

Chair LaFrance Report Archive, 9/13-12/20/2022

Suzanne LaFrance served on the Anchorage Assembly, representing District 6, South Anchorage, Girdwood and Turnagain Arm from 2017-2023. She served as Assembly Chair from July 2021 - April 2023. Read her archival chair reports below.

Chair Report - 12/20/2022

Welcome and thank you for being here tonight – in person or online. I hope you are all staying warm and enjoying the holiday season.

Yesterday, we learned that Ms. Demboski is no longer employed by the Municipality. While Assembly members didn't always agree with Ms. Demboski, we can probably all agree that she has always been a champion of public safety and a stickler for the rules. Thank you to Ms. Demboski for her service to our community. I will note that I have been made aware of pending media reports with additional information about the former municipal manager's departure; Assembly leadership's focus remains on facts.

Snowplowing

An ongoing "thank you" to the municipal operators who have been working nonstop to clear the roads and sidewalks. There is still much work to do. Mr. Mayor – the Assembly stands by ready to help. We have shown that we want to help; when we approved the budget, it included a proactive amendment from Ms. Quinn-Davidson and Mr. Dunbar that increased the funding for snow removal. However, our ability to help is limited if we're not informed of the issues facing the municipality, or if the administration doesn't bring forward proposals. We learned last week that operators are available, but the municipality's wages are too low to be competitive. Let us know how we can help you address the problem of attracting and retaining workers, especially operators.

Election Integrity

I want to draw attention to Item 10.B.9 before us on the agenda tonight, a resolution detailing the Municipal Elections Team's thorough response to the Mayor's intensive records request and request for a forensic audit of the 2022 regular election. The Elections Team responded to the records request promptly and posted the requested documents on the Elections website for public review, with additional items being posted throughout the summer and fall. Our Elections team has a thorough system of checks and balances to test election accuracy, including a pre-election Logic and Accuracy Testing audit that was completed in March 2022 and a post-election Risk Limiting audit that was completed in May 2022, both of which are recommended best practices for elections.

Anchorage has one of the strongest vote at home systems in the country and was recognized by the Sightline Institute for its handling of elections during the pandemic. Our elections are incredibly accessible, transparent and accurate, and our elections team works throughout the year with the community and election observers to address concerns and make continuous improvements to the system.

Homelessness

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Item 10.B.7 is a resolution before Assembly to increase the capacity of the Sullivan Arena. Before we get there, I want to acknowledge that our community is in a very difficult situation right now – there are many vulnerable people in our community who need shelter, especially in these bitter cold temperatures. We also continue to hear from many residents in the area that the shelter continues to cause problems for the neighborhood. Our community is committed to helping our neighbors, and the Assembly is eager to work on this issue, but we can't take action if we don't have accurate and timely information to make decisions. This item came to the Assembly at the last meeting without any advanced notice or explanation from the mayor; it was not moved by the mayor and no action was taken at that time.

I urge the Mayor to bring solutions to the Assembly, such as opening the Golden Lion for housing or bringing forth an updated navigation center proposal. After the navigation center was sidelined due to an illegal purchasing contract and ballooning construction estimates, we haven't heard any news on this project. While the navigation center wouldn't have been online in time to deal with our current situation, it is still an idea that many on the Assembly would likely consider pursuing.

For those of you in the public who want to do something to help, we learned today that Beans Café will begin delivery of meals to the people who are staying in the warming area, but they need additional funds to make this happen. If you would like to donate, you can visit donate.beanscafe.org/.

S1 Version of the Holtan Hills Land Disposal

Later tonight, there will be a new version of the Holtan Hills Land Disposal put forward by Member Zaletel, which will be labeled AO 2022-103(S-1). The document is available on the Assembly's Housing page, via [a link on our homepage](#). This item is scheduled to be back before the Assembly at the meeting of January 10 and there will be a worksession in Girdwood on Friday, January 6 from 5-7 pm. Ms. Zaletel is introducing the S-1 version tonight to give the community adequate time over the next month to review the changes.

Chair Report - 12/6/2022

Polynesian Association Gala

This weekend I was pleased to attend the very first Pacific Island Community Gala, hosted by the Polynesian Association of Alaska. There was lots of wonderful food and cultural entertainment. Students were awarded scholarships and individuals and groups were acknowledged for their community service and business contributions. Congratulations to all the awardees and to the organizers of this successful and fun

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event. I want to acknowledge the contributions of Pacific Islanders in our community. I look forward to next year's event!

