

SUNSET AUDIT REPORT

2026-S3

Public Naming Commission

Municipal Clerk's Office

July 17, 2026

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Mayor Suzanne LaFrance
Municipality of Anchorage
-Office of Internal Audit-

July 17, 2026

Honorable Mayor and Members of the Assembly:

I am pleased to present for your review **Sunset Audit Report 2026-S3, Public Naming Commission, Municipal Clerk's Office**. A summary of the report is presented below.

In accordance with Assembly Ordinance Number 2011-64(S-1), Section 14, we have performed a sunset audit of the Public Naming Commission. The objective of this audit was to provide information to the Mayor and Assembly to assist them in determining if the Public Naming Commission should be reauthorized. Our audit included a review of documents pertaining to matters such as meeting agendas, meeting minutes, resolutions, member authorization, and member participation.

Based on our review of documents pertaining to matters such as meeting agendas, meeting minutes, resolutions, member authorization, and member participation, we recommend that the Public Naming Commission be reauthorized.

The Public Naming Commission will sunset on October 14, 2026, unless reauthorized by the Assembly.

Alden P. Thern

Director, Internal Audit



Mayor Suzanne LaFrance
Municipality of Anchorage
-Office of Internal Audit-

July 17, 2026

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Introduction. We have performed a sunset audit of the Public Naming Commission (Commission) as required by Assembly Ordinance Number 2011-64(S-1), Section 14 which states:

“The Municipal Clerk shall notify the Assembly and the Mayor by assembly memorandum at least 120 days prior to the sunset of any board or commission, and an ordinance for reauthorization shall be introduced through the Assembly Chair with the assembly memorandum. The assembly memorandum shall include direction to the Office of Internal Audit to audit the board or commission under Anchorage Municipal Code section 3.20.110 D.3. and 4. The Office of Internal Audit shall report its findings to the Mayor and Assembly at least 60 days, prior to sunset, prior to vote by the Assembly on reauthorization.”

Objective and Scope. The objective of this audit was to provide information to the Mayor and Assembly to assist them in determining if the Commission should be reauthorized. Our audit included a review of documents pertaining to matters such as meeting agendas, meeting minutes, resolutions, member authorization, and member participation.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, except for the requirement of an external quality control review due to budget constraints. We also developed and implemented a required quality management system. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Overall Evaluation. Based on our review of documents pertaining to matters such as meeting agendas, meeting minutes, resolutions, member authorization, and member participation, we recommend that the Commission be reauthorized.

SUNSET FACTORS

The following factors were used in our evaluation and are presented for information to the Mayor and Assembly:

1. Commission Name.

Public Naming Commission

2. Sunset Date.

October 14, 2026

3. The purpose and goal of the Commission.

Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) subsection 1.80.030A., Public naming commission, states "There is established a public naming commission to implement the standards for public naming."

4. Is the Commission fully staffed?

AMC subsections 1.80.030B-C., states "The commission shall consist of nine voting members...To the extent available in the municipality, the commission members shall include:

- 1. A member with a background in history, anthropology, or archaeology.*
- 2. An Alaska Native culture advisor with knowledge of local Indigenous history and culture.*
- 3. A person recommended by the Native Village of Eklutna.*
- 4. A member with expertise in historic preservation.*

5. *A member with experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion work.*
6. *Four community at large members residing in different areas and neighborhoods in the municipality.”*

Audit Finding. Currently, the Commission is staffed with five of the required nine members.

<u>Commission Member</u>	<u>Most Recent Assembly</u>	<u>Term Expiration Date</u>
Jennifer Dahle Harrison (Alaska Native Culture Advisor with Knowledge of Local Indigenous History and Culture)	3-18-25	10-14-27
Darrel W. Hess (At Large)	3-18-25	10-14-26
Cuckoo Gupta (At Large)	3-18-25	10-14-26
Kevin Andre Heller (At Large)	1-27-26	10-14-28
Ayse Gilbert (Expertise in Historic Preservation)	4-28-26	10-14-26
Vacant		
Vacant		
Vacant		
Vacant		

Source: Assembly Memorandums

5. Are the terms of the Commission members current?

AMC section 4.05.040, Terms, states “Except as otherwise specified in this Code, the regular term of each member of a board or commission is three years commencing on October 15 of the year in which appointed and ending three years thereafter on October 14, provided however, to avoid a vacancy until new appointments can be made and confirmed, an appointed member's term is extended until a new appointment is confirmed or a maximum of 120 days which ever occurs first. The terms of initial or subsequent appointments to a board or commission shall be

staggered so that, as nearly as possible, a pro rata number of its members shall be appointed each year of the established regular term of office.”

Audit Finding. The terms for all Commission members are current.

