

Chair Constant Report Archive: 2025

December 16, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Laid on the Table Items

We generally have a policy to be pretty restrictive of laid on the table items, but at this point, we've asked the Administration to do as much as possible to get critical, time-sensitive items to us tonight because we don't want to have to exercise the worst option which is meeting next Tuesday at noon for a special meeting if, in fact, any time critical items arise that have to be passed before the end of the year. We don't have any items on that list and we would hope to keep no items on that list so we don't have to convene one more time before the end of the year. Hopefully this is it.

Solstice this Weekend

I will note that the Solstice is almost upon us, and I'm grateful that the light will start to come back. I'll join the Mayor in recommending folks come out and celebrate the Parks Department's annual Winter Solstice festival at Cuddy Park this Friday, December 19th 5PM to 8PM, free with activities like ice skating in a photo booth with Santa's reindeer as well as cocoa by the fire. I encourage everyone to get out and enjoy our uniquely Alaskan solstice experience.

Looking to the Calendar

As this is the final meeting of the year due to the way the calendar falls, our next meeting won't be for 4 weeks, as the mayor noted. I can't remember a time when we had 4 weeks between meeting so please take your time and enjoy it. You've earned it.

Thanks to the hard work of the Municipal Manager, the department heads, Clerk's Office, and everyone else to get our year-end materials all squared away early, hopefully we don't need that special meeting.

Year End Reflections

Finally, happy New Year! As the New Year approaches. I want to reflect a bit on where we've come as a community over the past year. We have had challenges. We have turned those challenges into opportunities.

I think upon our friends from Western Alaska who joined our community from the tropical storm, Halong, and then our school district. How the city has taken on the challenge of having year-round shelter in supporting people. How we as a city supported furloughed workers providing as many opportunities and benefits for them to have continuity in their life. And also, of course, the kindness that just exists in our community. That happens every day and every small way.

This Assembly has taken on some pretty complex questions. The question about camping in public and the laws around that. Dealing with challenges of homelessness

and improving our response. Public safety challenges in our town.

Of course, wrestling with the question of how we address our financial situation as costs increase but revenues do not. As we've learned over the past year, nobody is coming to save us. Our future will be determined by those who love this community and its people.

And it's challenging. Over the 9 years I've been on this body, we have been forced to find efficiencies and kind of engage in the process of picking up the slack where others have lost their ability to fund or their willingness to fund their responsibilities in our town. And we have done it but the challenges increase. We've had to work to support each other. And we continue to do so.

So, I encourage you to join one of the many holiday festivities being offered around town and take time to connect with your neighbors and celebrate the what it means to be part of this really special community at this really special time of year.

And to my colleagues, I am glad and look forward to us getting through our agenda tonight because once we're done, hopefully it's holiday season for the rest of the year.

December 2, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting. Welcome back after the Thanksgiving break.

Election Ballot Deadline

The first thing to note is that, as members of the public have been communicating, we do have a number of tax and revenue proposals that are circulating at this time, but nothing has yet been passed by the body.

What that signals is that we are coming to the end of the year, and that means we are on the verge of our April 2026 municipal election deadlines. The January 13 regular meeting is the last day to introduce ordinances containing propositions and the January 27 meeting is the final deadline for the Assembly to hold public hearings and approve propositions for the ballot on April 8.

The Assembly and Administration are currently working through several potential revenue proposals, as well as the slate of annual bond propositions to put before the voters in April. The next few meetings will have a lot of activity on these topics, right through the second meeting in January. If you have thoughts on these topics, you can testify at the public hearings or submit your comments to the Assembly at assembly@anchorageak.gov

City Nerd Nite

This Thursday evening is the next edition of City Nerd Nite. The event will take place at King Street Brewing from 6-8pm with the theme of “Getting down to Business.” The event will feature 7 speakers giving 7-minute presentations on their perspectives, takeaways, and ideas about doing business in Anchorage.

City Nerd Nites are a fun and informal way to learn more about our local government and I encourage you to attend. Event information can be found at muni.org/assembly.

Alaska Municipal League Conference

Also, the annual Alaska Municipal League Conference is next week, where leaders from local governments across Alaska will convene to share knowledge and connections to help run our local communities. Affiliate organizations like the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks will also be meeting next week. I highly recommend and encourage Assembly Members to attend the conference next Wednesday and Thursday – the agenda has some highly relevant topics like housing, fiscal planning and disaster preparedness.

Municipal Seal

I also would like to note that a few weeks ago, I introduced an ordinance and survey to consider updating the Municipal seal. Through the process of our 50th anniversary celebrations, and also through the downtown wayfinding project that has happened over the last couple of years, there’s been some interest and excitement in looking at our seal, and asking ourselves – do we want to evolve that seal at our 50th anniversary for the next 50 years, or for the future.

This question will be properly before us at our December 16 meeting, but right now there is a survey where you can provide comments on the various options that have been presented. There are five options and one is maintaining the seal as it is today.

The online survey runs through December 16 in advance of the ordinance coming back before the Assembly at that evening’s meeting. You can find the seal proposals and a link to the survey at muni.org/assembly in the [News section](#) and you can also see some great coverage in the [Anchorage Daily News](#).

November 18, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

2026 Budget

The big ticket item on our agenda tonight is the budget. We will work through our budget process tonight until we are done. I want to thank everyone who has testified or submitted comments to the Assembly – your input helps us make better decisions and we appreciate the time folks have taken to inform us of your priorities for the budget. I

also want to thank the Administration and Assembly Members for very thoughtful conversation on the budget and potential amendments. We are facing some tough budget decisions in the next few years and it's going to take all of us working together to figure it out.

I would note that I added an AIM document into your packets tonight that is associated to all of the revenue legislation that is before us. It is a study from the city of Washington D.C. that has been done annually since 1997 that compares the taxation burdens between the largest city in every state. Since 1997, in almost every category, Anchorage has come in as the lowest tax burden jurisdiction in America. So I encourage everyone to look through that report as we consider new revenue as part of the conversation.

I do look forward to a productive meeting tonight where we wrap up the budget so we can move forward with the good work of the Municipality.

MOA 50th Anniversary

I also want to note that last Friday, we held the final celebration event of the 50th anniversary of the Municipality at the Anchorage Museum. We gathered with current and former Mayors, Assembly Members, Youth Representatives and School Board Members.

It was really heartening to see people of all stripes come together, putting politics aside and having a great evening celebrating, and actually looking into the civics, of our community through the Civics Fair that was in the main lobby of the Museum.

Not only was it a time of celebration, it was an opportunity to imagine what we can become in our next fifty years. As I said then, and I'll say now because I believe it – our best days are still ahead of us.

November 4, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Western Alaska Evacuation

I'll start by celebrating the fact that Anchorage was able to be part of a response to the crisis in Western Alaska. The way that our residents came together to support the individuals who came and find shelter for everyone so quickly was so admirable. About 700 people have relocated from the YK Delta to Anchorage and it is expected they will be here a year or longer until they can safely return home

We continue to welcome them to our community and I thank everyone who has worked so hard to make their stay as comfortable as possible, and it's great to see that the youth were enrolled so quickly in ASD and have received such a warm welcome in our schools.

South Korea and Japan Visit

The Mayor and I visited our sister cities in Korea and Japan and I'm sad that our mayor was not able to attend the Korea part of our trip, but she had to stay here to respond to the emergency. I went to Korea for the first time, and I was absolutely marveled by their port infrastructure. We were able to tour the Port of Incheon and see where Alaska's number one trading partner in Korea transfers seafood, ore and metal from Alaska into the global energy economy. And it's worth noting that the Governor's gasline proposal that appears to be making progress at this time, will likely see a steel supply coming through the Port of Busan. So, it was really great to meet with the individuals who are part of that conversation and see firsthand the extraordinary economic activity that is happening over there, and to explore the possibility of a friendship city with the City of Busan.