Alaska Municipal League

Welcome to the delegates who have travelled from all over Alaska to attend the 2022 Annual Local Government Conference, held by the Alaska Municipal League this week at the Dena'ina Center. We have a resolution later on the agenda acknowledging this important event, which not only results in an economic boost to Anchorage but offers an opportunity to learn more about issues facing local governments in Alaska. I hope that Assembly members will take advantage of this opportunity.

Municipal Budget

With tonight's final vote on the Mayor's budget vetoes, we will complete the 2023 Municipal Budget tonight. Thank you to the Budget and Finance co-chairs, Ms. Quinn-Davidson and Mr. Dunbar for their tremendous work and especially for coordinating the omnibus amendment that was before the Assembly at our last meeting. The Assembly and Administration engaged in a very open, collaborative process to deliver a balanced budget to the people of Anchorage that we can all be proud of. We are very fortunate that the Municipality is in sound financial condition and has the resources to maintain the services and programs that our community has come to expect. To learn more about the budget, go to www.muni.org/assembly.

Title 28 Elections Updates

Later tonight the Assembly will take up item 13A, AO 2022-98 changes to Title 28 elections. Annually, the elections team together with Assembly counsel reviews Title 28 and suggests updates. The Elections team started this process in August 2022 after the regular and special elections. The proposed amendments were presented and discussed at the Ethics and Election Committee meeting on Sept 28 and the Election Commission meeting on October 7. AO 2022-98 and AR 2022-328 containing the proposed amendments were introduced to the Assembly on October 25. The ordinance and resolution were posted on the Elections website on November 10 where they have remained since. The Elections team notified all registered observers where they could find the ordinance and resolution and all of the related Assembly worksessions, meetings and opportunities for public input and comments. The Elections team then presented the proposed amendments at an Assembly worksession on November 18. Because of the importance of elections, the Assembly held a public hearing on the proposed amendments on November 22 and continued that public hearing to tonight, December 6, so there's still an opportunity to testify on this item.

Housing Crisis

The Holtan Hills project in Girdwood has brought the attainable housing crisis to the forefront and I wanted to reiterate the Assembly's commitment to developing more

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housing in the municipality, especially housing that is affordable to community members from a broad range of economic backgrounds. Specifically, at our annual retreat in September, the Assembly devoted a whole day to listening to housing experts and formulating solutions. Some of the solutions are already working through the Assembly process and you will be seeing these issues a lot on future worksession and meeting agendas. Later this month, Assembly leadership plans to introduce a resolution to affirm the Assembly's commitment to housing, which we will discuss with members at this week's Rules committee.

The Importance of Respectful Dialogue

Lastly, I want to affirm the importance of civil dialogue, especially when we're dealing with topics that generate controversy. A lot of the issues that come before the Assembly deeply affect our daily lives and it's very easy to get caught up in the heat of the moment and say hurtful or accusatory things. But we must all remember that we are part of the same community and the person on the opposite side of an issue today might be the ally on another issue tomorrow. I encourage everyone participating in the Assembly and local government process to focus on the issues and be respectful of each other. You never know who's going to drive by when you're stuck on the side of the road in a snowstorm when you need help from a neighbor.

Chair Report - 11/22/2022

It's been an exciting few weeks for UAA sports. The women's volleyball team won their conference championship and moved on to play in the NCAA championships, and the women's basketball team won the Great Alaska Shootout, the first to be held since 2017. I congratulate both those teams for a job well done and I also want to extend an invitation to all female athletes and anyone who has benefitted from women's increased participation in sports to the Assembly meeting on December 6 where we will recognize the 50th Anniversary of Title 9.

Budget

The 2023 municipal budget is on the agenda tonight for Assembly approval. The municipal budget is a reflection of the values, vision and priorities of our community, so it's important that we develop a budget that our community can be proud of. At our recent budget worksession, Assembly Members brought forward modest and thoughtful amendment proposals to improve snow plowing, increase public safety resources and improve the quality of life in Anchorage. Those proposals have been crafted into an Omnibus amendment package and I look forward to reviewing that proposal later tonight.

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With that, I want to acknowledge the hard work of the Budget and Finance Co-Chairs, Ms. Quinn-Davidson and Mr. Dunbar, and the Assembly's budget analyst Desirea Camacho. They have worked tirelessly for months to review the submitted budget and gather the members' amendments to help ensure a transparent and smooth process to create a budget that meets the expectations of our community.