6. Were positions deemed vacant after the maximum number of absences?

AMC subsection 4.05.060A., Attendance requirements; vacancies, states “The office of a member of a board or commission member shall become vacant if the member:

- 1. Ceases to meet the qualifications prescribed for the office;*
- 2. Resigns;*
- 3. Dies;*
- 4. Is judicially determined to be incompetent;*
- 5. Is convicted of a felony;*
- 6. Is removed from office for breach of the public trust; or*
- 7. During any 12-month period while in office:*
 - a. Is absent from three regular meetings without excuse;*
 - b. Is absent from:*
 - i. Six regular meetings; or*
 - ii. Eight regular meetings for members of the planning and zoning commission, urban design commission, platting board, or zoning board of examiners and appeals; or*
 - c. Fails to attend a two-thirds majority of the regular meetings.”*

Audit Finding. No members were absent from three regular meetings without an excuse during any 12-month period from January 2025 through June 2026.

No members were absent from eight regular meetings during any 12-month period from January 2025 through June 2026.

No members failed to attend two-thirds of the regular meetings during any 12-month period from January 2025 through June 2026.

7. **Did the Commission meet regularly?**

AMC section 4.05.090, Meetings, states “A board or commission shall hold regular monthly meetings at such time and place as may from time to time be designated by the board or commission, but meetings need not be held if no business is pending.”

In addition, AMC subsection 1.25.015B., Agendas; duties of staff; rules for public notice of meetings, states “The public official tasked with staffing a meeting shall...Post the written public notice information on both the municipal public notice webpage and the events calendar on the municipal website as provided in subsection C...”

Audit Finding. From January 2025 through June 2026, the Commission held six regular meetings and five work sessions. Meetings were sometimes publicly announced on the Municipality of Anchorage's Public Notices website, and the Mayor's Boards and Commissions events website. In addition, the Commission's website had the Commission's meeting information as follows, “Regular Public Naming Commission Meetings are currently held the second Wednesday of each month starting at 4:00 p.m...”

8. **Were minutes taken and published?**

AMC subsection 1.25.015B., states “The public official tasked with staffing a meeting shall...Either electronically record or produce written action minutes, unless both are required by this chapter or Code.

- a. The recording of the meeting shall include the entire meeting from the call to order to adjournment, although recesses, provided no business takes place, are not required to be recorded. If the public meeting is recorded and the recording is available to the public on a publicly accessible website, (currently the municipal meetings page), written action minutes are not required for committees or task forces but are required for boards and commissions.*
- b. Written action minutes shall include the call to order; roll call; motions, seconds, the vote of each member in attendance on motions, but do not include discussion and debate on*

motions; disclosures by members of potential conflicts of interest and the ruling on the potential conflict, but do not include discussion and debate on the potential conflict or ruling; the subject of public hearings and a statement, if applicable, that public testimony or comment was provided on that subject; and adjournment of the meeting.

- c. Minutes, either by recording or written action minutes are public records and should be retained by the municipal agency that staffs the municipal body in accordance with the applicable records retention schedule.”*

Audit Finding. Meeting minutes were taken at each Commission meeting. Municipal Clerk's staff keeps a copy available for the public. In addition, the meeting minutes are available on the Public Naming Commission's website.

9. Did meetings have action items or other business?

AMC section 1.80.030D., states:

“Duties of the public naming commission shall include:

- 1. Responsibility for implementing the naming policy of the municipality through review of all requests and actions for compliance with this policy and honorary naming criteria under this chapter.*
- 2. Review of proposed names and public places, including holding public hearings, and identifying additional potential names or public places as appropriate to the request. The panel will assess all requests once a year as part of the annual naming plan.*
- 3. Identifying public places or real property of significance that have not yet been named.*
- 4. Collaborating with the department of public works to recommend names for facilities in development.*
- 5. Meeting at least once annually for the sole purpose of naming implementation goals and strategy, and monthly as needed for the purpose of regular commission business. The panel will assess all requests once a year as part of the annual naming plan.*
- 6. Preparing an annual naming plan and submitting to the assembly by August 31 of each year, which shall include:*
 - a. Activities of the prior year.*

- b. The commission's statement of vision for naming of public places.*
- c. A list of public places proposed for consideration of naming or renaming in the coming year.*
- d. A summary of naming requests from the public from the prior year and proposed disposition of those requests, including how the proposed names meet the requirements in section 1.80.020.”*

Audit Finding. From January 2025 through June 2026, the Commission issued by-laws and wrote a letter in March 2026 seeking additional members to fill vacant seats. In addition, in lieu of the 2025 annual naming plan, the Commission issued a memo to the Assembly outlining business conducted from May to August 2025 including: drafted and approved a vision statement, drafted bylaws, developed a draft form for nominating municipal facilities for naming, and developed draft naming implementation goals and strategies.