



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 23, 2022
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

March Preview: There are two joint meetings scheduled in March. One meeting with the Planning Commission and the other with the School Board in addition to the two regular meetings. Staff are preparing presentations for each meeting for a discussion on a variety of topics and the School District will present its preliminary budget. The Borough comprehensive annual financial report will be provided in an upcoming weekly post along with a summary by the Finance Director as opposed to a presentation at a regular meeting due to the number of public hearings and topics that will be on the agenda. Our Finance Department will be working throughout March to finalize the proposed budget for Assembly consideration on April 7.

Legislative and Alaska Municipal League Updates: The Manager and Assemblymembers Nowers and Sumner attended the Alaska Municipal League (AML) Winter Legislative Conference in Juneau last week. In addition to the AML meetings, the group met with multiple legislators to discuss Borough priorities.

We have seen recent movement on SB 9, Alcohol Beverage Control. The Borough worked with Senator Hughes last year to insert an amendment, in the Senate Judiciary Committee, providing for more local control for licensing by allowing the Borough and cities to petition the State Alcohol Board for additional licenses. The Senate approved the bill, as amended last year, 18-0 this session. Last week, while the bill was in House Labor and Commerce, the amendment was removed taking the bill back to its original form. The bill will now go to House Finance and then to the House floor for consideration. Due to the change in House Labor and Commerce, the Senate will have to take up this change for a concurrence vote if approved by the House.

The following is a short summary of two presentations from the AML conference at the following link: <https://matsugov.us/docs/general/22349/AML-Winter-Legislative-Session-Highlights.pdf>. The first is a budget update from the Governor and the second is a presentation from Miles Baker

on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) or what is also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Key takeaways are as follows:

1. The Governor's proposed budget includes full funding for school bond debt reimbursement.
2. Proposed \$325 million G.O. bond includes \$175 million for Knik Arm Port Infrastructure. Even with influx of federal funding as part of the IIJA, State administration is recommending a bond due to bond rate and that the estimated annual cost of ~\$20 million. Many projects are eligible for significant federal match, further maximizing State capital dollars. Including state funding allows more flexibility on project execution, accelerates project timing, and helps incentivize federal prioritization.
3. The IIJA is not a "stimulus" bill and is much less discretionary than previous COVID stimulus bills. Spending is largely directed by federal agencies and state and local capital priorities are generally ineligible for funding. Only a portion of "Alaska" funding will come through the State of Alaska.
4. Funding types vary and of the new \$550 billion in spending, ~65% is formula funding, ~30% is grant funding with an additional ~5% in loans. Many programs will require non-federal match of typically 10%-20%.

All presentations from the AML conference are available at <https://www.akml.org/conferences-events/winter-legislative-conference/>.

Landfill Excavator Procurement: This is a short follow-up to the discussion at the February 15 Assembly meeting regarding the landfill excavator purchase. The Borough requested pricing through a Cooperative Government Sourcwell Contract for a CAT 323. The alternative quote provided at the meeting was a rental/purchase option for a different model. Our Purchasing Department contacted NC Machinery to inquire about the specifics of that type of agreement. NC Machinery cannot provide us with Sourcwell contracted pricing on rental purchase agreements. We would be paying higher prices on equipment purchases if we took that route. Additionally, the quote did not include items such as delivery, extra buckets and pins, 1-day of training, and an extended warranty. We developed specifications for this equipment based on input from Kenai and Fairbanks landfills, due to their similar size, and spoke with our consultant and contractors.

West Susitna Public Involvement Update: West Susitna Access Public Meetings from 4pm to 7pm on Wed., Feb. 23, 2022 and Wed., Mar. 23, 2022 (Presentations at 4pm, 5pm, and 6pm) -- Online: https://bit.ly/susitna_access or Phone: 235-215-8782, Meeting ID: 860 7777 0537, Passcode: 150663

As of yesterday, we have 327 subscribers to our email list, 98 people opened the public meeting reminder email, 129 responses to the online survey, 16 responses to the text message survey, online newspaper ads started running on February 17, and we have mailed out over 13,000 postcards.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Natural Disaster

- [Old Glenn Highway back open, Hatcher Pass Road remains closed](#)

Resource Development

- [More gold is found at prospective mine at the end of planned West Susitna access road](#)
- [Prospector resurfaces plans to drill for coalbed methane gas in the Susitna Valley](#)

Redistricting

- [State judge erred in rejecting claims Mat-Su was disadvantaged by state redistricting board ...](#)
- [Judge rules that 2 redrawn districts violate the Alaska Constitution - KNBA](#)

Economy

- [Mat-Su firms show manufacturing and exports can work in Alaska](#)
- [Alaska Mental Health Trust awards over \\$1 million in grants supporting housing, workforce and system improvements](#)
- [Governor says state's fiscal future is rosy, again pushes extra PFDs](#)

Assembly

- [Borough on track to create clean energy financing for commercial, industrial property owners ...](#)
- [Disgruntled Big Lake residents seek recall of Assemblyman Mokie Tew-Frontiersman](#)