



## 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](mailto:Mike.Brown@matsugov.us)

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 24, 2023  
TO: Mayor and Assembly  
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager  
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

**Tanaina Community Council Follow-Up:** During the May 16 Assembly meeting, the property at 895 E. Heather Way was discussed. Here are some timeline events for 895 E. Heather Way:

- Staff have conducted approximately 45 site visits from 11/01/2019 to date.
- Staff have issued ten citations from 02/28/2020 to date.
- This property was referred to Law Department on 02/18/2022 for consideration for an injunction.
- This past winter, a house fire destroyed the house.
- Taxes are current on the property, so foreclosure is not an option.
- There has been extensive outreach to the neighbor (who is on the community council).

The Manager and Attorney will discuss this case and the way forward when the Attorney returns to the office next week. The Manager will propose an Assembly special meeting on August 8 at 6 p.m. This meeting would discuss community clean-up options and, if approved by the Assembly, will include invitations to community councils.

**Port MacKenzie Operations Update:** Cruz Construction recently docked barges at Port MacKenzie to support road construction projects in western Alaska this summer. The first barge arrived for the evening tide on Friday, May 19. The barge was loaded with 251 tons of construction materials and equipment; and headed to the village of Kongiganak, located at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River.

The second barge arrived at high tide on the evening of Monday, May 22. The barge was loaded with 290 tons of construction equipment, building materials, and blasting agent; and headed to the village of Shageluk, located on the Innoko River, accessed from the Yukon River. This project supports upgrading an existing road connecting the village to the airport. For this loadout, the

US Coast Guard inspected the shipment to verify that the shipper met safety requirements for transporting explosives.

Additionally, Northern Gravel and Trucking recently approached the Borough to use Port MacKenzie's deep-draft dock as part of a five-year plan to bring 30,000 tons of road salt into the Port each year as part of a State of Alaska DOT contract. The salt is coming out of Peru, and we are expecting the first shipment to arrive in late June; the ship will be docked for 3-5 days.

**Library Book Challenge Meeting Summary:** On May 18, 2023, the Book Challenge Committee considered a book review of "Let's Talk About It." The Willow Librarian presented how the book was purchased and placed. The patron then gave her opinion on why she objected to the book. The Committee focused on two aspects of the complaint: 1) did the book violate obscenity laws, and 2) was the book purchased and placed using our Collection Development Policy (CDP)? The Committee recommended keeping the book on the shelf in the young adult area of the Willow Library.

There were approximately 35 people in the room, and several others were viewing through the Microsoft Teams meeting. Most were respectful; however, a few outbursts were addressed as they occurred.

The Parks and Recreation Manager asked Library Advisory Board members observing the meeting to leave the meeting. There was a concern that there could be a perception of a violation of the Open Meetings Act because the Board had essentially created a quorum.

The patron has requested a reconsideration per the CDP, which has been forwarded to the Community Development Director.

At a previous Assembly meeting, the same patron submitted objections for several other Borough Library items to the Assembly. Staff have drafted a letter to the patron asking her to follow the Borough's policy for any future objection(s) and that we request she prioritize her requests. We also updated the CDP to allow a maximum of five objected materials per meeting as we continue to work through this process. We will consider changes for future meetings to provide a better space to accommodate larger groups.

### **Public Affairs Media Flyover:**

#### **State Budget**

- [\\$5 million for new Palmer library, \\$1.5 million for Arctic Winter Games in late additions to State budget](#)  
Frontiersman

#### **MSBSD**

- [Mat-Su Education Association votes to strike](#)  
Frontiersman

### **Opioid Assessment**

- [Opioid settlement task force to meet with public](#)  
Frontiersman

### **Assembly**

- [After 6-hour MSB meeting, gravel extraction ordinance vote postponed...again](#)  
Frontiersman
- [Mat-Su neighbors grow frustrated over derelict properties, borough plans on steps to address issue](#)  
Alaska News Source

### **Notable Facebook Posts**

- [Cruz Construction docks two barges at Port MacKenzie](#)
- [AST- Boater Safety Week](#)
- [National EMS Week here in the Mat-Su](#)

### **Future Events:**

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

- Thurs., May 25, 2023, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Menard Center