

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Alvin D. Osterback called the Aleutians East Borough Regular Assembly Meeting to order by videoconference in each community on November 13, 2025, at 2:00 PM.

Roll Call for Elected Officials

Mayor Alvin D. Osterback	Present
Brenda Wilson	Absent
Chris Babcock	Present
Glen Gardner Jr.	Present
Jim Smith Sr.	Present
Josephine Shangin	Present
Paul Gronholdt	Present
Warren Wilson	Present

Advisory

Samantha McNeley	Present
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A quorum was present.

Staff Present

Anne Bailey, Administrator
Glennora Dushkin, Administrative Clerk
Ernie Weiss, Natural Resources Director
Charlotte Levy, Fishery Analyst
Jacki Brandell, Finance Director
Seward Brandell, Accounting Clerk
Beverly Ann Rosete, Borough Clerk

Others Present

Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION Chris made a motion to adopt the Agenda
SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

Hearing no objections, the agenda will stand as presented.

Community Roll Call and Public Comments on Agenda Items

The communities of Akutan, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon, Sand Point, and the Anchorage office were participating by videoconference. The meeting was also broadcast on KSDP radio.

Conflict of Interest

Mayor Osterback asked for any potential conflict of interest to be discussed. There were no conflicts on this agenda.

Swearing In Newly Elected Officials

- Assembly Paul Gronholdt
- Assembly Glen Gardner Jr.

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Minutes

- October 09, 2025, Regular Assembly Minutes

MOTION Josy made a motion to accept the October 09, 2025, Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes.

SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

Hearing no objections, the minutes will stand as written.

- October 20, 2025, Special Meeting Assembly Minutes

MOTION Glen made a motion to accept the October 20, 2025, Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes.

SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

Hearing no objections, the minutes will stand as written.

Financials

- Finance Directors' Report

Finance Director Brandell reviewed her report.

Paul asked how the new software was working. Finance Director Brandell said that the new software is way better. She can pull out reports in a better format. It is a great change.

Glen asked what the new software was. Finance Director Brandell said Casselle.

- September 2025 Financials

MOTION Chris made a motion to approve the September 2025 Financials.

SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey reviewed the September 2025 financials. She pointed out that for the Raw Fish Tax, we brought in about \$289K, a portion of which is from a small processor from July and August. Another item, we received the State Shared Raw Fish Tax from the State of Alaska. We anticipated about \$1.45M but it came in \$1.317M. We received about \$114K in Interest Revenue. Another item to point out is the State Revenue Other, which we received the Community Assistance Funds. Expenses are tracking along well.

Paul commented that he heard that pink salmon prices that were originally bought for 25 cents, some canaries are going to pay .50 cents.

ROLL CALL Yeas: Glen, Paul, Josy, Warren, Jim, Chris Advisory: Samantha

MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Investment Report

The September 2025 report from APCM is in the packet.

Consent Agenda

Public Hearings

Ordinances

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Resolutions

- **Resolution 26-20**, Requesting Governor Dunleavy to Support a Fishery Disaster Declaration for Alaska Peninsula Sockeye Salmon Fisheries

MOTION Chris made a motion to approve Resolution 26-20.

SECOND Paul seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Natural Resources Director Weiss reviewed the resolution.

Paul asked Ernie about the status of speeding up the disaster funding. The Natural Resources Director said he does not know where it currently sits.

Mayor Osterback commented that when he was at Washington, DC, this issue was discussed. The Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Agriculture agreed that this should be expedited and should not take too long.

Jim asked if they looked for Red disaster only. The Natural Resources Director said he believes so.

ROLL CALL Jim, Warren, Chris, Glen, Josy, Paul **YEAS: ADVISORY: SAMANTHA**
MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Old Business

- Ratification of the October 20, 2025 Special Meeting

MOTION Chris made a motion to ratify the actions taken at the October 20, 2025, Special Assembly meeting. This ratification acknowledges that the meeting was presided **OVER** by the Borough Administrator due to the absence of the Mayor, and that the election of a president pro tempore was inadvertently omitted.

SECOND Paul seconded the motion.

The Clerk reviewed the Ratification of the October 20, 2025 Special Meeting.

ROLL CALL Paul, Chris, Warren, Jim, Josy, Glen **YEAS: ADVISORY: SAMANTHA**
MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

New Business

- Donations
Administrator Bailey reviewed the Donations.

Mayor Osterback commented that if there are no questions or objections, donations will be approved.