MOA 50th Anniversary

Next, at the end of this week on Friday, we will be celebrating formally the 50th anniversary of the Municipality. Not only is this a time of celebration, it's an opportunity to imagine what we can become in our next fifty years – what does the future hold for Anchorage? Our best days are still ahead.

This Friday, November 7 from 6-9PM at the Anchorage Museum, we'll be turning the focus to our future. The free admission event features:

- A civics fair with municipal departments and local organizations – where you can learn more about what is going on in your community and how to get involved
- An Anchorage history lecture by David Reamer and Dena'ina Elnena Exhibition opening remarks by Aaron Leggett, Museum Senior Curator and President of the Native Village Eklutna
- A recognition of former Mayors, Assembly Members and School Board Members

We have more information at muni.org/50 where you can also read the histories of local groups and municipal departments and find activities for the whole family. As you learn more about our history, you'll see that it only takes one person to make a difference. Imagine what we can become when we join together. My hope is that this celebration of our past sparks inspiration and new conversations about our future.

Budget

Tonight is the second and final public hearing on the budget. For those of you here to testify, we anticipate testimony will be held after the dinner break. The budget items are 14.A-14.G on the agenda. There have already been a number of worksessions on the budget that have been highly informative – you can find a record of those meetings at muni.org/watchnow

This Friday at City Hall, the Assembly will have a worksession to go over our proposed budget amendments and the public is welcome to watch that worksession in person or online. I encourage you to learn more and get engaged in the budget by visiting the [Assembly's Budget and Taxes page](#).

Tax Reform Proposals

Finally, there have been a number of new tax reform proposals introduced and at least one more on the way.

The three tax proposals submitted by Assembly members will be before us on the Nov. 18 agenda and the information on each proposal is available on the [Assembly Tax Reform page](#) on the Assembly's website.

October 21, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Western Alaska Evacuation

I'll start with the Western Alaska Evacuation. I'm grateful to the Municipality, I'm grateful to our friends at Southcentral Foundation, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, the Alaska National Guard, the Governor and the state response, the School District and everyone who has been working to get people here and get them safe. We are here, we are ready for this response and to the people who have been evacuated, I want to say – you are welcome here! Thank you to everyone who has been part of that.

I did have the opportunity to visit one of the shelters today and I got a tour with the United Cajun Navy, which is one of the response groups that deploys to events like this and provides resources and support. My father is cajun and they come from very close to where my people are from and so this was a great opportunity to meet with them and see some of the things they brought to individuals within the shelter.

Thank you again to all of the emergency workers in the Municipality and the Administration to meet this moment. We don't yet know all the ways this will impact our community, but what I know that the people of Anchorage always step up for our neighbors, just as they step up for us when things go wrong here. We will all do our best to welcome and support the evacuees and make their time in Anchorage as comfortable as possible.

We are still waiting for our delegation to impress upon the executive branch in Washington to do their duty and declare this emergency so the funding can flow to support the individuals in their time of need. So, we're looking to you Senators Murkowski and Sullivan to land this plane

Civic Discourse

Next, I want to talk about a radio show I did this last week with Mr. Goecker from Eagle River. I want to acknowledge that in these trying times when the political discourse is coarsening and the heat that comes off the debate is not light, but is instead a threat, it is incumbent upon leaders in civic roles to model and demonstrate that though we might not agree on this or that issue, one thing we can agree to do is work together civilly to get the work done that the people need and to model for people that we can disagree passionately, but continue to do the work of building a community. So I want to thank Member Goecker for the time on Alaska Public Media and I look forward to our second edition of that discussion when we go on the radio show of a former member of this body. It was well received by lots of members of our community and was well worth the time.

Budget

So finally, the big item on our agenda tonight is the budget with the first public hearing of the budget. The code provides that we shall have two public hearings on the budget, so we will have one tonight and again at our next meeting on November 4th. For those of you here to testify, we anticipate testimony will be held after the dinner break. The budget items are 14.A-14.G on the agenda.

There have already been a number of worksessions on the budget that have been highly informative. I encourage you to learn more and get engaged in the budget by visiting the [Assembly's Budget and Taxes page](#).

October 7, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

2026 MOA Budget

The big item before us this fall is the 2026 Municipal budget. The Mayor's team worked diligently on the budget behind the scenes this summer and through the fall. Now it's before the Assembly and public for review. The budget documents are being introduced tonight and there are several ways the public can be involved:

- First, you can watch the September 12 worksession on the 2026 budget projections. The Mayor and her team did an excellent job of laying out the challenges ahead with the muni budget. You can find the link to that recording on the Assembly's Budget and Taxes page.
- The public is also welcome to view online or attend the Assembly's budget worksessions in October and November. It's always interesting to hear from each municipal department on their challenges and goals for the upcoming year.
- Finally, your voice is welcome in the process. You can email the Assembly with your thoughts on the budget at any time and there are at least two public hearings schedule – one on October 21 and November 4.

All of this information and tips for how to follow the budget can be found on the [Assembly's Budget and Taxes](#) page.

50th Anniversary of the Municipality

I've been pleased to see so much participation in the 50th Anniversary of the Municipality. There have been really fun events, activities and reflections on our history, who we are as a community and what lays ahead in our future.

I encourage you to visit muni.org/50 to get the maps for the Hidden Gems and Neighborhood Time Machine scavenger hunts and to read stories of the history of community groups and leaders who've been working in our community for the last fifty years. The celebration will conclude at First Friday at the Museum on November 7th.

Parks and Rec Haunted and Enchanted Trails

Finally, to end on a fun note, the Parks and Recreation Department is hosting the Haunted and Enchanted Trails event at Goose Lake on October 17th and 18th. You can get a fright on the Haunted Trail on Friday Night or embark on a magical adventure in the woods Saturday afternoon. They are also looking for volunteers to dress in costumes for both events. You can purchase tickets and sign up to volunteer at the [Muni Parks and Rec website](#).

September 23, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting. There are a number of things to talk about, so I will save the agenda items until later.

Project Homeless Connect

Tonight, I will note that today was Project Homeless Connect, which is an event organized by Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness and supported by many service providers and investors across the community. It's a one-day, one-stop resource fair connecting hundreds and hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness, or on the verge, to vital resources, supplies, and gear — just in time for winter. I want thank the Coalition, providers and volunteers and everyone who has helped. If you were in downtown today around the Egan Center, you saw a line going around the corner. These lines are just so big and these challenges so great.

ASD Legislative Briefing

Last week a number of Assembly Members attended the School District's annual briefing to state legislators. The District shared some good news that bears repeating:

- The Legislature found a way, despite politics, to keep the BSA increase, which is going to bring a lot of quality and stability to our schools this year.
- With that last-minute infusion of stable funding, the District was able to fill 20 new teaching positions, restore tutoring for kids struggling with reading, and purchase critical instruction materials.
- Dr. Bryantt, the Superintendent, also countered the narrative in our community that our schools are failing and shared some examples of recent success:
 - Kindergarten and first grade students have had double-digit literacy gains for two years in a row
 - Math proficiency scores for 8th graders has gone up 5% on the state assessment
 - The AP test pass rate has soared across schools, with Eagle River High seeing an improvement from 55% in 2021 to 89% last year – it's extraordinary
 - Suspensions are down 20%

However, Dr. Bryantt shared that this is only a temporary reprieve. If the legislature doesn't do anything to counter rising costs of gas and inflation, we'll be back in the hole and facing deep cuts in the next couple years, but I want to thank our leadership in the community and all of the people who stood up to ensure our school district, and school districts across Alaska, have the funding they need to deliver for our youth.

