

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Assembly Call to Order

Mayor Alvin D. Osterback called the Aleutians East Borough Regular Assembly Meeting to order by videoconference in each community on January 08, 2026, at 2:00 PM.

Roll Call for Elected Officials

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

Advisory

Samantha McNeley	Present
Tom Hoblet	Present

A quorum was present.

Staff Present

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

Others Present

Lorie Pierce
Kurt Uttecht
Mayor Robert Walker
Carter Uttecht

Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION Chris made a motion to adopt the Agenda
SECOND Brenda 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.

Minutes

- December 11, 2025, Regular Assembly Minutes

MOTION Brenda made a motion to accept the December 11, 2025, Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes.
SECOND Glen seconded the motion.
Hearing no objections, the minutes will stand as written.

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Financials

- Finance Director's Report.
Finance Director Brandell reviewed her report.

- November 2025 Financials

MOTION Brenda made a motion to approve the November 2025 Financials.

SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said there were two items to point out. First, the Raw Fish Tax, we received zero in November 2025. This is the first time we had zero in financials since 1999. The second one is the Interest Revenue, which is still doing well. As far as expenditures go, we are tracking on schedule; we are about 41.66% through the fiscal year.

Chris asked what the usual November fish tax is. Administrator Bailey said the average 5-year we get is about \$64,000, and the 10-year average is about \$89,000 for November. This is the first time we got nothing for the fish tax for November.

Paul commented that the Cod quota may increase after the BOF February meeting.

ROLL CALL Yeas: Paul, Brenda, Glen, Warren, Jim, Chris, Josy Advisory: Samantha, Tom
MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Investment Report

No report

Consent Agenda

Public Hearings

Ordinances

Resolutions

- **Resolution 26-27**, Supporting Geothermal Development in Akutan, AK

MOTION Chris made a motion to approve Resolution 26-27.

SECOND Brenda seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Executive Assistant Dushkin reviewed the resolution.

Paul commented that in Dutch Harbor Geothermal, one of the issues they encountered was the lease. Paul proceeded to ask who owns the lease in Akutan geothermal, if there is one. Executive Assistant Dushkin said she can find out.

Jim asked if there is grant funding for this project. Executive Assistant Dushkin responded that she believes they are looking for funding from the State and ANCSA.

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Josy commented that they have a meeting with a grant writer to pursue funding, and they have not heard back anything about tribal support. She said as of now, they are just looking for letters of support.

Mayor Osterback asked if Akutan is looking for a range of megawatts that they are looking to produce. Josy responded yes, but she can't remember the exact number. She said there are a number of different spots that were discussed with the City, and when they pursued this years ago. With the litigation of Makushin Geothermal, a lot of focus has been shifted to Akutan.

Chris asked Joay who owns the land where the geothermal will be. Josy responded that, for the majority part, the Akutan Corporation owns the land and the Aleut Corporation.

ROLL CALL Yeas: Josy, Jim, Warren, Glen, Paul, Brenda, Chris Advisory: Tom, Samantha
MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Mayor Osterback congratulated Glennora on her new position.

- **Resolution 26-28**, Authorizing the Mayor to Negotiate and Execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District Regulatory Division, the King Cove Corporation, State of Alaska, City of King Cove, the Aleutians East Borough, the Agdaagux Tribe, and the Native Village of Belkofski Concerning Coordination and Implementation of Projects and Efforts in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge

MOTION Brenda made a motion to approve Resolution 26-28.

SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey reviewed the resolution.

Paul asked for confirmation that there is nothing new or unexpected in the memorandum of understanding. Administrator Bailey said no, it is just outlining the actions that are currently occurring.

ROLL CALL Yeas: Chris, Paul, Warren, Jim, Brenda, Josy, Glen Advisory: Samantha, Tom
MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Old Business

New Business

- **Oil and Gas**
Natural Resources Director discussed the Oil and Gas Lease

Paul commented that technically, we have no requirements to submit a comment at this time and that this process moves very slowly. Natural Resources Director agreed, he said people can make individual comments if the Assembly is not interested.

Mayor Osterback commented that back in 1992, the Shumagin was brought up as interest areas on oil industry. They were looking for some areas to build a facility, and that was one of the reasons why the

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Aleutians East Borough was formed. Back in the days, the Borough supported the oil and gas industry, and Mayor Osterback stated his support for this.

- **Sand Point Pool Project Bonding Requirement Discussion**

Administrator Bailey discussed the Sand Point Pool Project Bonding Requirement

Paul asked whether there were any suggestions to get this project moving forward. Mayor Osterback responded that there are a couple of things that can be done, and is working on it. Paulo is talking to 6 different bonding companies, and the Borough is willing to speak with them if it will help. Mayor Osterback said the administration is looking for different ways to figure this out. He added he wanted this project pushed through, and when the Assembly passed the resolution providing the money to do this, it was with the understanding that the Assembly trusted the people that will work on this project.