Reports and Updates

- **Administrator's Report**

Cold Bay Dock: The State of Alaska, of PND Engineering, continues to work on the environmental and design portion of the Cold Bay Dock Project. A link is included in the report. The State held a virtual public hearing for the Cold Bay AMHS Ferry Terminal

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Reconstruction Project on October 28, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. The State of Alaska and PND are progressing on the design and environmental aspects of the project.

Paul commented that it was very hard to call in during the public hearing for the Cold Bay Dock held by the State of Alaska. He thinks that it is a very poor turnout. He thinks that the Borough has to weigh in on some of the alternative designs that they were discussing. He said the project seems to be making slow progress. He continued to ask if the Borough could invite PND to have a presentation at the next meeting.

Administrator Bailey responded that she could talk to the State if they can present at our next meeting, and she believes that before the Borough's December meeting, there will be another virtual meeting for the Cold Bay Dock to go over the scope of the project. She agreed that the project seems like a slow process, but the Sand Point Float Project also has to go through the MARAD process, and the environmental process takes a long time. With the government shutdown, they are not able to get answers from government agencies that have to comment.

Mayor Osterback commented that there were 4 design options. They also talked about not having a fuel line, and this is part of the AMHS. Mayor Osterback also mentioned that the cost is so high.

Administrator Bailey added that there is \$19 million differential in one alternative they are proposing. When we put in the original proposal, we did not anticipate the high inflation changes. We are definitely trying to figure out ways to cut costs and see if there is supplemental funding.

Chris commented that, before we got this grant from the State of Alaska, there was a discussion that the company that operates the fuel would be responsible for the fuel line. He asked if that had changed.

Mayor Osterback commented that the original request, the Borough would own the pipeline up to the solid ground and put headers so that multiple suppliers can operate. But as time passes and prices change, we are now having discussions with all the parties and trying to figure this out.

Paul commented that proposal 4 is the preferred alternative right now. He thinks that the Borough has to submit a recommendation for design to include a wave barrier.

Chris commented that Mayor Osterback and Administrator Bailey are familiar with docks and harbors. So, he knows we are making sure we get the biggest benefit for the Borough. He agreed with Paul about PND presenting in the next meeting.

Piling Project: On October 14, 2025, the Borough received notification from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities that "the Cold Bay Ferry Dock was load posted earlier this year due to decay identified in the pilings. We are pleased to inform you that the necessary repairs have been completed, and the reduced load rating is no longer applicable."

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Sand Point Harbor Float: Western Marine Construction is still in the process of completing the project. On November 3, 2025, representatives from the Borough, Western Marine Construction, and Moffatt & Nichol travelled to Sand Point to conduct the substantial completion inspection. A link to a time-lapse video of the float can be seen at the report included in the packet. The substations are still not here yet. The electrical entity is way behind on finishing those, so we are pushing the project back to December 2025.

Mayor Osterback added that if you see the float listing, is because the little short floats that are hooked to it are holding one side, and when the transformer is set, it will level out. Also, the new ladders are still coming.

Jim asked if the Borough made an agreement with Western Marine. Mayor Osterback said, at one point, the city of Sand Point will have to talk to Western Marine about whether they would charge once it was turned over.

Sand Point School DEED Grant: UIC Construction continues to make progress at the Sand Point School. We are already behind schedule. We are supposed to have a substantial completion at the end of November, but that is not going to happen. They are in the process of drafting a new schedule. DOWL is in the process of reviewing the Change Order Proposals provided by UICC. We're still within the budget, but just taking a little bit longer.

Glen commented that he drove the school, and it looks like there's still a lot of work left. He also asked the administrator for the Sand Point pool update.

Administrator Bailey said this pool project is ongoing. There have been discussions with Paulo, and we are in the process of looking into that. We also have a 95% complete design for a stainless steel pool, but the Assembly did not make a motion to proceed with that because of the cost.

Mayor Osterback added that Paulo came about 3 meetings ago and proposed a solution to put in a fiberglass pool. We are working in to get a proposal from him to get a price and bring it back to the Assembly.

Paul commented that the school project might be a month away from being done.

Mayor Osterback commented that one reason for the project taking so long is that, as the construction company tears up a section, they discover problems internally. They are doing the best they can, and the building is really old. We just have to go by what the engineers tell us.

School Items: Akutan School Boilers: The boilers at the Akutan School need to be replaced. They also have a new water heater, so this project has been done. King Cove, False Pass, and Sand Point boilers have been in the queue. We are working with Cool Air Mechanical to do additional repairs. They will also be going to the Cold Bay terminal to work on the boiler.

King Cove Road: During the week of October 20, 2025, the Secretary signed a land exchange for the King Cove Road, and it is through the conveyance process. The furthest this project has ever been. The Borough, the City, and other entities have been constantly attending meetings

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on this. Yesterday, we heard that the trustees on behalf of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge have sued the Department of the Interior and King Cove Corporation for an illegal land swap. We do not have additional information on that since it just came out.