Local Lens on Legislative Services

Tomorrow, the Assembly's Legislative Services Office will be presenting at the Federation of Community Council's Local Lens series. They'll share about their work and how to get more involved in the Assembly's work.

It's a virtual meeting on Zoom at 6pm tomorrow and you can sign up for the link on the Federation's website or [through the News section at muni.org/assembly](https://muni.org/assembly).

September 9, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

50th Anniversary of MOA

Our 50th Anniversary of the unification of the Municipality is now upon us, in fact, next week marks the actual date that the voters adopted the charter and we moved into our new government – 50 years ago.

So, last Friday, we kicked off the public celebration with a great event at Town Square Park at the Night Market. Thanks to Zaneta Stetsunova who has been organizing that great activation of the park all summer long and agreed to do one more week to support this. It was a great time - there were vendors, information booths, there was music,

there was dancing – a lot of celebration. And that was a nice thing for this city to be doing as we continue the challenging work of running this city and trying to make improvements with the limited resources available to us.

From now through November, we'll celebrate with events, activities and history stories. This weekend, I highly recommend the event this Saturday – a history lesson on historic Anchorage neighborhoods with David Reamer at the Beartooth. Tickets are free at the Beartooth ticket office.

You can see all of the activities listed at muni.org/50. This is a great opportunity to learn about our roots and begin envisioning the next 50 years, so I hope you find a way to become involved.

2026 Budget Season

This week, we start the process for the 2026 municipal budget at the Assembly – the Mayor's team has been working on it for a while. While studying a government budget might not sound like fun to everyone, I really encourage folks to follow the process and be involved – it's actually pretty interesting and informative about the state of the municipality.

It's important for members of the public to understand the budget process and be involved because really, our budget is a statement of our values and every year we challenge ourselves to be as efficient as possible with the resources we have, while facing the fact that the needs we have far outstrip the resources we have available to us. Every year, it is a challenging and interesting process.

If you don't have the time to read the budget, you can still testify or email the Assembly to tell us up about the municipal services you want to see prioritized for funding. We'll have a worksession this Friday where the Mayor's team will present the "120-day" memo, which is a 71-page memo which is the precedent for us to receive the full budget which details every financial aspect of the Municipality.

There are further worksessions in October and November, as well as opportunities for public testimony – these are all open to the public and also livestreamed and recorded. Learn more at the [Budget and Taxes section of our website](#).

Youth Representatives

Finally, I'd like to celebrate the fact that tonight, with the adoption of the consent agenda, we'll be bringing on three new Youth Representatives to the Assembly. They won't all serve at any given time, but occasionally all three will be here at the same time like they are tonight. All three are in the audience tonight and in a little while, we will swear them in.

I'd like to add a few thoughts. This project started many years ago with Mr. Rivera and Mr. Martinez several administrations back and it's had a number of twists and turns that bring us to today. We've had a number of excellent youth representatives and we've

also faced some challenges and I'm grateful to the Mayor when she was Assembly Member, for helping us get squared away and standing up the program we have today.

So, tonight, I welcome Kennedy Bowser from Chugiak High School, Gwyneth Eggleston from East High and Jacob Lavarias from West High to spend the better part of the school year with us as they learn about our process. They are currently sitting in the audience, but we'll pull them up when we get to Item 10.D.2 and conduct their swearing in ceremony. Then they will join us up on the dais. All three will serve at tonight's meeting and then they will rotate for future meetings. So, welcome again Kennedy, Gwyneth and Jacob!

August 26, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

50th Anniversary of MOA

Tonight, we have the awesome fortune to kick off the 50th Anniversary of the unification of the Municipality celebration. It's an especially exciting night because we have with us former Assembly Members and Youth Representatives to begin the conversation of what the 50th anniversary means for our community – looking at the past, the present and the future. So, from now through November, we'll celebrate with events, activities and history stories. You can learn more at muni.org/50. This is a great opportunity to learn about our roots and begin envisioning the next 50 years, so I hope you will all find a way to become involved.

We start the celebration with a performance by Soul Society of Alaska, so when we do the anniversary resolution later tonight, we'll also get to enjoy some live music. This is just a small taster for their longer performance at the 50th Anniversary Night Market on Friday, September 5th at Town Square Park. Ed Washington will be performing as well and there will be food booths and vendors as well.

Town Square Park

Speaking of Town Square Park, I want to recognize all of the hard work this summer that has gone into improving this local treasure. I want to give thanks to the Parks and Recreation department for all of their work in beautifying the park. I also want to thank the Anchorage Downtown Partnership for their Thursday concerts and other events, and the Administration for making the park a priority, and finally, the voters for approving the bond to meaningfully improve and fix up the park. I also want to thank my friend Zaneta Stetsunova for starting the Friday Night Markets, which are a great addition to the downtown scene, bringing vibrancy and activation and vibrancy to the park all summer long on Friday nights.

If you haven't been downtown in a while or seen Town Square Park when it is full of people and activity, I really encourage you to come by the Night Market on September 5th to help us celebrate 50 years of the Municipality. It's energizing to see what the future holds for Town Square Park.

Annual MOA Employee Survey

For the municipal employees listening, I would like to note that we have the annual survey currently running – it kicked off yesterday and runs through September 15. It's really important to the Assembly to understand how employees are working and what their satisfaction is – what's working and what's not working- so we can help improve from the operations of the municipality from the legislative and budgetary side. The Mayor and her team have already implemented many things based on the feedback from the 2024 survey, so I hope municipal employees can feel confident that your input will be listened to and valued by both the Administration and the Assembly.

Assembly Work on Housing

As you can see on the agenda, the Municipality is working on a number of items to spur more housing development and get ahead of the crisis we've been facing where it's so hard for people to find an affordable place to live. We're getting some initial indications that the sum of this work is leading to more housing construction. In fact, we've heard from the Administration that multi-family housing permits have increased by at least double over the previous year.

We included a summary of that work and the initial results in our most recent Assembly newsletter. If you haven't received that yet, please sign up at muni.org/assembly and we'll send you regular communications about the business of the Assembly.

August 12, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting. Three quick updates tonight.

Assembly Youth Representative

First, last week the Assembly had the privilege of hosting a Meet and Greet with five of the ten remarkable young people who applied to serve as the Assembly Youth Representative. This was an impressive group – engaged, thoughtful, and full of ideas about our community. I want to thank Assembly Members who were able to attend, welcomed these young people to City Hall and engaged with them in the meet-and-greet.

I'll be selecting a small cohort next week to serve as the Youth Representatives, providing them with opportunities to learn together, share perspectives, and contribute meaningfully to our work. Orientation and training will begin later this month, with

swearing-in tentatively planned for either August 26 or September 9. The Vice Chair and I will share more details at the Rules Committee meeting on Thursday.

Website to Celebrate 50 Years of the Municipality

Next, the new [MOA50 page](#) is now live. It's the go-to spot for celebrating the 50th anniversary of Anchorage's unification and creation – with history, stories, events, and ways to get involved. I encourage you to check it out and share it with your friends and neighbors.

