

CLERK'S OFFICE  
AMENDED AND APPROVED  
Date: 10-21-03

Submitted by: Assemblymembers TESCHE,  
Traini, Whittle, Tremaine, Van Etten, Von  
Gemmingen  
Prepared by: Department of Assembly  
For reading: October 14, 2003

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA  
AO NO. 2003-144 (As Amended)

AN ORDINANCE SUBMITTING A BALLOT PROPOSITION TO QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE  
MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE AT A SPECIAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 25, 2003,  
AUTHORIZING LEVY OF A SPECIAL TAX TO PROVIDE FIRE HYDRANT MAINTENANCE AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE ON AN AREAWIDE BASIS

WHEREAS, the public health, safety, and welfare are affected by fire, earthquakes, floods, and  
other catastrophes, natural and manmade, which cause loss of life, property, and livelihoods, impacting  
the entire community; and

WHEREAS, through existing fire service areas, the Anchorage Fire Department, the Chugiak  
Volunteer Fire Department, and the Girdwood Volunteer Fire Department play primary roles in fire  
suppression and disaster response within their respective jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, fire and disaster, whether natural or manmade, do not respect political or  
governmental boundaries and instead pose a continuing threat to all of the residents of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the cost of operating and maintaining an integrated system of fire hydrants in  
Anchorage is largely borne by the existing Anchorage Fire Service Area even though such activities  
benefit all of the citizens of Anchorage regardless of where they reside.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Anchorage Assembly ordains:

**Section 1:** In addition to any other tax levy authorized by law, a special tax shall be levied on real  
and personal property on an areawide basis for the purpose of providing fire hydrant maintenance and  
infrastructure. This tax is dedicated to and may only be used for the purposes set forth in this section.  
The special tax shall not be levied unless it is authorized by a majority of the qualified voters of the  
Municipality of Anchorage at a special municipal election to be conducted on November 25, 2003.

**Section 2:** A ballot proposition in substantially the following language shall be submitted to the  
qualified voters of the Municipality of Anchorage at a special election to be conducted throughout the  
Municipality of Anchorage on November 25, 2003. The proposition shall read:

**FIRE HYDRANT MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Shall the Municipality of Anchorage levy a special tax on real and personal  
property on an areawide basis for the purpose of providing fire hydrant  
maintenance and infrastructure, ~~fire prevention services, and training for~~  
~~first responders~~ effective January 1, 2004.

| Yes [                      ] No [                      ]

If authorized by the voters, the proceeds of this special tax on real and  
personal property would be dedicated to providing fire hydrant  
maintenance and infrastructure. Voter approval of the special tax would  
generate \$2,900,000 in 2004. For each \$100,000 of assessed taxable  
property, approval of the proposition would result in an annual increase

in taxes of approximately \$1.08 per month (about \$13 per year).

**Section 3:** Anchorage Municipal Code is amended by adding a new section 6.10.121, Fire Hydrant Maintenance and Infrastructure Fund to read as follows:


**6.10.121      Fire Hydrant Maintenance and Infrastructure Fund**

There is hereby established, the Fire Hydrant Maintenance and Infrastructure Fund 605 for the purpose of funding fire hydrant maintenance and infrastructure on an areawide basis. Subject to the Tax Increase Limitations of Section 14.03 of the Home Rule Charter as applicable in subsequent years beginning in 2004, the Assembly may levy a special areawide tax on real and personal property for these purposes and as determined in the annual budget process. All revenues collected from levy of this special tax shall be deposited in Fund 605, and are dedicated to the sole purposes of that Fund.

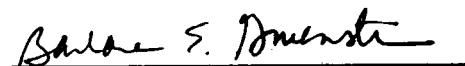
**Section 4.** Sections 1 and 3 of this ordinance shall become effective, upon certification of the results of the November 25, 2003, special municipal election if, but only if, the proposition is approved by a majority of the qualified voters voting on the question and the United States Department of Justice issues its non-objection to the Municipality's pre-clearance request of this enactment, or the sixty days for objection has expired.

**Section 5.** This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and approval.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2003.

  
Chair

ATTEST:

  
Municipal Clerk



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM**  
**NO. AM 802-2003**

**Meeting Date:** October 14, 2003

**From:** Assemblymember Tesche

**Subject:** AO 2003-144 FIRE HYDRANT MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The proper allocation of charges for maintaining and operating fire hydrants in Anchorage has eluded several municipal administrations and remains a source of controversy in city government. The proposed reduction within the Fire Department has once again drawn attention to this issue.

Even though fire hydrants are not evenly distributed throughout the municipality, their presence serves all residents. Wild fires and structure fires occurring in areas without hydrants are fought with fire apparatus that draw water from the hydrant system in neighboring areas. Moreover, residents of outlying areas of Anchorage who travel to more populated areas for employment, recreation, or other business benefit directly from the additional measure of safety afforded by fire hydrants in those areas. For these reasons, I believe the costs of maintaining and operating our fire hydrants should be distributed on an areawide, rather than on a service area basis.

If approved by the voters at a special election on Tuesday, November 25, 2003, the special tax proposed in AO 2003-144 would generate sufficient revenues to pay for the costs of operating and maintaining Anchorage's system of fire hydrants consistent with AWWU's tariff as approved by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska. The estimated cost of this service in 2004 is \$2.9M. Tax levies for this same service in 2005 and in later years would, of course, be subject to the "tax cap" found in Sec. 14.03 of the Charter. A simple majority of voters in the November 25, 2003 election will be sufficient to approve the measure.

Approval of the measure will allow Anchorage to maintain acceptable levels of fire and EMS personnel and to ensure the continued availability of some apparatus otherwise targeted for budget cuts. Its passage will also enable us to more equitably distribute the costs of a service which benefits all residents.

Passage of AO 2003-144 and submission of the ballot proposition to the voters is recommended.

Respectfully submitted,

*Allan Tesche*  
Allan Tesche  
Assemblymember

Ad

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DEPARTMENT NAME

Assembly

THE PERSON THE DOCUMENT WAS ACTUALLY PREPARED BY

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COORDINATED WITH AND REVIEWED BY

INITIALS

DATE

Mayor

Heritage Land Bank

Merrill Field Airport

Municipal Light & Power

Port of Anchorage

Solid Waste Services

Water & Wastewater Utility

Municipal Manager

Cultural & Recreational Services

Employee Relations

Finance, Chief Fiscal Officer

Fire

Health & Human Services

Office of Management and Budget

Management Information Services

Police

Planning, Development & Public Works

Development Services

Facility Management

Planning

Project Management & Engineering

Street Maintenance

Traffic

Public Transportation Department

Purchasing

Municipal Attorney

Municipal Clerk

Other

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Special Instructions/Comments

Intro letter @ Special Meeting