



**Municipality of Anchorage
Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission**

ACTION SUMMARY

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

12:00 Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Hybrid Format

| Commissioners | MOA Staff |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily Creely, Chair • Lee Cruise (<i>Absent</i>) • Tamás Deák, Vice Chair • Maddie Halloran (<i>Excused</i>) • Nic Kinsman • Matt Nemeth * • Samantha Simpson * • Rick Sinnott <p>Virtual *</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel Mckenna-Foster, Long-Range Planning • Michael Nti Ababio, Long-Range Planning |

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Creely called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

A. Establishment of Quorum

Staff determined quorum was established after the roll call.

B. Disclosures

Chair Creely disclosed that her company is under contract with the Municipality for a Planning term contract, and they are likely to be working on the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan* update.

Daniel Mckenna-Foster recommended the commission discuss whether Chair Creely’s disclosure will be an issue following his consultation with the Municipality’s Ethics Commission.

Commissioners discussed the issue and noted:

- The Commission plays an advisory role and does not approve permits.
- Disclosure had been appropriately made.
- Continued participation would benefit the work due to the Chair's expertise.
- Members discussed whether participation would pass a "red-face test" and concluded it would, given the advisory nature of the body.

Commissioner Deák moved to allow Chair Creely to continue to participate in the meeting citing that he does not see any conflict of interest. **Commissioner Kinsman** seconded. Passed unanimously.

Commissioners advised the Chair to disclose again at later meetings.

II. MINUTES

- A. **Commissioner Sinnott** moved to approve. **Commissioner Nemeth** seconded. Unanimous approval.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. **Mr. Mckenna-Foster** introduced Michael Nti Ababio, the new staff support for the Commission. **Commissioners** introduced themselves and talked about their background.

- B. **Mr. Mckenna-Foster** mentioned that the wetland plan needs to be updated and the permitting process. He mentioned that we will try and separate the permitting part of the plan from the plan. Get the map updated to long-term permitting to be done by development service as they hire someone.

The Commission reflected on their past exercise on the Commission and previous projects while discussing the broadness of their mandate.

C. Wetlands Permitting Discussion

Mr. Mckenna-Foster said he is glad to answer any questions about the wetlands permitting process. He added that the next step will be to bring the draft of phase I of the wetlands plan update to the next meeting. He added that the phase I update will be little edits that hinges on the Municipality doing the wetlands permitting process and not the Long-Range Planning Division.

- D. **Commissioner Introductions and Commission Role.** Commissioners seized the opportunity to remind themselves of the role of the commission.

Commissioners introduced themselves and shared professional

backgrounds including wildlife biology, wetlands, coastal processes, flooding, erosion, permitting and design.

Members also discussed the broader role of the commission, noting that historically it has advised on a wide range of topics beyond wetlands including:

- Wildlife issues and human wildlife conflicts
- Park and trail development impacts
- Watershed health
- Stormwater issues
- Natural resource protection across municipal lands

Members emphasized the value of maintaining a broad advisory scope.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. WNRAC Resolution No. 2025-01 for Review and Approval

The Commission commended how the resolution is written. Commissioner Sinnott asked if there was a need for classifying the wetlands into the three categories and if the resolution is going to lump them. The chair added that the classes were there to divide what the wetlands would be with the municipal permit.

Chair opened for discussion.

Commissioner Deák expressed support for the first two items on the resolution. He added that he hopes the plan update will happen with the guidance of the Planning Department and mentioned he is happy to go with it. The chair, now speaking as Emily Creely of DOWL, then added that once the commission knows how they want the update of the Wetlands Plan, she can have one of her colleagues deliver a presentation to the commission.

Discussion emphasized that the resolution serves two purposes, which are (1) clarifying and supporting the current permitting framework and (2) encouraging continued progress toward updating the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*.

Chair Creely suggested some minor textual amendments to the resolution. **Commissioner Deák** moved for the approval of Resolution 2025-01; **Commissioner Sinnott** seconded. The resolution passed with no objection to the additional edits.

B. Discussion on Presentation to the Assembly

The commission discussed whether a commissioner should make an appearance for the presentation of the resolution to the Assembly.

Staff noted that resolutions are typically forwarded into the Assembly packet. They are

also shared with Planning and Zoning Commission, the Administration, and the Assembly leadership and that commissioners may request to testify if desired by contacting the clerk. Staff added that additional forums such as the Assembly's Community and Economic Development Committee could also be considered. The consensus was that the resolution should be submitted formally now, and commissioners could provide verbal support or testimony later if questions or concerns arise.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*none*)

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT

A. Staff Report

Mr. Mckenna-Foster talked about the readiness of the Planning Department to undertake the AWMP updates. He provided additional updates on the Planning newsletter distributed periodically and offered to share the subscription link with commissioners and a recent Assembly passage of code changes related to nonconformities and relocatable dwelling units, noted as general development context.

- B. Commissioners discussed membership and vacancies, noting that there is currently one vacancy and expects an additional vacancy is expected following Commissioner Deák's departure in January 2026. Staff clarified that all appointments are processed through the Mayor's Office. Commissioners were encouraged to recommend strong candidates and encourage them to apply. **Chair Creely** added that the Commission will have to choose a new Vice Chair as well.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Deák moved to adjourn. **Commissioner Kinsman** seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:46 p.m.