End of Summer

Finally, the end of summer is almost here. As we move into mid-August, we're feeling the close of Alaska's short but beautiful summer. The Alaska State Fair kicks off this week – a time for giant vegetables, music, and the last big gathering before the leaves turn. Students in the Anchorage School District head back to school soon, filling crosswalks, bike lanes, and bus stops once again. Let's all remember to do our part to slow down in school zones to keep our young people safe, cheer on our students and educators, and savor these last long evenings before the days grow shorter.

July 29, 2025

Vice Chair Brawley chaired the meeting and offered the following remarks.

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting. Chair Constant is unable to attend this meeting, so I am serving as Chair for the meeting and Assembly Member Rivera has been gracious to serve as Vice Chair, so thank you Mr. Rivera. I look forward to this opportunity to usher us through a productive meeting!

Downtown Safety

To begin, I want to acknowledge the shooting that happened downtown last week ago. My condolences go out to everyone who was affected by that incident. It must have been very scary for the people at the scene that night, but I'm glad to see APD increase their presence downtown on weekend evenings and I hope increasing downtown safety can be a long-term endeavor for all of us. This goes beyond any one bar, but has been a larger issue in Downtown for many years. Some of the problems downtown in the evenings obviously run counter to our goal to create a more vibrant, active downtown where people go to have fun. As an Assembly Member, I commit to reviewing the areas that we have control over in terms of safety and licensed establishments to see if there is work we can do to make our bars and downtown overall safer.

Downtown Growth

It is important to address the downtown safety issues because we are on the cusp of some great growth and vitality in our urban core. In their presentation at last month's

Community and Economic Development Committee meeting, we heard from the Anchorage Downtown Partnership pointed out a number of new businesses that have opened downtown recently and several new buildings and renovations, such as the Wild Birch and Hilton Hotel remodels, new housing developments, and a new office building now known as the Santos building.

And, last week we heard that the Block 41 project at the site of the former 4th Avenue Theater is set to begin construction for a mixed-use tower with retail and potential housing. After years of stagnant development downtown, it is great to see this revival and I'm hopeful that we are finally turning a corner on bringing downtown back to life and creating a vibrant hub for our community.

MOA Housing Development

Speaking of housing, if you didn't catch the ADN article a few weeks ago on housing development in Anchorage, I encourage you to go read it. In the discussions earlier this month on the camping ordinance, we heard from a lot of members of the public with great suggestions for things Anchorage should be doing to address homelessness and the cost of housing. So I'm pleased to report that after a lot of work in recent years, we've made significant progress on many of those ideas. It will take some years to see the results, but housing developers have been starting to announce new projects and expanded project that have been made possible thanks to recent code changes, tax incentives and other process improvements. In just the first six months of this year, the Municipality has permitted 146 residential units for projects with four or more units – that's a huge increase over the 79 that were issued for all of last year.

So, while things feel tough right now in the housing market right now, I'm cautiously optimistic that we're going to start seeing more affordable housing options for purchase and for rent in the next few years, and hopefully that helps us address our other problems like homelessness, outmigration, filling our workforce shortage, and making sure we have a community that folks can afford to live in.

Youth in Local Government

Next, I want to say congratulations and goodbye to the Assembly's summer intern Martin Karmun. It was great having him up here on the dais for the past few meetings to learn more about the inner functions of local government. And with the transition to fall, we'll soon be welcoming some new Assembly Youth Representatives to our meetings. We have a worksession on Friday, August 8th, where we'll be hearing from a few of the candidates from folks who applied and will determine who will be sitting in the youth representative seat on the dais this next year. It's great to have youth and young adults involved in our processes and sharing their perspectives.

Community Celebrations and Munification

Finally, I'll wrap up by saying the Municipality will soon kick-off the 50th anniversary celebration of the unification of the former city and borough governments into what we now know of as the Municipality of Anchorage. The exact date of the anniversary is September 16th and the Municipality and our partners will be hosting events between

September and November to commemorate the good, the bad and the wild of the formation of the Municipality. A website will be launching this week with events, activities, and history stories at www.muni.org/50.

July 15, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

I'd like to begin by pointing out that I'm joined on the dais by Assembly Intern Martin Karmun. He's been shadowing Assembly leadership this week and I've invited him to sit next to me and to get an up front experience for the meeting tonight.

Coeur D'Alene Firefighter Tragedy

I would like to start with a heartfelt moment of sorrow for once again having to report tragedy in this country, and that is the sabotage and shooting of firefighters near Coeur d' Alene, Idaho. This hits close to home for Alaskans because our firefighters are so important in our community. We count on them to save lives and protect properties. As I speak, hundreds of firefighters are working around the clock, across the state, to keep our communities safe from wildfires and from all manner of trouble. In fact, we saw a big fire on Ingra in my district last week.

It's pretty important that we are able to provide an environment that is safe for our first responders, and that includes our police who are also out there doing this hard work. So, I just wanted to take a moment to recognize the tragedy that occurred.

AO 2025-74 and Decorum at Meetings

Next, I'd like to speak briefly about AO 2025-74 and decorum at our meetings. Over the past few weeks, the Administration, the Assembly and the Community have been engaged in a pretty in depth conversation on camping in public spaces. We had almost 7 hours of testimony on the issue, over 100 people joined us, and I think it is fair to say that our community engaged in a very healthy, respectful debate. In fact, the Clerk was kind of filled with glee over the exercise of democracy that has been occurring in these chambers over the last few weeks.

We had a lot of people packed in Chambers to testify over several days, and we were able to hear from everyone who wanted to be heard, and hundreds also submitted written testimony. Despite the tough subject and strong feelings, for the most part, we were able to keep testimony and debate respectful and professional.

It can be hard for people to voice their thoughts in a big public forum, so the Assembly has been working to make public testimony more approachable. At our Rules meeting

last week, we discussed how to more quickly address audience members who cause disturbances, and what Assembly Members can do to make it more fair and welcoming for people who are testifying. It's always a work in progress, but I am committed, and I believe all of my peers on this dais, are committed to ensuring that everyone in our community who wants to speak can have their voice heard.

Also, after our meeting on Friday, there was a little bit of a tech glitch that took us through Monday morning to get the video recordings up on our website. I would note that the code, the law, requires that we record our meetings, but it does not in fact require that we instantaneously publish them. The reason it takes time is because the video has to be codified and reuploaded into the format that remains permanent. We've found that because we've moved to a high definition camera system, the video file was actually larger than the capacity of the server and the server stopped working. But our IT team, that is doing hard work to keep our meetings running, notified me today that in fact the server has been updated and has ample capacity now. So, I'm privileged to announce that we are able to provide to the public the video recording within hours of the meeting. I'm grateful that our team can get that information up as soon as possible so the public can see what is occurring in our chambers.

Municipal Prosecutor's Office

Next, I want to congratulate the Mayor, Municipal Attorney Eva Gardner, and of course Municipal Prosecutor Dennis Wheeler and everyone who has worked tirelessly over the past year to build back up the Municipal Prosecutor's Office. I hear a lot of concern from folks about public safety and I hear a lot of concerns about lawlessness in this town. The pandemic provided a real challenge because our courts shut down and our Prosecutor's Office thinned out to almost unfunctional. The good news is that our Prosecutor's Office is if not fully staffed, nearly fully staffed and functioning very well at this time. What that means is that where previous reporting had been that the Municipality and the State were not prosecuting DUIs, OUIs, and assaults even, those days are over and the reality now is that our prosecution system is working and people will be brought to justice through the Municipality. I'm grateful for that functioning again, because without the operation, the city is not going to be as safe and as vibrant a place as it should be.

Community Celebrations and Munification

Finally, I'll wrap up by saying that this was a big month of community celebrations, I want to celebrate our District 2 friends in Chugiak and Eagle River having a successful Bear Paw Festival last weekend.