To learn more about the budget process, [click here](#).

Thanksgiving and Native American and Alaska Native Heritage Day

We have two holidays coming up this week. I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving this Thursday and I hope you get quality time with your loved ones. Also, Friday is Native American and Alaska Native Heritage Day where we honor and recognize Indigenous peoples as the first people of this nation and celebrate both their cultural heritage and integral importance to our past, our present, and our future.

Shooting at Colorado LGBTQ Establishment

And finally, on a more somber note... There was another mass shooting in America this week. This time it happened at Club Q, an LGBTQ establishment in Colorado Springs on the Transgender Day of Remembrance. The Colorado Springs Police Department identified the five victims as:

- Raymond Green Vance (he/him)
- Kelly Loving (she/her)
- Daniel Aston (he/him)
- Derrick Rump (he/him)
- Ashley Paugh (she/ her)

Officials have named the "heroes" who halted the attack as Richard Fierro and Thomas James. More details will be forthcoming soon. "One of the drag performers was walking by and Fierro told her kick him," he said. "And she took her high heel and stuffed it in his face."

According to a New York Times report written by Dave Phillips, "It was Mr. Fierro's first time at a drag show, and he was digging it. He had spent 15 years in the Army, and now relished his role as a civilian and a father, watching one of his daughter's old high-school friends perform. "These kids want to live that way, want to have a good time, have at it," he said as he described the night. "I'm happy about it because that is what I fought for, so they can do whatever the hell they want."

The long-suppressed instincts of a platoon leader surged back to life. He raced across the room, grabbed the gunman by a handle on the back of his body armor, pulled him to

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the floor and jumped on top of him. Officers rushing into the chaotic scene had spotted a blood-spattered man with a handgun, not knowing if he was a threat. They put him in handcuffs and locked him in the back of a police car for what seemed like more than an hour. He said he screamed and pleaded to be let go so that he could see his family.

Eventually, he was freed. He went to the hospital with his wife and daughter, who had only minor injuries. His friends were there, and are still there, in much more serious condition. They were all alive. But his daughter's boyfriend was nowhere to be found. In the chaos they had lost him. They drove back to the club, searching for him, they circled familiar streets, hoping they would find him walking home. But there was nothing. The family got a call late Sunday from his mother. He had died in the shooting. When Mr. Fierro heard, he said, he held his daughter and cried.

Chair Report - 11/9/2022

Guest report from Vice Chair Christopher Constant. Chair LaFrance was excused for this meeting and Vice Chair Constant chaired the meeting and gave the chair report.

In Memorium

I offer condolences to the family and friends of Bill Sheffield, who passed away on November 4. Mr. Sheffield, a prominent figure in Alaska politics and business, was governor from 1982-86. We honor his service to Alaska and extend heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones.

Elections

As a nation, once again we celebrated a time-honored tradition of going to the polls. Congratulations to Alaskan voters, candidates, volunteers and the State Division of elections for holding a successful election. Voting is one of our most basic fundamental rights in a democracy and it is a true act of civic engagement to participate in the election process. We as Alaskans can be proud that we have safe and secure elections and smooth transitions of power. I thank the staff and volunteers at the Division of Elections for working so hard in the last weeks to administer our elections so that all Alaskans have an opportunity to express their will through their vote.

Budget

Tonight is the final public hearing for the 2023 municipal budget and I thank those of you who are here tonight to testify. The municipal budget affects everyone – from the number of books on the shelves at libraries, playgrounds in our parks, and immunizations provided at health clinics, to the quality of the roads we drive on and the response times of emergency services, there are few things in our daily lives that aren't

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impacted by the municipal budget. There will be a worksession tomorrow at 11:30 at City Hall, Suite 155 to discuss potential budget amendments, and the Assembly will take up deliberations and likely vote on the budget at the November 22 Assembly meeting. You can learn more about the budget or get contact information to email the Assembly with your budget ideas at muni.org/assembly.

Veterans Day

Finally, I want to acknowledge all of the Veterans in our community and thank them for their service. Member Allard and Mayor Bronson, I thank you for your service. Veterans and their families are asked to make great sacrifices for our county and this day is an opportunity for us to thank them for their service and sacrifices. Tonight, we will have a resolution in recognition of our Veterans and every May we do a similar reorganization for Hmong Veterans Day.