Administrator Bailey added that she talked to our insurance, and they are trying to get her some answers. She also talked to a construction attorney, and there may be a way that the Borough could bond, but she'll do more research.

Glen asked if it would be possible to just hire Paulo as an employee to repair the pool. Mayor Osterback said we can look into that.

Paul commented that we really need to figure it out by the next meeting, and if there's any way around that, in order to get the job done this year. I think there are several ways to solve it, and he has confidence that the administration has figured it out and will bring it to us by February, and we can make a final decision to get the pool.

Mayor Osterback commented that anybody who has ideas is welcome to share.

Paul commented that one idea is for the Borough to buy the materials to reduce the total cost of the contract. Paul added that we are going to decide the waiver requirement. It is our project; we say this qualifies for a waiver, and we will just pass that. Mayor Osterback said that this idea is one of the things they talked about. Administration is waiting to hear back from Paulo regarding talking to bonding companies. He added that if any Assembly Members have any other ideas, feel free to contact him because he wants this project done, but we have to make sure we get a good legal opinion so we don't get shut down in the middle of this project.

Paul commented that whenever there is a question of legality, there are always two sides, one opposing and one in favor. We expect our attorney to support the decisions we make.

Brenda commented that we have to think about a way we are going to be able to keep our insurance. She added what if we finish this project and find out that we cannot ensure it. She thinks it is really important to follow the rules. Mayor Osterback said we have to have insurance so we are protected for personal injury.

Chris commented that the laws are put in effect, not only to protect us as a Borough but also to protect the citizens who will be using the facility. Chris added that he disagrees with Paul; our attorney cannot bend the rules just because we are paying him a salary. The reason we hired a lawyer is that he can go

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over all this stuff, and he thinks our attorney did a great job explaining this to us. Chris added that we need to research this more.

Mayor Osterback said the attorney that we have is here to protect the Borough, and he is doing a great job. He said it was over the holidays when Paulo first emailed to let the Borough know they ran into a problem finding a bonding company.

Chris asked whether this project could be done in phases to help break down the cost. He added that we want this pool done, but we should not try to do something overnight. This needs more research.

Mayor Osterback responded that this is the main thing the administration is doing right now, working with them, trying to figure this out, and looking at different avenues.

Chris added that he does not want the administration to feel rushed to come up with another contract at the next meeting. He said he wants something that the Assembly could pass and know that it will go on, and they are not going to come back and re-look at it. Mayor Osterback agreed and said the administration will give updates and will have something final when it's ready.

Paul commented that the Borough has AMLJIA, so we are kind of self-insured. He said AMLJIA board makes the rules of what's insured and what isn't. So he doesn't see insurance as a problem. Paul added that being a partner in the bonding requirement is a good idea, too.

Mayor Osterback said that the administration wanted the Assembly to know where we were at. And everything is on the table right now. But we are going to get this project done.

Reports and Updates

- **Administrator's Report**

Cold Bay Dock: The State held a virtual public hearing for the Cold bay AMHS Ferry Terminal Reconstruction Project on December 16, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. Prior to the meeting, Borough Administration submitted a public comment stating "at the December 11, 2025 Assembly Meeting, the Assembly approved a motion to support the option of a wave barrier in the preferred alternative design. DOT, NPD, and others that are present have considered the comments.

Sand Point Harbor Float: This is still moving forward. The substations have arrived in Sand Point. The electricians are now waiting for the weather window for flights to install those. Early spring, Western Marine Construction is scheduled to finish all the things that need to be completed. We are also looking into purchasing a portable fire pump.

Sand Point School DEED Grant: Right before the holidays, we found out that the paper barrier that was on the roof was blown off, and it was raining inside the building. They have been addressing the issue and have been fixing the damage. A change order was made for \$165,275, which still falls under the authorized amount. They are behind schedule. Currently, they are saying they will be done by the end of March.

School Items: False Pass Roof Repairs: Bering Sea Services has provided an updated quote to complete roof repairs at the False Pass School. The cost for the repairs is \$59,000. DOWL is in the process of drafting a contract for this work. The repairs will be charged to the Deferred Maintenance Line- Item. **Sand Point Boiler Inspections:** On October 9, 2025, a contract with Cool Air Mechanical in the amount of \$64,922.50 was executed. This includes additional repairs to the Sand Point School,

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Office and 4-plex. In early December, Cool Air Mechanical went to Sand Point and ended up getting stuck due to weather and lack of flights, which will increase the overall cost of the project.