I also want to share another big event coming up this fall. We're calling it Munification – the 50th anniversary of the unification of the former city and borough governments into the Municipality of Anchorage. The exact date of the anniversary is September 16th and the Municipality and our partners will be hosting events between September and November to commemorate the good, the bad and the wild of the formation of the Municipality. We'll have more to come soon at muni.org/assembly.

June 24, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Assassination and Assassination Attempt on Minnesota Legislators

It is with a heavy heart that I start my remarks this week with reflection on a very dark occurrence in American history that took place a few weeks ago – the assassination of Minnesota State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, and the assassination attempt of Minnesota State Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette.

We in this chamber are no strangers to extreme rhetoric and people who are frankly, quite scary, showing up at your home and acting in ways that are uncivil and unacceptable. We here in the Anchorage community do not stand with assassination or threats of violence.

Camp Abatement

Next, I want to speak about the camp abatement in Mountain View last week. I want to say thank you to the entire municipal infrastructure that stood up in defense of Mountain view. In a case that took far too long to abate – it was a 5 year problem, going back to 2021 – and the people of Mountain View had to pay the price of this city's inability to act. My gratitude to this administration for taking the heavy lift and getting that work done. The neighbors of Mountain View are deeply grateful to this administration.

Navy Week

On a lighter note this week last week we enjoyed Navy Week. We had members of the USS Anchorage, USS Alaska and the USS Ted Stevens pre-commissioning staff here in celebration of our solstice and Fleet Week. It was really amazing to see them here and to participate with them in a variety of activities, including music and the solstice event and a variety of other activities.

Opening of Wild Birch Hotel

I'd also like to celebrate that at the very, very edge of east downtown, a tax abatement policy that was established 12 years ago was implemented with the opening of the Wild Birch Hotel last week. This brings some new energy to the revitalization effort that has been spoken about by the people of Fairview for the last 20 years. It is with gratitude that we celebrate this new business, see hundreds of new people employed in the downtown and see a world-class hotel that in its interim before it became that hotel, provided shelter services for people in need.

Opening of the Equity Center

The mayor and I, and several members of the Assembly had a great opportunity to celebrate Juneteenth with the opening of the Equity Center with the Alaska Black Caucus. It will be a great place in this community to celebrate to educate, to innovate and to build community.

Summer Solstice is here

With the passing of summer solstice last weekend, we are now at the peak of summer and enjoying the longest days. I hope everyone got to do something special this weekend to commemorate the solstice.

Pride Parade

This weekend is the annual Pride Parade and we hope to see you out there when it starts downtown at 11:30am.

June 10, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

June Celebrations

June is a month of celebrations. There's a lot of trouble in the world and a lot of things going wrong in the world, but Anchorage is doing its best and we have a lot to celebrate.

So, Juneteenth kicks off this month and you are all invited. I hope to see you out there as we celebrate the African American history in our community. It's such an interesting time that there are forces out there that would try to make you feel like it is somehow a threat or somehow a negative to be celebrating the diversity in our community, but that is not this community – we are celebrating!

- Also, May 31 was the 20th Year Celebration for Asian American and Pacific Island Heritage Flag Day Month – congratulations on this significant anniversary!
- For the father's in the room, Father's Day is next Sunday
- Solstice weekend is June 20 and there are a number of community events to celebrate
- June 26 is the annual World Refugee Day Celebration at Grow North Farm. If you haven't been to that farm, you should check it out. It is amazing. We will be there celebrating the refugees of the world who are making the world a better place.

- June is Pride Month, with the focus of activities taking place June 23-29 and the big Pride Parade on Saturday, June 28, which the Mayor and members of the Assembly will be marching in.
- And Bear Paw Festival in Eagle River is just around the corner in July.

The season of celebrations is upon us! There are a variety of markets, festivals, open houses and sporting events all month – so I hope you do find a chance to be out there, especially when the sun is shining because winter is coming soon and we need to get outside while we can.

Update from Joint School Board Meeting

Last Friday, the Assembly held our quarterly joint meeting with the Anchorage School Board. I'll leave the report up to the Vice Chair in her committee reports since she chaired that meeting in my absence.

Federation of Community Council's Local Lens Series

Next, I want to point you to the Federation of Community Councils' Local Lens series. It's great opportunity for the members of the public to understand the goings on in the community and the council system. Local Lens webinars invite experts to break down complex topics and let the community ask questions. You can participate live or watch the recordings afterwards.

Past topics have included zoning and building changes that have come before the Assembly and the next one on June 23 is on Neighborhood Resilience and wildfire preparedness. You can find more at communitycouncils.org. And for those of you interested in that topic of wildfire preparedness, AFD held an open house on May 19, the recording can be found on the Anchorage Fire Department's website.

May 20, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Congratulations Graduates!

I'd like to start out by recognizing this is graduation season. This past week, we graduated 17 new cadets into the Anchorage Fire Department into probationary firefighters. So we have new and very excited individuals who are now providing services to our Municipality and getting training in the best fire department in the world. The Anchorage Police Department Academy graduation is next week and it's exciting that we have our first full class a number of years with another full class in coming this fall, which is helping us to get back to a position where we have full staff in both these critical public safety and EMS branches. One of last year's Assembly priorities was to develop the municipal workforce, so it's great to see all of our departments starting to fill

back up with staff over the past year. Having strong classes of first responders coming to work in our fire and police departments is important because public safety and emergency services are high priority in our community and success depends on having for a long train staff to carry out their missions.

It's also high school and college graduation season. The Anchorage School District is graduating this month 2,950 seniors from the high schools in the Municipality. And this spring, UAA graduated more than 950 students. So with that, to all of those individuals who are starting their careers or finishing their high school experience and their college expenses, I want to say congratulations and thank you for the commitments he'll be making to our community.

Happy Municipal Clerks' Week!

Also last week was Municipal Clerks' Week. We had a large number of recognition resolutions at our last meeting and we weren't able to fully recognize one important group. I'd like to do that now. Municipal Clerks' Week took place earlier in May. The Assembly couldn't do our work without having an extremely competent and well-organized Clerk's Office. From supporting our meetings to manage and public records and overseeing elections, their work ensures that the work of this body function smoothly. So thank you to our Clerk's Office.

Youth Member Application Now Open

Speaking of graduates, we had our youth members graduate off of our Assembly's body at our last meeting. And so now we are going to open the solicitation application for new youth representatives. We're recruiting openly right now. The application could be found at www.muni.org/assembly. The seats are open to youth ages 16 to 19 and applications are due next week on May 31st.

Memorial Day

Also, as the Mayor noted, Memorial Day is coming right up. And as we look forward to the long weekend, I'd like to remind our community of the annual Memorial Day event, "Anchorage Remembers," to be held at the Veterans Memorial on the Delaney Park Strip at 09:30AM on Memorial Day. I hope to see many of you there to honor the brave service members have given their lives in defense of our country.

Administrative Matters

Also tonight, members will note that you've received committee assignments on your desk, but mainly that's committee leadership. I think it's going to take a little bit of time for membership to kind of fill out into the committees and for new members to figure out where they want to serve. So this list is not set-in-stone, it's just so that the committees can have their leadership to begin organizing recruiting members and starting to do their business as well.

Tonight, item number 18 is a standing item on our agenda and its executive session. The Municipal Department of Law has requested that we consider the question of shall we convene into executive session over the dinner hour to provide us a briefing on

certain legal matters. So as we conclude the consent agenda, we will begin a conversation about that.