Chair Report - 10/25/2022

In Memoria

I offer condolences to the family and friends of Ben Stevens, who passed away on October 13. Mr. Stevens, a prominent figure in Alaska politics, was a former president of the Alaska State Senate who later served in the governor's office. We honor his service to Alaska and extend heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones.

I also offer condolences to the family and friends of Burt Cottle, who passed away last Wednesday. As a former mayor of Wasilla and former police chief and mayor of Valdez, Mr. Cottle was a dedicated public servant and a tremendous advocate for local government. Some of us got to know Burt through the Alaska Municipal League, which was memorable in a very good way. Mr. Cottle, we will miss you.

Alaska Federation of Natives

Congratulations to the Alaska Federation of Natives for what appears to have been a very successful annual convention. It was wonderful to have so many visitors in town last week and I hope everyone was able to attend the craft fair, a session or a performance. The convention is also a big boost to our local economy. Thank you to AFN for choosing Anchorage.

Delegation from Chitose, Japan

It was an honor last week to welcome delegates from Chitose, our Sister City in Japan. Vice Chair Constant, who is part of our delegation, along with Mr. Dunbar (who was

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unable to attend the events due to National Guard service), will be talking more about those events in his report later.

Homelessness

There is an item on the agenda tonight, item 11.E. – AM 496-2022, that pertains to the Navigation Center/Adult Shelter project on Tudor and Elmore. Per Title 7 (7.15.080) of Anchorage Municipal code, this \$4.9M contract amendment for construction requires Assembly approval before it can be awarded. Last month the Administration informed the Assembly that it gave the contractor the greenlight to start construction, even though Assembly approval had not been given, or even requested, which is in violation of Municipal code. At that point the Administration halted the project. However, at the last meeting the Administration erroneously stated that the Assembly had pulled back the funding. This is not true. Let me clarify that the Assembly has not pulled back funding from the navigation center/adult shelter project.

The \$9M is still appropriated. But just because funds are appropriated, i.e., money is set aside for a specific use, that does not mean that the funds can be immediately spent, as the Municipality has local laws that govern how purchases and contracts must be executed.

There is an AIM to be LOTT for the consent agenda that clarifies the Assembly's actions concerning the navigation center/adult shelter project. It also shows how the Administration's claim that if it weren't for the Assembly, the Mayor would have opened his navigation center/adult shelter by now is false. The reason why the mayor's navigation center has not been built yet is because the Administration has yet to come up with a thorough plan to see the project through to completion. As of today, the Assembly is still waiting to see a comprehensive project budget that includes design and construction costs, FFE, permits, and contingencies. We're still waiting for a detailed operating plan and budget, and we've yet to see a total project cost estimate that gives us confidence.

I encourage you all to go to the Assembly's [web page](#) for more information about the Municipality's response to homelessness. The Assembly has set up a "Navigation Center Update" page where we've put all the information we've been able to gather about the project. Thank you to the Assembly's legislative staff, especially Clare Ross, for making this helpful information available.

Congratulations to APD K9s

And lastly, we congratulate APD Officers Lars Tulip and Brandon Otts along with K9 Rylin and K9 Midas for taking first place this weekend among approximately 20 entries for the "Top Patrol Agency" in the Nation at the Desert Dog Police K9 Trial in Scottsdale, Arizona. This is the largest competition specifically designed for Police

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Service Dogs in the country, and this is the first year APD was invited to compete. Anchorage Police Department, with the financial support of Dollars for Dogs, were able to send two K9 teams to Arizona to participate in the K9 trails and we are very proud of their hard work.

Chair Report - 10/11/2022

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Yesterday was Indigenous Peoples' Day, where we celebrate and honor Native American people and commemorate their contributions. I was honored to attend the Placemaking Ceremony at Potter Marsh, which celebrated the history of the area as a place where the Denai'ina people gathered driftwood before the marsh was created in 1917 with the construction of the railroad. The Denai'ina name for the area of Potter Marsh is Hkaditali and it is now commemorated with a place marker which includes information about the region's indigenous history. It features artwork by Athabascan & Paiute artist Melissa Shaginoff. Her metal sculpture encircling the post is inspired by the dentalium bead pattern and the Dena'ina fire bag. Fire bags were used by the Dena'ina to store and transport fire-making materials like tinder and embers; the bag represents living with the land. Our Land Acknowledgement that we do at the beginning of each meeting reminds us that the Denai'ina people have been stewards of this incredible land on which we live, for thousands of years. Indigenous Placemaking is a growing global movement. The Hkaditali marker is the third installation of the place name signs in parks and on trails (the first ones were placed at Chanshtnu Muldoon Park and Westchester Lagoon) and there are 29 more to go. Thanks to all in our community who have worked and continue to work to bring the Indigenous Placemaking project to fruition.

