



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-8689 • Fax (907) 861-8669

Mike.Brown@matsugov.us

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 19, 2023
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

Fish & Wildlife Commission Quarterly Report: The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) has been busy with work on the following:

- Passed Resolution FWC 23-01 commenting on Waterbody Setbacks during a special meeting on February 2, 2023, dealing with draft OR 23-002
- Approved submitting one proposal to the Alaska Board of Fisheries for the Upper Cook Inlet meeting scheduled for February 2024
- Staff started work on an FWC Board of Fisheries project website
- Developed and submitted a comment to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for their April meeting work on Cook Inlet Salmon Fisheries Management Plan
- Continued planning work on hosting a Game Season Summary with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, tentatively scheduled for June 1, 2023

During the first quarter, the MSB FWC worked on one wildlife agenda topic at their three regular meetings. For more about the MSB FWC work: [Matanuska-Susitna Borough - Fish & Wildlife Commission \(matsugov.us\)](https://matsugov.us)

Healthy and Equitable Community Grant: The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) announced \$9 million in funding to local governments through memorandums of agreement (MOAs) in support of creating healthy and equitable communities around the State. The funding will be available through May 31, 2024, to support activities of greatest need identified by the local community. The application is due April 25, 2023.

The funding allocations within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are:

Houston City	\$ 29,879.00
Palmer City	\$ 89,078.00
Wasilla City	\$ 136,966.00
Mat-Su Borough	<u>\$ 1,364,075.00</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,620,008.00

All three cities have indicated that they will be applying to their portion. Two potentially eligible projects that are being considered for the Borough portion of the funding are:

1. Jay Nolfi/Fish Creek Park in Big Lake; this project was #3 in the Assembly-approved 2022 Capital Improvement Program. Funding will improve existing facilities by providing equitable access to park amenities for people of all ages and abilities. The project, estimated at \$250,000, would include expanding and paving pathways, adding inclusive and accessible playground equipment, and paving the trail to the covered gazebo area. This park is already a Borough facility maintained by Parks and Recreation staff.
2. Palmer Family Park - the park project organizers have reached out seeking funding for the Mat-Su Communities First inclusive and accessible park. This park will include rubber safety surfacing and fencing, an access ramp, and a pavilion. Based on the budget, fundraising for this project has begun with a total estimated cost of roughly \$885,000; the project coordinators have secured over \$475,000 and are seeking grant funding and donations for the remaining portion. The Borough will not maintain this park and will not increase operating expenses.

There is an opportunity to include other projects if the Assembly has any they would like included. The application states that all funding must go towards creating community plans, supporting and facilitating local coalitions, or activities that fall into one of the categories listed here:

- Improve COVID-19 health outcomes among higher-risk underserved populations by expanding existing or developing new mitigation and prevention resources and services; **Examples:** support hospital or clinic vaccination and testing efforts; provide COVID-19 mitigation supplies to underserved groups; provide translation for COVID-19 messages
- Increase/improve data collection and reporting for populations disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to guide current and future pandemic response; **Examples:** support hospitals and clinics with data collection support; purchase new lab equipment to facilitate data collection and reporting
- Build, leverage, or expand infrastructure support for COVID-19 or future pandemic prevention and control among populations that are at higher risk or underserved; **Examples:** improve communication system for EMS and 911 calls (new antenna and cable); improve internet and communication capabilities at community center to support telehealth and make it more accessible;
- Mobilize partners to improve spaces in their community where people live, learn, work, and play, allowing individuals and families more significant opportunities for better health outcomes; **Examples:** improved recreational opportunities; support local subsistence practices by providing gas vouchers to residents; support community education and action regarding substance misuse and suicide prevention; facilitate health improvements for homeless shelters; provide opportunities for isolation and facilitate medical treatment for homeless people infected with COVID-19;
- Improve access to COVID-19 and other vaccines for higher-risk or underserved individuals. **Examples:** Equip an outreach van to improve access to vaccines and testing; fund a mobile care clinic; provide outreach to home-bound individuals