May 6, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Tonight's Agenda

Tonight, I'd like to give a warm welcome to all the new members who are here for their first full meeting of the Anchorage Assembly. I'd like to specifically welcome Member Brawley in her first full meeting as Vice Chair.

To the new members, I will be going slow tonight, and I'll do my best to help you along, as will your neighbors on the dais, to ensure that you are up to speed on procedures. I know it probably won't be a real issue, but getting up to speed can be really challenging, so if you're unsure of anything, you can always ask point of information from me or talk to your neighbor to get clarification. We'll just work through it as we go. And it won't be long before everybody's up to speed.

Visit with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary

This last week I took a very rapid trip to Washington, D.C., with a delegation from Anchorage and statewide that Senator Sullivan organized – the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness, the Balance of State Coalition, the Anchorage Affordable Housing and Land Trust and Cook for Housing Authority – to meet with HUD Secretary Scott Turner.

It was really great meeting. The highlight of the visit was that we're working on figuring out how to address the HUD funding formula, because the HUD funding formula disadvantages small states and Alaska very dramatically. It doesn't reward performance of your local continuum of cares, even though ours in Alaska are very successful in moving people from camps to housing. We have a 90% success rate of moving people out, but we have this continuous flow into the system which proves to be a challenging. And the formula doesn't award funds based on the severity of the issues, it's just a strict overall population-based formula.

And that issue has really disadvantaged us. The City of Houston receives funding at a level of approximately \$23,000 per homeless individuals that they support, and we receive less than \$2,000 per individual. So, it's no question why we continue to face what feels like an insurmountable challenge when the funding that should be supporting communities to address the specific challenge of homelessness is just a general welfare program for large cities and that's not an acceptable alternative.

The HUD secretary did make the commitment work really closely and to help work with us to set up a pilot program that will ensure that we don't have to wait many years to see a change. If we can come up with proposal and get it back to the secretary, they will work with us. The Secretary's staff reached out to me today, which was more than any outreach and from the previous secretaries, so I'm very and heartened that we're going to start to see some response out of D.C. Hopefully, before I leave this body.

Youth Representative Application

Also, for young members of the public, with the departure of our three youth members at the last meeting, we are now recruiting for next year's class. The application is now open and can be found at muni.org/assembly. The seats are open for youth ages 16-19 and applications are due May 31. So please get your applications in.

Seasonal Updates

As we approach summer, several municipal departments have some reminders:

- Solid Waste Services wants us all to be "Bear Aware" and secure our trash out of reach of bears and other wildlife, so we can ensure that our wildlife and community can continue to co-exist. They have [a great video with tips](#) (and I don't mind the fact that part of it was filmed in my neighborhood)
- Also, as we approach wildfire season, our Fire Department has been busy helping us all prepare to be safe. They are hosting a Town Hall here at Loussac Library on Monday, May 19 at 6:30pm and there is a community survey available and lots of tips on wildfire safety [on their website](#).

Now is the time for us all to prepare for a safe and fun summer.

City Nerd Nite

Finally, we're back with another [City Nerd Night](#) next Thursday, May 15. This time, the topic is "Hear Me Out" at King Street Brewing from 6-8pm. Locals have 7 minutes to talk about a topic they are passionate about and we hope to see you there.

April 22, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Tonight's Agenda

Tonight, we have a quite a packed agenda and all manner of good things to happen. We've had a good rhythm of working through items at recent meetings, so I hope we're able to keep up that pace tonight. We plan to take up the budget as close to 6pm as possible and all the public hearing items will flow from there. Shortly, you'll hear from the

Vice Chair with a motion to change the order of the day to get through the items the outgoing members are interested in participating in before we take up the election certification sometime between 8 or 8:30pm. So, from an organizational perspective, we ask for some flexibility so we can get through everything in the order that is needed so that we can meet as many people's needs as possible for outgoing members, as we welcome our new members and their families to celebrate the certification and the swearing in.

Youth Representatives

Tonight is the last meeting for our three fantastic youth representatives Kynnedi Grady, Mika Bell and Bruno Bookman, who have all served admirably and have been great assets to this body.

We had a great tour last week to meet with the administration up in the Mayor's office, as well as our Fire Department, Police Department and Health Department. In the future as this program continues to evolve, we're going to do that part earlier and make sure that the Youth Reps coming forward have an opportunity also visit other municipal departments. I anticipate that there will be a few legislative items coming forward that the youth reps have worked on in the near future on how to shape the program in the future.

To the Youth Reps, we will greatly miss you. Thank you for all the work you've done. And hopefully we see you here in Chambers, and maybe some of you up here on the dais, in the future. We are going to begin recruiting for Youth Representative for 2025-26 school year, so keep your eye out for that on the Assembly web page for announcements from the Associate Ombudsman who has been stewarding of this program.

Passing of Former Assembly Member Tim Steele

I would also like to honor Tim Steele and note that the Assembly plans to take up some honoree action for him, but likely not until June to provide the family an opportunity to grieve, and then come forward to receive an honor for his service to this Municipality.

Port of Alaska

Next, I'd like to briefly talk about the Port of Alaska. This last week we took some momentous steps on the modernization of our Port. It's been years in the making and we arrived at a very substantial milestone last week with the approval of construction for Terminal one, as well as the financial arrangements to make it feasible.

That said, our work is not done. We as a body have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure construction is done in a manner that meets the financial goals the Municipality has set out. We'll continue to have conversations about how we might structure future oversight activities to ensure that the Port construction is delivered to meet the community's future needs. And while we share great excitement for this project, it's something that hopefully people in our community will never notice as the goal all along has been consistent and affordable delivery of goods without interruption through the Port. This is

critical because a 2024 economic study found that service disruptions of the Port would exceed 39 million dollars per week and economic damage to Alaska. With the work last week, we're one step closer to avoiding that potential future.

I want to congratulate everybody who worked on this project. I especially want to recognize both Municipal Manager Wendt Pearson and Chief Administrative Officer Falsey for your exceptional work in the last year to get this project before us. I also want to thank my colleague, friend and partner in this work, Assembly Vice Chair Meg Zaletel. Thank you for your leadership on this issue with this body.

Last Meeting for Outgoing Members.

This is it – the last meeting for our outgoing members. Thank you all for your service. I'll save my remarks for later on when we get to certification, but I do want to again acknowledge my gratitude to the Vice Chair for her service and leadership, as well as to members Sulte, Bronga and Littlefield who stepped up and have led the city over the last three years and more, and also to all the family members of outgoing Assembly Members who made all the sacrifices needed for your family member to participate in this very challenging and amazing work. That makes our community a better place. And to those new members coming in this week, we thank you and your families for your sacrifice that has just begun.

April 8, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Tonight's Agenda

Tonight, we have a very long agenda and the culmination of some big projects that members have been working on for a long time. As this current Assembly body comes to a conclusion on April 22, lots will need to be taken care of. Tonight, Members should note any items that need to be done before the end of our business on April 22 and if we don't get through it all tonight or at the special meeting on April 16th, there may be a need for a Friday meeting. If we work efficiently tonight, we can hopefully avoid that need, but tentatively, a special meeting is scheduled for April 16th, but if we don't get it all done then, we may need to extend that meeting to Friday.

Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Presentation

Yesterday afternoon, I presented the Assembly's annual Progress Report to the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and I shared our accomplishments from 2024 and our plans for the upcoming year. Our 2024 highlights include housing, Port of Alaska modernization, getting the Mobile Crisis Team to 24/7 service, and helping neighbors solve problems that vex them in their daily lives. In the year ahead, we'll be working on housing— cutting red tape, funding rental assistance and hotel conversions, tax

incentives to get the housing we need. We'll also work on Eklutna River restoration, fixing HUD issues and on and on.