Alaska Federation of Natives

At the October 11 meeting there was a resolution welcoming delegates and attendees to the 2022 Alaska Federation of Natives Convention. The Convention is next week, October 20 to 22 at the Denai'ina Center. We look forward to welcoming all attendees to Anchorage. Thank you to the AFN for choosing to hold this preeminent event here in Anchorage.

Homelessness

There are several items on the agenda that pertain to the Municipality's Emergency Shelter Plan, which is focused on temporarily sheltering individuals experiencing homelessness during cold weather months. Our community's collaborative approach seeks to provide a continuum of services from emergency shelter to housing. Navigation centers are critical for getting individuals aligned with help and support that provides a ladder out of homelessness. At this time, I want to address something that keeps coming up in the discussion surrounding the navigation center/adult shelter on

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Tudor and Elmore that is under construction, which has been paused so the administration can complete its project briefing to the Assembly.

It has been suggested that a 1000-person facility would solve our community's homelessness issue, but a facility of that size is not aligned with the policy the Assembly adopted in 2018 to conform with national best practices of dispersing services for houseless people through smaller facilities. It is also much more expensive to operate shelters than it is to stand up affordable housing. While we recognize the need for emergency shelter, it is important that we don't invest all of our resources in this area at the expense of long-term affordable housing solutions, which not only solve homelessness, but save taxpayers money because they can be largely funded through state and federal programs.

I encourage you to go to the Assembly's [web page](#) for more information about the Municipality's response to homelessness. Thank you to the Assembly's legislative staff for making this helpful information available.

Chair Report - 9/27/2022

Western Alaska

Our thoughts go out this week to our neighbors in Western Alaska who have been impacted so greatly by the catastrophic storm. We can help ensure Western Alaska receives the resources they need to rebuild their communities. The Alaska Community Foundation has set up a disaster recovery fund if you would like to donate to support the recovery work at alaskacf.org

Assembly Meeting Technical Issues

The Assembly branch continues to seek ways to improve public participation in meetings by adding new options for viewing, and expanding options for providing testimony, such as written and phone testimony. Two years ago, the Clerk's office added the YouTube live stream of meetings and updated the Onbase meeting system, microphones and sound system.

Despite these great advances, as with all technology, it isn't perfect and last night there was a network connectivity issue that impacted the quality of the YouTube feed. IT is working to address this issue for the future and our team is working to ensure that a clean recording of that meeting is posted soon. Additionally, last week, when the meeting was recessed and Onbase was paused, the YouTube feed did not immediately restart. I want to stress that the meeting recording was intact and the full recording of that meeting has been posted on our YouTube page.

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Emergency Shelter Plan

At last night's special meeting, the Assembly approved funding to support the elements of the plan put forward by the Emergency Shelter Task Force. Assembly Member Rivera will share more details in his committee report, so I want to take this time to acknowledge and thank everyone for the tremendous work that went into producing this plan.

First, I want to thank the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness for organizing the task force, and thank the organizations and individuals who volunteered hundreds of hours in service to ensuring our neighbors experiencing homelessness will be safe and have shelter this winter. I thank the hundreds of community members who provided testimony and attended public meetings on the topic, and I also want to thank Assembly Members for all of your thoughtful questions and debate on the matter. Finally, I want to give thanks to the Mayor and the municipal staff who will carry out the plan.

The process wasn't easy, but we proved that our community can put politics aside and pull together to look out for each other and our neighbors. As one person testified, helping out people who are vulnerable makes our community stronger, not weaker. It is heartwarming to see how many people in our community really care about each other and the health of our community. I hope you will all continue to stay engaged and help out as we put the plan into action.

Risk Limiting Audit

At a work session last Friday, the Assembly received a report on the Risk Limiting Audit performed on the April 5 Regular Election and the June 21 Special Election. The Risk Limiting Audit showed that the scanning, adjudication, and tabulation system performed as expected and the results of the election reflected the will of the voters.

Post-election audits such as this, where the paper ballots are checked against the results produced by the vote tallying equipment to ensure accuracy, are recommended by election security experts as one method of protecting the integrity of elections. The audits use statistically developed audit techniques that allow selection of a number of ballots to be audited that provide statistical confidence that the tabulation system performed as expected. The audits were publicly noticed and candidates were invited to attend.