Cold Bay Terminal: Chinook arrived in Cold Bay on December 18, 2025, and conducted the annual fire alarm, extinguisher, and sprinkler inspections, and completed deficiency work for the Cold Bay Terminal

King Cove Road: The litigation is moving forward smoothly and quickly, the 3 plaintiff groups and the rest of the involved parties have worked out a proposed case management agreement for the court to consider. The agreement will relieve our side of the obligations to submit answers to the plaintiff's very lengthy complaints. The plaintiff's briefs will be due on February 20th. The opposition's briefs will be due March 23rd. And the plaintiff's chance to reply will be due on April 6th. The Corps of Engineers is circulating the road construction permit request for public comments.

The Strategic Planning Meeting will be held on March 11, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Anchorage at the APIA building. March 12, 2025, Regular Assembly Meeting.

Paul asked if the comments that were provided for the Cold Bay Dock were written or verbal. Administrator Bailey said it was written comments via the portal. Paul asked for a copy of the comment. He proceeded to ask how many people attended the virtual meeting.

Paul asked Anne how firm the March School project completion is. Administrator Bailey said she does not think that is firm at all; she thinks the completion will be the end of the school year.

Jim asked if the extra money from the Sand Point Harbor Float project could be used for the wall and surface the gravel area, or the waterline. Administrator Bailey said we won't have enough money to do all that, but what we are looking to use the money for is ladders and potable fire pump to comply with the fire marshal.

Tom asked if the folks were coming in by the end of March. Administrator Bailey said yes, Being Sea will get that done by the end of March. As far as the boiler goes, she is hoping to get there next week, but it seems like there is no flight. They are shipping the materials first.

Lorie commented that she was there with some of the public works staff, and it was a bigger issue. There was a big leak under the boilers.

- **Executive Assistant's Report**

APRA Training and Inspections: The Borough participates in a Loss Control Incentive Program through APRA, our insurance provider. By meeting the program requirements, we can earn a percentage back on our annual contribution. One component of the program is APRA's online safety training through Target Solutions. Each employee must complete eight hours of training for the Borough to qualify for the discount. Another way is by attending monthly meetings, where staff can earn half an hour towards training time. Another program requirement is completing a self-inspection for each Borough-owned building or infrastructure that is valued over a certain dollar amount.

Akutan Helicopter Operations: In November 2025, I coordinated with Trident, Coastal, Matson, and Delta Western to transport the Borough's ISO Tank from Akutan to Unalaska for Jet A Fuel. This was a learning process as several folks I worked with had not previously been involved with this. The tank arrived back in Akutan around December 13, 2025.

Deeptree, Inc – IT Provider: The Borough fully transitioned from ICE Services to Deeptree, Inc. in November and we received our final invoice from ICE Services in December. ICE Services is still covering several software subscriptions for the Borough. As these subscriptions expire, Deeptree will assume responsibility for them. Beginning this year, I will be scheduling quarterly meetings with Deeptree to review IT maintenance needs and identify potential tech improvements for the Borough. The Borough also transitioned from Barracuda to Sophos Email Gateway, which is an email security system.

Other Items: An In the Loop article was published in December, highlighting all of the projects Nelson Lagoon completed recently. Also working with Chris with SERRC to learn the Maintenance Connection.

- **Borough Clerk’s Report**

The Borough Clerk said In May 2018, the Assembly passed a resolution regarding Records Retention. In the resolution, it says, “Records that are not considered permanent shall be disposed of in accordance with the approved general retention schedule. Records of a confidential nature shall be disposed of by shredding or burning. All other records shall be disposed of in an appropriate manner. The records manager shall maintain a permanent log of all destroyed records. The Borough Clerk shall report a detailed description of the records destroyed to the Assembly annually.” Attached to the report is a detailed description of all obsolete and destroyed records in the Anchorage, King Cove, and Sand Point Offices.

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

North Pacific Fishery Management Council: During the February 2-11, 2026 NPFMC meeting at the Egan Center, the Council will take final action on the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery Chum Salmon Bycatch. The Draft EIS for the Chum salmon action on this agenda item is over 700 pages and has garnered over 400 public comments on the Rulemaking docket as of this writing. I plan to testify in support of our AEB communities that are highly dependent on onshore pollock deliveries. At the February meeting the SSC and Council will set harvest specs for federally managed salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ. They are also reviewing specs for PCod and hopefully setting new ones.

Alaska Board of Fisheries: Bristol Bay finfish proposals will be considered at the Egan Center on Jan. 13-18. I will be giving the Anchorage Advisory Committee report for the Bristol Bay meeting. I also plan to give personal testimony at the BB meeting in support of Proposal 188 that would increase the Dutch Harbor food and bait herring quota. Proposal 188 will be heard at the BB meeting and deliberated in February. The Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands/Chignik Finfish meeting February 18-24 is going to be critical for the future of AEB salmon fisheries. I encourage the communities of the Borough to come out and give testimonies.