The year ahead will be an interesting challenge as we continue to face uncertainty and chaos coming out of Washington. Thankfully the local government is strong and we will continue to be a steady hand on the till.

Elections

Last week, we concluded another successful Vote at Home operation. All ballots have been cast that are legally allowed to be counted and all things are going smoothly in the process. We maintained a high standard that Anchorage elections demands for its elections for transparency and access. Turnout was steady for an Assembly-year election – we're expecting about 62,000 ballots cast and 60 to 65 thousand ballots is average for a vote at home election with Assembly races.

The voters approved of all but two of the bonds and levies, which shows that Anchorage still believes in itself and wants to invest in making our community a better place to live. Certification and swearing in of new members is on 4/22, which is our next regular meeting. It will probably happen later in the evening after we take care of the budget and other matters.

Education Funding

Last week, the Assembly held a special meeting to approve the School District's Budget and I've said it before, but it was incredibly sobering to hear just how bad the school district's financial challenges are in light of years and years of reduced state funding. If the State isn't able to deliver adequate funding to our schools, we are going to see 558 positions eliminated next month, and that includes librarians, library assistants, nurses, counselors and principals, and cuts to activities, programs and electives like IGNITE, Special Education, Immersion, Summer School and Battle of the Books and the West High theatre program. All of this is on top of the need for higher classroom sizes that are being forced on our community.

The Assembly passed the budget, but this is really in the hands of the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to fix this enduring problem and get our schools back on track.

March 18, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

National League of Cities Conference

Last week, several of us attended the National League of Cities Congressional Conference in Washington D.C. and held meetings with the members of the Alaska delegation to Congress. I'll leave it to Member Brawley to address that topic in her committee report.

Elections

Last week, ballot packages were mailed to all qualified Anchorage Voters for the April 1, 2025 Regular Municipal Election.

If you haven't yet received your ballot, please call the Voter Hotline – that's 907-243-VOTE – to order a replacement ballot. The Accessible Voting Centers open next week if you would like to vote in person.

As I've said before, Anchorage has one of the best voting systems in the country and we can all be really proud of the transparency, accessibility and security of Anchorage elections. In the past year, the Election Team has added equipment to make it easier for people with disabilities to vote and has advised the State Legislature on ways the state can improve their elections.

To learn more about our local election, go to www.muni.org/elections.

Education Funding

Tonight, the Assembly will take up the hearing on the Anchorage School District budget. We have through April 3rd to pass the budget. As I mentioned last week, when it comes to this year's school budget, the Assembly's power is very limited.

Essentially, we can vote to approve the budget, approve it with reductions, or not approve it at all. If we don't approve the budget at our next meeting, it will go into effect anyway as an operation of code. The Alaska Constitution sets the maximum local contribution, and the Municipality invests the maximum allowed annually, so there's no way for us to increase the budget.

However, the Assembly has been hearing from a lot of people who have voiced their concerns and unhappiness with the School District's proposed budget. This budget is shocking and devastating to our community. It will be devastating if you participate in charter schools, if you participate in after school activities, if you participate in sports.

For those of you who are concerned about this, I encourage you to join the Assembly in contacting your legislators and the Governor and to keep the heat on them to increase school funding.

Special Assembly Meeting

Finally, I want to give everyone an early forewarning that we may have a need to add a special meeting to the Assembly calendar in the next few weeks. If we are not able to hold a vote on the School District budget tonight, we will hold a special meeting in the next few weeks, likely April 2nd, the last day we have statutorily to act on it. Additionally,

there are several big items that our current body has been working on that might not be dispensed with before the April 22nd meeting, so there could potentially be a second special meeting to wrap up projects.

March 4, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

It's a rare occurrence to have two Assembly Meetings scheduled on back-to-back Tuesdays, and I appreciate everyone's accommodating this schedule as we look forward to spring break.

Elections

Here in Anchorage, spring break is synonymous with our local elections season. This week, the MOA Elections Team is getting ready to receive tens of thousands of ballots for the April 1, 2025 Regular Municipal Election.

Ballot packages will be sent to all qualified Anchorage Voters next week on March 11 and the last day of voting is Tuesday, April 1. Secure drop boxes open on March 12 and Anchorage Vote Centers will open on March 25.

It's a big election with six Assembly seats, two school board seats, and many service area board seats on the ballot, as well as nine bond propositions, two levies and four service area propositions.

As I've said before, Anchorage has one of the best voting systems in the country and we can all be really proud of the transparency, accessibility and security of Anchorage elections. In the past year, the Election Team has added equipment to make it easier for people with disabilities to vote and has advised the State Legislature on ways the state can improve their elections.

Don't forget to sign up for Ballot Tracks – you can get text, email, or voicemail notifications when your ballot package is mailed out, when it is received by USPS if returning by mail, when it arrives at the Election Center, and if your ballot package is counted or if it requires curing.

To learn more about the elections and sign up for Ballot Tracks, go to muni.org/elections.

Anchorage School District Budget

Next, we have the introduction of the Anchorage School District budget tonight, which will be heard at our next meeting when the Assembly will take up the School District's

budget for approval. We've received comments from people in our community who are justifiably concerned about school funding. Our schools have been underfunded for a decade and our education system is truly suffering.

However, when it comes to this year's school budget, the Assembly's power is very limited. Essentially, we can vote to approve the budget, approve it with reductions, or not approve it at all. If we don't approve the budget at our next meeting, it will go into effect anyway as an operation of code.

As to increasing the budget, the Alaska Constitution sets the maximum local contribution, so the state caps the amount of funding local governments can contribute to school districts and the Municipality has invested the maximum allowed amount every year I've been on the body.

I say all of this to let school supporters know that while the Assembly cannot increase the school budget, we have been advocating to the Legislature for increased funding for many years, including it as a priority in our legislative program and issuing resolutions of support to the legislature. While we want to continue to hear from you on your concern for school funding, I also urge you to take this to the people who have the power on this issue – your legislators and especially the Governor.

Executive Appointments

Tonight, the body will consider confirming three Mayoral appointments for top leadership positions in the Municipality. We held confirmation hearings for those candidates on Friday, and you can watch the recordings on the MOA Meetings YouTube channel.

To the appointees, thank you for your time on Friday and thank you to you and your families for being here tonight. I intend to ask my colleagues to change the order of the day to take up the confirmations – items 10 D 1 thru 4 – as early in the meeting as possible.

February 25, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Elections

I want to start with a reminder that the last day to register or update your voter registration for the upcoming municipal elections is this Sunday, March 2nd. You can register to vote by visiting the State of Alaska Division of Election online.

Yesterday, February 24, 2025, 1,385 ballot packages were mailed to military and

overseas voters. On March 11, Municipal Elections will send out 204,493 ballot packages to all qualified Anchorage Voters. The last day of voting is Tuesday, April 1, with voting ending at 8:00 p.m. This election includes six Assembly seats, two school board seats, and many service area board seats, as well as nine bond propositions, two levies and four service area propositions.

Anchorage has one of the best voting systems in the country and we can all be really proud of the transparency, accessibility and security of Anchorage elections. In the past year, the Election Team has added equipment to make it easier for people with disabilities to vote and has advised the State Legislature on ways the state can improve their elections.

One of the tools Anchorage elections use to increase transparency and accessibility is Ballot Tracks. It's an amazing tool where you can get text, email, or voicemail notifications when your ballot package is mailed out, when it is received by USPS if returning by mail, when it arrives at the Election Center, and if your ballot package is counted or if it requires curing.