This is just another example of the strength of our local election system, and we can all be proud in knowing that our local elections are accessible, transparent and fair.

Library Card Sign-Up Month

Finally, I want to encourage everyone here to sign up for a library card before you leave tonight if you don't already have one. With your card, you can get a book delivered to

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you from any library in Alaska, and you can also get online magazines, movie streaming and e-books through the Library website. And for those parents struggling to help your kids with homework, check out the Library's school resources, which includes live online tutoring sessions on just about every school topic.

Chair Report - 9/13/2022

911 Anniversary

I want to acknowledge that this past Sunday was the twenty-first anniversary of the 911 terrorist attacks. While time has softened the pain for many of us, it is still very raw for the thousands of people who lost loved ones in that horrific event. I want to acknowledge those we lost that day, and their families and loved ones who will never forget them. I also want to acknowledge the heroic first responders and civilians who put their own lives on the line to help their fellow neighbors. Many of those heroes lost their lives in the days and years that followed, and to them and their families, we owe a huge debt of gratitude.

Congresswoman Peltola

A more joyous occasion happened this week and that was the swearing in of Mary Peltola, the first Alaska Native representative in Congress and the first woman to represent Alaska in Congress. My colleague Vice Chair Constant will make some remarks on that shortly, but I wanted to offer personal my congratulations to Representative Peltola.

Housing Worksession at Retreat

Last Friday, the Assembly held our annual retreat and this year, we spent the day focused on looking at affordable housing solutions. I thank the subject matter experts and municipal staff who joined us to help give the Assembly a lay of the land and identify potential solutions to increase safe and affordable housing in our community. I look forward to future discussions and legislation on this topic, and my hope is that this is one of many gatherings of the Assembly, municipal staff and industry to make our community more vibrant and economically sustainable.

Confirmation

Recently there have been questions about the Assembly's role in executive confirmations, so I wanted to take a minute to remind members of the scope of the Assembly's confirmation powers, which are described in Section 5.02 of the Anchorage Municipal Charter. Part "a" of Section 5.02 reads that "The mayor shall appoint all heads of municipal departments, subject to confirmation by the assembly, on the basis of professional qualifications."

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Over time, the Assembly has established several processes to ensure that its members can effectively exercise their confirmation responsibilities. In 1991, AMC 3.30.173 was enacted to require individuals seeking an executive appointment to submit “a municipal employment application form,” which must include “a resume describing relevant education, training and experience.” And in 2019 the Assembly enacted AMC 2.30.095 to require a confirmation hearing for certain mayoral appointees.

The Municipal Charter vests in the Assembly broad discretion to confirm, or refuse to confirm, an executive appointee, which is consistent with generally accepted municipal norms. The leading treatise on municipal law, McQuillin’s Law of Municipal Corporations, states only that an Assembly must in the confirmation process act in good faith and that “No reason need be given to the appointing officer for the refusal to confirm.”

Longstanding practices on state and municipal levels show that confirmation can be withheld by a council for any number of reasons, such as concerns about judgment, temperament, suitability, or simply whether the public would be well served by any appointment.

I have asked Assembly Counsel to prepare a memo on the scope of the Assembly’s confirmation powers, which members will be receiving tonight. I ask that members read this document and use it as a reference for the mayoral appointments that are before us tonight and all future appointments that come before us. Below is a summary statement of that memo:

Our review of the Anchorage Municipal Charter, transcripts of the proceedings of the Commission that produced the Charter, background principals of municipal law, and comparisons to similar state and federal provisions, all support the conclusion that the that the Assembly has broad discretion to confirm, or to refuse to confirm, mayoral appointees. The Anchorage Municipal Charter does not include language limiting the Assembly’s confirmation power. The Anchorage Charter Commission likewise did not discuss any such limits, but rather noted that the confirmation requirement ensures a measure of legislative “control,” and is consistent with the public’s then-surveyed desire for “maximum legislative safeguards.” The leading treatise on municipal law states provides that the background principle of law is only that Assembly members must exercise their confirmation prerogative in “good faith,” but need not provide reasons for refusing to confirm an appointee. State and federal law are similar; the Alaska State legislature and U.S. Senate have virtually unconstrained authority to reject executive appointments. Moreover, while the Assembly likely cannot impose substantive constraints on the mayor’s power to appoint, it has broad latitude to legislate in service of ensuring that its members can effectively exercise their confirmation votes.

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