The Statewide finfish meeting, March 17-21, also at the Egan, also includes additional impactful decisions, including on Proposals 11, 163, 164 & 165 that would restrict trawling within state waters

North Region Opilio Crab: In December, the Assembly adopted Resolution 26-25 to allow an agreement to process North region-designated Opilio crab in Akutan in 2026, and collect tax on that crab on behalf of the City of Saint Paul. As of this writing, the Administration is still negotiating that one-year agreement with Saint Paul. If that arrangement had not been worked out, Akutan and the AEB would lose out on other crab processing shares, and potential tax revenue. Also, potential future emergency agreements that might be needed for the South region crab shares processing could have been jeopardized.

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I made an assumption that there will be no fish tax in December, but that was wrong. We received some December fish tax.

The list of meetings is included in the report.

Paul asked what the Borough is doing to maximize participation in the Board of Fish meetings. Mayor Osterback said the Borough will help with the usual costs, like airfare and lodging.

Paul commented that several articles were written about the Fish Act being introduced. He proceeded to ask Ernie if he had any insight on this. The Natural Resources Director said this was co-sponsored by Lisa Murkowski, and it was introduced by Senator Sullivan. It is almost a title of a bill, but they don't have the language of the bill published yet; it is reducing bycatch mostly in Alaska fisheries.

Mayor Osterback commented that he read that the president is suggesting making cuts to NOAA's budget, and he asked how that is going to affect us as far as research. The Natural Resources Director said there have been cuts to NOAA, but he does not know any new ones that are coming but he can look into it.

- **Fishery Analyst's Report**

AFSC Cod Tagging Project: The project team is finalizing the tech memos for each year with conclusion sections, which will then be sent for review and publication at NOAA. I am working on the regular quarterly report, which will be available at the next meeting. I have been having a lot of conversations with NOAA with council staff, and fishermen on how to move this forward on the policy trend. The best approach to bringing this up is to testify at the February meeting under the cod stock assessment agenda item.

Salmon Tagging Pilot: I am still finalizing the draft case report and hope to have it submitted to Animal Biotelemetry soon. This paper will characterize the movement and behavior of tagged fish. I am concurrently working on the outline for the subsequent, comprehensive manuscript that will address policy-relevant questions regarding nonretention survival and mortality.

I am working on the final report to ADFG for the Aquatic Resource Permit used for this project.

Board of Fish: I am currently working on several documents, which include: A human interest article about a local fishermen and how fisheries are interwoven in AEB communities. A summary of the recently published full ADFG chum genetics study that occurred from 2022 to 2024. This is intended to be a more approachable document that highlights key points in the document and changes from WASSIP and the 2022 single report. A comment letter that collates the Adaptive Management Program reports since the program started. I assist with writing these at the end of each June, and will write a comprehensive review of the program performance relative to the metrics outlined in the RC104. One of the most time-consuming tasks in each BOF cycle is organizing information and making it accessible to stakeholders. Information such as fishery and genetics data, historical BOF actions, past BOF RC's and proposals are typically scattered and can be difficult to track down. I am in the process of collecting those data into a clearinghouse format that can be easily accessed by stakeholders for their own use.

Other: I am slowly uploading my remaining inactive grant files to Laserfische. Glennora has assigned the ARPA Insurance trainings, so I am trying to take at least 2 per week.

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Assembly/ Mayor's Comments

Josy thanked the Mayor and the Assembly for signing on to the joint statement in support of Geothermal. Josy congratulated Glennora.

Glen congratulated Glennora and said lets push hard on getting the pool repaired.

Chris commented that he sent a letter to the Mayor and Administrator Bailey through the clerk, regarding some of the concerns that he's been hearing from some people in the Borough with Trident processing the crab in St. Paul. He said maybe we could put something out that could explain this a little bit for transparency.

Administrator Bailey responded that she is in receipt of that letter as well as Carter's letter, and she is working on a response letter soon.

Jim congratulated Glennora on her new position.

Paul commented that he appreciates what the staff is doing in preparation for the board of fish meeting in February. It will be a tough meeting, and he encourages everyone to use all their resources to ensure maximum participation.

Mayor Osterback commented that we are working on putting together a plan to go forward on the problem that we have, needing essential air service. So, this is in the works, and hopefully we'll be successful in getting the price of tickets down.

Mayor Osterback commented that almost everyone who works in the Borough started from being an administrative clerk position, like Anne and Charlotte, and now Glennora is moving on to her new position. This shows that people stay, and there is longevity, and we have really good employees. He thanked all the Borough employees for all the work they do.

Public Comments

Carter Uttecht commented that he sent a letter to the Assembly and asked when they were going to receive that. Borough Clerk responded that when the letter was received, it was past the deadline to put the letter in the meeting packet as requested by the sender.

Next Meeting Date

- February 12, 2026

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 3:47 PM.


Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

ATTEST


Beverly Resete, Clerk