Chris asked if this lawsuit would stop anything from moving forward. Administrator Bailey said, as of now, no.

Glen asked if it's true that three tribes up north were suing. Administrator Bailey said that might be true. We should have more information from the attorney soon.

Paul asked if the Assembly could be kept updated regarding the timeline for court hearings regarding this.

Other Items

On October 10, 2025, the IT Services contract with Deeptree was executed. The transfer has been completed.

• **Natural Resources Department Director's Report**

Alaska Board of Fisheries: Natural Resources staff attended the Work Session and Pacific cod meeting last month, hosting an off-shoot room down the hall at the Dena'ina Center. Several of us were very concerned in the Work Session when 4 to 3 votes went against the staff's recommendations. The summary of Board actions at these meetings can be found in the November 1, 2025 AEB Fish News. Of note, RC 17, adopted 6-1 in place of Proposal 6, raised the South Alaska Peninsula Pacific cod GHL from 30% to 35% of the WGOA cod. In the report, there is a link for salmon proposals; there was a change in the numbers. We plan to meet with fishermen and will attend all Board meetings this cycle, including the AYK meeting in Fairbanks.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council: The December 2-9 meeting will be held at the Egan Center, with the main agenda item to decide final groundfish specifications for 2026. Since the Groundfish Plan Team meetings this month have been cancelled due to the government shutdown, the Council will take final action on harvest specifications, likely without change, for the GOA and BSAI as adopted in October and mostly carried over from last year. At the February 2-11, 2026, meeting, also at the Egan, the Council will take final action on the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery Chum Salmon Bycatch. The Council will also set harvest specs for federally managed salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ at the February meeting.

The Natural Resources Director was appointed to the Ecosystem Committee.

Land Issues: The AEB Municipal Land selections at Sandy River totaling approximately 2400 acres, were recently finally conveyed by patent to the AEB from the State. Prioritized on the 2018-2019 AEB Strategic Plan and authorized by Assembly Resolution 19-05, we contracted with McClintock Land Associates to Survey the Sandy River lands with the goal to eventually gain formal ownership. McClintock also surveyed Port Moller and Bear Lake AEB municipal land selections, chosen to be surveyed based on commercial activity on or near the land selections.

Natural Resources Director Weiss was thrilled to hear about the land exchange agreement for the Izembek wilderness road on the 38th anniversary of Aleutians East Borough Incorporation Day, October 23. Thanks to all those who got us to this major milestone. A link to the article

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was included in his report.

Fishery Disaster Request: The AEB signed on to a September 30 letter requesting Governor Dunleavy look into a 2024/2025 Bering Sea Snow Crab fishery disaster. The Governor responded in an October 27 request to Secretary of Commerce Lutnick for a fishery disaster determination for the 24/25 BSS crab fishery.

A list of meetings is included in the report.

- **Fishery Analyst's Report**

AFSC Cod Tagging Project: Our project team has published a high-level synthesized report. The results published are still preliminary. Some of the key takeaways are: On average between 2021-2025, of fish with known migration, approximately 43% of satellite-tagged Pacific cod from the WGOA moved north into the EBS/NBS shortly after tagging during winter spawning.

More than 93% of tagged Pacific cod in the CGOA did not move into the WGOA; the remaining 7% were tagged and recovered close to the management boundary. A link is included in the report.

- GOA stock assessment author Pete Hulson gave a presentation at the September Plan Team with results from his work collating all Pacific cod tags to estimate WGOA movement. A link to the presentation is included in the report.
- Given the current government shutdown and impact on the stock assessment process, it is unclear when/how these options will be considered and adopted.

Mayor Osterback asked the Fishery Analyst to give a heads-up which meeting the fishermen need to attend. The Fishery Analyst said it will definitely come up starting the September Plan Team Meeting.

- **Unimak Acoustic Telemetry Project:** There aren't many updates since the field work, except that we had 2 sPAT tags pop up early. We deployed these tags in tandem with the acoustic tags as an experiment to see if we could monitor the survival of acoustically tagged fish and ground truth signal detection for fish that passed over the array.
 - I have submitted the first reimbursement request to NPPR and the project is tracking as expected.
- **Salmon Tagging Pilot:** The majority of my time is spent analyzing tags and working on the manuscript for peer review. I anticipate having a case report paper submitted to Animal Biotelemetry by the end of the year. This paper would simply characterize movement and behavior of tagged fish. A more comprehensive paper will be published regarding nonretention survival, genetic results, and other more policy-relevant questions. I am talking to collaborators, the department, and stakeholders about next steps. This could include a more comprehensive tagging effort across space/time but would need to define clear objectives.
- **Board of Fish** • I attended the recent Pacific cod meeting and work session. I assisted stakeholders as needed to submit testimony, conduct analyses and write RCs as needed. I am shifting my attention to the February BOF meeting and will work with stakeholders up until the meeting as needed. I intend to submit written comments regarding the salmon tagging work and non-retention policies.