You can register to vote by visiting the State of Alaska Division of Election online and you can learn more about the elections and sign up for Ballot Tracks at muni.org/elections.

Federal Workers

Next, I want to extend my support to the federal workers who have lost their jobs in recent weeks. From working with municipal employees all these years, I know that public sector workers care deeply about their communities and often sacrifice opportunities for higher pay and advancement to do the important work of providing critical services to our communities.

The loss of this many jobs is a huge blow to the fabric of our community, our public health and safety, and our local economy. We now have hundreds of workers who will struggle to pay their rent and mortgages and will have less disposable income to spend on local businesses. And now we have critical jobs to deliver federal services, fight forest fires, and protect our community that will go unfilled. My heart goes out to those workers and their families during this difficult time.

For those workers who find themselves unemployed and have a passion for hard work and community service, I encourage you to visit muni.org to see the jobs we have open at the Municipality. We have a number of job openings and would welcome the wealth of experience and knowledge that former federal employees would bring to the job.

Assembly Annual Workplan

Tonight, we have before us the Assembly's Annual Workplan that the Assembly has put together in our recent Rules Committee meetings. Each year we go through this process to help us focus our workload on the most pressing issues for our community.

And while any member may introduce their own legislation at any time, and new issues come up throughout the year, you will see the majority of our work this year focused on the Assembly's 2025 priorities, which are: Housing Action; Energy, Infrastructure and Transportation; Public Health, Safety and Quality of Life; and Good Government.

An important note is that the project list in the workplan is a compilation of individual member priority projects and does not necessarily represent the priorities of all Assembly Members. By adopting the workplan, Members are committing to support their colleagues' pursuit of their priorities, but are not endorsing each individual project.

While the Members on this body have very different viewpoints and political backgrounds, we have found that by coming together to develop a workplan, we can find opportunities for collaboration in the areas that are most important to our community. Not every item in this plan will make it to adoption, but by creating a method for everyone's ideas to come forward, we enable this body to be more collaborative, more productive and more responsive to community needs.

The plan and more information on the Assembly's priorities and current projects can be found at muni.org/assembly.

Nerd Nite

Last week, the Assembly held another City Nerd Nite. This time it was on the topic of "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" in collaboration with Anchorage Design Week and featured seven locals talking about their neighborhood-related work. City Nerd Nites are a great way to make new connections, meet new people and learn more about local government and our community.

If you missed it, you can watch the 7-minute presentations on the MOA Meetings YouTube page.

February 11, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

Juneau Visit

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to go to Juneau to advocate for Anchorage's legislative priorities, alongside Members Brawley and Johnson, and the Mayor and her team.

Our meetings with legislators went well and there is a lot of shared interest in the Municipality's priorities of:

- Adequate funding of snow removal on state roads
- Securing our energy future
- Stabilizing funding for public schools
- Restoring defined benefit pensions for public employees

We also had great conversations about building more housing, improving state elections, improving the state's mental health care system and addressing the threat of wildfires. I'm looking forward to working with the Anchorage delegation to the legislature over the coming session. For more information about what we're focused on this legislative session, visit www.muni.org/akleg.

Public Discourse

Next, as we grapple with the chaos and division coming out of our federal government, I'm heartened by the [findings of a recent study](#). An organization called More in Common recently released survey findings that indicate Americans want to foster a climate of understanding. Here's what stood out to me:

- Most Americans want to connect with neighbors, even if they supported different candidates.
- Most (61%) say they want their political perspectives understood by those different than them.
- 3 in 4 Americans (75%) are open to listening to those with different political views.

I think you can agree that these findings reflect what I see in Anchorage. While there is a national narrative that we are a country divided, when I look at our own community, and our municipal government, I see people putting their political differences aside to work for the common good.

The big issues we are grappling with, like housing scarcity, energy security, and affordable delivery of our goods through the Port are not Democratic or Republican issues, they are community issues. I'm proud to see our community coming together to develop creative solutions to our shared problems and I hope we can continue the spirit of cooperation no matter what happens on the federal level.

January 21, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

Good evening everyone and welcome to our regular business meeting.

MLK Weekend

Yesterday I presented the Assembly Resolution recognizing Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to the Alaska Black Caucus at the Third Annual MLK Cultural Solidarity Celebration. As I was standing in the room, surrounded by people of all walks of life, I had the profound sense that, despite all that divides our country, Anchorage is coming together.

We each have a choice to build lasting and meaningful relationships, to respect and appreciate our neighbors, and to work together toward Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a beloved community. While everything happening on the national stage feels out of reach, this community is in our hands.

Which is why it's important to keep local government accessible to everyone who lives here.

Assembly Meetings in High Definition / Cancellation of GCI's Yukon TV

To that end, we have some big changes coming up for public municipal meetings held in the Assembly Chambers, beginning February 11.

After more than 40 years of recording in standard definition, municipal meetings in the Assembly Chambers will now be in high definition, providing a clearer view into the work of the Assembly and the boards that meet in Chambers. This investment reflects our commitment to transparency and accessibility, ensuring the public can engage with their local government with 21st Century technology.

Additionally, due to GCI's discontinuation of Yukon TV, the Municipality of Anchorage will no longer broadcast on Channel 9 after February 11. We encourage everyone to tune in by subscribing to the MOA Meetings YouTube Channel at youtube.com/@moameetings. This platform offers a convenient and user-friendly way to view live and archived municipal meetings anytime, anywhere.

January 7, 2025

[View the recording](#) of the remarks.

First Meeting

This is the first meeting of the New Year and it's going to be a full agenda. Hopefully, we get through everything tonight, but if we don't, we will continue the meeting tomorrow evening, starting at 6pm, here in Assembly Chambers. I want to make sure we have ample time, so we don't have to rush through really important matters. With that said, my remarks tonight will be short so we can get to the work in front of us.

Assembly Meetings in High Definitions/Cancellation of GCI's Yukon TV

In regard to our meeting broadcasts, we have some big changes coming up for public municipal meetings held in the Assembly Chambers, beginning February 11.

After more than 40 years of recording in standard definition, municipal meetings in the Assembly Chambers will now be in high definition, providing a clearer view into the work of the Assembly and the boards that meet in Chambers. This investment reflects our commitment to transparency and accessibility, ensuring the public can engage with their local government with 21st Century technology.

Additionally, due to GCI's discontinuation of Yukon TV, the Municipality of Anchorage will no longer broadcast on Channel 9 after February 11. We encourage everyone to tune in by subscribing to the MOA Meetings YouTube Channel at youtube.com/@moameetings. This platform offers a convenient and user-friendly way to view live and archived municipal meetings anytime, anywhere.

Martin Luther King Day Free Legal Help

Later this month, on January 20th, there is community event that is near and dear to my heart. It is the Alaska Bar Association's MLK Free Legal Help Day. The event will take place at the Mountain View Boys and Girls Club on Monday, January 20th from 12-4pm, as well as locations across the state. This is where the Alaska Bar Association, Alaska Court System, Alaska Legal Services Corporation and local bar associations offer free legal consultation with volunteer attorneys to confidentially answer questions on Alaska-based civil legal issues for low to moderate income Alaskans attend a first come, first served basis.

The legal system is daunting to most of us, and for those with limited financial resources, it is even harder to access. If you have limited financial resources and are struggling with an issue with your landlord, child support, your place of employment or any other issue that you think may have a legal aspect, I strongly encourage you to attend this event and get the support you need and deserve. And to the attorneys of our community, I thank you for providing this valuable service and if you haven't signed up to help, contact the Bar Association to see how you can get involved.