Landfill Compaction: During the March 21, 2023, Assembly meeting Landfill compaction contract discussion, AM 23-018, staff made statements regarding the current landfill compaction contract and performance issues. This is intended to correct the record. The current compaction contract does have penalties for not meeting the compaction specification. Public Works and Purchasing are reviewing performance documentation and investigating opportunities to recoup funds based on non-performance. Public Works will also review contract performance with the new contract to ensure we have a comprehensive monitoring system. At this point, I have

no reason to believe staff statements were made with ill intent but that staff answered on the spot when they should have checked facts and followed up later. I apologize for the misstatements, and we will work to ensure we have a better system in place moving forward.

Annual Road Service Area (RSA) Contract Adjustments: Last week, Borough Administration received a letter from RSA contractors expressing concerns that road maintenance costs are outpacing the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with an ‘...imminent cascading failure of the contractors’. RSA contracts contain provisions for the annual adjustment to account for the impact of inflation/deflation and fuel pricing.

The formula for computing the annual increase, referred to as a cost of living adjustment (COLA), is based on an 85/15 formula that uses the Anchorage Consumer Price Index provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (85%) and quarterly sampling of Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel and Regular Unleaded provided by Crowley Fuels (15%). A quarterly sampling of fuel pricing accounts for fluctuations throughout the year instead of a single 12-month price adjustment.

The COLA was incorporated into the contracts over a decade ago at the request of the RSA Contractors. This adjustment has generally resulted in an annual increase in the contracts that exceed the CPI alone; however, as seen in 2020, the substantial drop in fuel prices can result in a reduction in contract pricing.

For RSA contracts bid in 2019, the cumulative impact of the COLA has increased contract value by 17.5%, which is 4.6% higher than the CPI. For the contracts bid in 2020, the cumulative effect has been an increased contract value of 22.3%, which is 8.2% higher than the CPI. Additionally, two RSA contracts were re-bid in 2021 (Trapper Creek and Caswell), and five RSA contracts (South Colony, North Colony, Lazy Mountain, Alpine, and Butte) were re-bid in 2022.

The 2019 (Fairview, Knik, Willow, Big Lake, Meadow Lakes, Gold Trail, and Talkeetna) and 2020 (Midway and Bogard) contracts are five-year contracts and will be re-bid in the spring of 2024 and 2025, respectively. The 2022 contracts are three-year contracts with two one-year options, so they could also be re-bid in 2025. Borough Administration will be responding to the letter but has yet to receive any specific documentation from contractors that would support the need for documented losses for reimbursement or an increase in the current per-mile contract prices for unforeseen costs.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Planning

- [This draft bike and pedestrian walkway plan will guide upcoming construction](#)
Frontiersman

Opioids

- [Mat-Su Borough to host public input for opioid settlement distribution](#)
Frontiersman
- [April sees increase in patients seen for fentanyl-related issues in Southcentral](#)
Frontiersman

Education

- [Students take flight in aviation at Career Tech](#)
Frontiersman
- [Mat-Su school district reviewing book fairs and library collections](#)
ADN

Reports

- [Talkeetna water report released](#)
KTNA
- [Mat-Su Regional Medical Center releases 2022 Community Benefit Report](#)
KTNA

Fisheries

- [North Pacific Council reaches impasse on Cook Inlet Fishery Management Plan](#)
ADN

Big Cabbage Radio

- [Inside the Borough: Flooding Management](#)

Future Events:

National DEA Drug Take-Back Day:

- Sat., April 22, 2023, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Fred Meyer (Palmer & Wasilla) and Willow Library

Mat-Su “Needs Assessment” Determination for Distribution of \$2.3M in Opioid Settlement Funds:

- Wed., April 26, 2023, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Assembly Chambers
- Thurs., May 18, 2023, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Willow Community Center
- Thurs., May 25, 2023, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Menard Center