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Paul asked if AEB would have no presence at the Fish Expo. The Natural Resources Director said yes.

Mayor Osterback commented that he was in Juneau for the AAHPA when the announcement for the King Cove-Cold Bay road. He was able to attend it via YouTube. He tried to go to the Cod meeting in Anchorage, but the flight was fully booked.

Assembly Comments

Chris thanked the Borough for its continued task of fighting for the road to Cold Bay. He came to King Cove in 1991; they were fighting for it then. We have some lawsuits now, but he thinks we are in a better spot than we've been in the past. He thanked the Borough for all the support and hard work. He said the administration is doing a great job. Chris mentioned he has been in the Assembly for 10 years now. He welcomed Jim Smith and Glen Gardner Jr. to the Assembly.

Glen Gardner commented that we have a major drug problem in the region. He said the Borough used to help with that project, but somehow stopped. He asked if this could be put on the agenda for the next meeting. He said Eastern Aleutian Tribes got some grant money this year, and he thinks the Borough needs to collaborate with them. He asked if this could be put on the agenda so the Assembly can talk about it in the next meeting. He had a follow-up question about whether the Borough has a maintenance person.

Mayor Osterback responded only have an on-call maintenance person to do light work. He said, with all the work we are doing around all the communities, we've gone to hiring different companies from Anchorage to do the work to keep up with all the maintenance.

Administrator Bailey said the AEB provides \$150,000 to the EATS, which is included in the budget. This was from the agreement written in 1992 or 1993, the Borough pays it quarterly.

Josy thanked Tom Hoblet for his service. She asked, now that the government shutdown is over, she was wondering what the update is on EAS. Administrator Bailey said she has not heard anything else. She thinks everyone is trying to get their feet back on the ground on the Federal level. Administrator Bailey said she was anticipating the proposal would come out in October, but it did not happen. She was assuming it would come out soon.

Paul asked if there would be a midyear budget amendment. Administrator Bailey said, right now, she does not see any reason for a midyear budget amendment.

Warren commented that there will be a round table with EAS on November 18th, 10:00-11:30 AM. Warren commented that with the lawsuits coming out, it is disheartening to see the residents in King Cove being demeaned. He said he was on the radio and had a conversation about how important the road to Cold Bay is and how many lives have been lost in King Cove. It will be a long way to go. Warren thanked the Borough for supporting King Cove's fight for a road project.

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Glen commented that it blows him away that in Anchorage, there is a freeway that runs through a refuge and ducks and birds are being chased away, but in Cold Bay, they are trying to shut down when you can barely see any when you drive there.

Chris commented that he thinks it will set a precedent that if they can go to this wildlife refuge, why can't we build a rad here too. Chris agreed with both Glen and Warren. He said that is the sad and hard part to fight, but he is hoping to see more progress.

Mayor Osterback commented that he's been working on EAS for quite a while now, trying to get our communities back into EAS. Ticket prices are driving everyone out of the communities. It is hard to afford to travel. He said some people can only travel off the island through their medical appointments. AEB is working hard on getting our communities into the Essential Air Service.

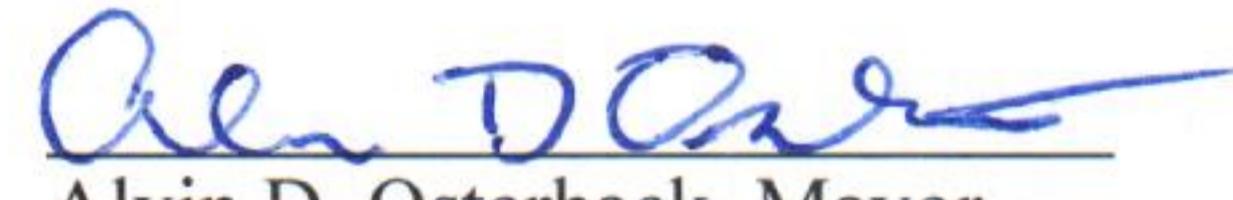
Next Meeting Date

- December 11, 2025

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 3:38 PM.

ATTEST


Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor


Beverly Rosete, Clerk