

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Assembly Mayor Alvin D. Osterback called the Aleutians East Borough Regular Assembly Meeting to order by videoconference in each community on September 10, 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.	Absent
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

Laura Young - Fairweather
Lorie Pierce
Samantha Johnson
Kurt Uttecht

Rob Walker
Gary Hennigh

Adoption of the Agenda

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

Hearing no objections, the agenda will stand as presented.

Community Roll Call and Public Comments on Agenda Items

The communities of 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.

Presentation

- **FY2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Laura Young said that the Aleutians East Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan is undergoing an expedited update because the current plan expires in January. Aleutians Pribilof Islands Association obtained grant funding for the project, which is being completed on a significantly shortened timeline. The updated multi-jurisdictional plan will include 14 jurisdictions, expanding beyond the communities and tribes included in the existing plan. The plan is intended to meet both FEMA local and tribal

Aleutians East Borough Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

requirements and is necessary for jurisdictions to remain eligible for certain FEMA mitigation funding. HUD also requires an approved hazard mitigation plan for certain CDBG-DR funding.

The planning process identifies natural hazards, critical facilities and infrastructure, evaluates vulnerabilities, and develops mitigation projects designed to reduce or eliminate future risks. The planning team currently includes 84 members representing the participating jurisdictions. A draft risk assessment of more than 950 pages has been completed and released for public review. The project has also produced more than 100 GIS maps and analyses, and the Borough will receive the GIS and critical infrastructure data so it can be maintained and updated in the future.

The next major step is working with each jurisdiction to identify and prioritize mitigation projects. Borough officials and community representatives are being asked to review the risk assessment for missing or inaccurate information, identify capital projects that should be incorporated into the mitigation strategy, and help encourage public participation. After the mitigation actions are completed, the full Hazard Mitigation Plan will be assembled and released for review.

Because of the expedited schedule and the upcoming election cycle, the project team plans to ask participating jurisdictions to adopt the plan before it is submitted to the State and FEMA. The State has up to 30 days to review the plan, and FEMA has up to 45 days. If either agency requires changes afterward, those revisions will be documented and provided to the jurisdictions in a summary memo. The goal is to bring the plan to the Borough Assembly for adoption at a regular meeting in mid-October, if the project remains on schedule.

Paul asked if they are using AI for this planning. Laura explained that their Anchorage-based company has extensive experience in hazard mitigation planning throughout Alaska and nationwide, including work as a FEMA technical assistance reviewer. They previously completed similar large-scale projects involving multiple rural Alaska jurisdictions and noted that the Borough already had a strong hazard mitigation plan in place. The current effort is focused on updating the existing plan, incorporating additional jurisdictions, and ensuring each participating jurisdiction is directly involved in the planning process. When asked whether the Borough was ahead or behind schedule, Laura acknowledged that ideally the update would have started about a year earlier. Working with rural Alaska communities during late summer and fall also presents scheduling challenges due to hunting, fishing, and other activities. However, she expressed confidence that the plan can be completed within the required timeframe and emphasized that the expedited process helps keep the work focused on FEMA requirements and meaningful mitigation projects. The goal is to complete the update without allowing the Borough's existing hazard mitigation coverage to lapse. The presenter noted that a future planning schedule will help the Borough identify when to seek funding, assemble its planning team, and begin the next update. The primary immediate concern is the possibility of a significant storm or other event occurring before the updated plan is completed in mid-October.

Minutes

- August 13, 2026, Regular Assembly Minutes

MOTION Brenda made a motion to accept the August 13, 2026, Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes.

SECOND Glen seconded the motion.

Hearing no objections, the minutes will stand as written.

Financial Reports

- Finance Director's Report

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Finance Director Brandell reported that the Finance Department has been very busy with preparations for the upcoming audit. The auditors are expected to arrive the week of September 28, and staff is completing the remaining items needed for their review. Significant progress was made, including posting the lease receivables and liabilities and receiving and posting the K-1 for Southwest Governments. The remaining items include the amortization and depreciation schedules for capital assets and ensuring the interfund transfers net to zero. These items are expected by the end of the week or early the following week. Overall, audit preparations remain on track, and the department's regular monthly tasks have been completed smoothly.

- July 2026 Financials

MOTION Brenda made a motion to approve the July 2026 Financials

SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said that the July 2026 financials, representing the first month of FY27, were included in the packet and have been updated to reflect the approved FY27 budget. Raw fish tax revenue for July was approximately \$580,000, which is 93.3% of the five-year average and 93.5% of the ten-year average, indicating revenues are generally on target with recent historical levels. Interest revenue also continues to perform well due to favorable yields on Borough funds. On the expenditure side, approximately 8.3% of the fiscal year has elapsed, and expenditures are tracking as expected at this early stage of the budget year.

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

MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Investment Report

- July 2026 Investment Report

Consent Agenda

- **Resolution 27-17** –Appointing the Election Judges for the October 6, 2026 Regular Borough Election
- **Resolution 27-18** –Appointing the Canvass Committee for the October 6, 2026 Regular Borough Election

MOTION Brenda moved to approve Resolution 27-17 and Resolution 27-18.

SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Borough Clerk said Resolutions 27-17 and 27-18 are routine annual resolutions required as part of the Borough election process. Resolution 27-17 appoints election judges for Akutan, King Cove, and Sand Point in accordance with AEB Code 4.08.020. Resolution 27-18 appoints the Canvass Committee, which is responsible for canvassing the votes after the election judges complete their tally, in accordance with AEB Code 4.08.050.

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

MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Public Hearings

Ordinances

- **Ordinance 27-01** –authorizing the Mayor to negotiate and execute the Assignment, Assumption and Consent of the Outfall Tidelands Lease for the City of False Pass to Assume the Tidelands Lease between the Aleutians East Borough and Ikatan Bay Investments, LLC

MOTION Glen moved to approve Ordinance 27-01.

SECOND Brenda seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said the Borough is in the process of transferring the False Pass Harbor to the City of False Pass. At the August meeting, the Assembly approved three resolutions authorizing the harbor transfer, assignment of permanent easements, and negotiation of a harbor lease. The remaining items are three tidelands leases associated with the harbor—two with Ikatan Bay Investments LLC and one with Silver Bay Seafoods LLC. The proposed ordinances authorize the Borough to negotiate and execute the necessary assignments so the City can assume these leases. The assignments will not be executed until the Army Corps of Engineers requirements and the other harbor transfer documents are completed.

Ordinance 27-01 specifically addresses the outfall tidelands lease associated with the False Pass Harbor. The ordinance authorizes the Borough to assign the lease to the City of False Pass as part of the overall harbor transfer.

Paul asked if this will affect the ferry's operation. Administrator Bailey responded that , she do not believe these will impact the operations that you just discussed. These are just the leases that we currently have in place with them so they can have the infrastructure there.

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

- **Ordinance 27-02** –authorizing the Mayor to negotiate and execute the Assignment, Assumption and Consent of the Dock Tidelands Lease for the City of False Pass to Assume the Tidelands Lease between the Aleutians East Borough and Ikatan Bay Investments, LLC

MOTION Brenda moved to approve Ordinance 27-02.

SECOND Glen seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Ordinance 27-02 authorizes the Mayor to negotiate and execute the assignment, assumption, and consent of the tidelands lease between the Borough and Ikatan Bay Investments LLC. This lease relates specifically to the dock infrastructure.

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

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Ordinance 27-03 –authorizing the Mayor to negotiate and execute the Assignment, Assumption and Consent of the Dock Tidelands Lease for the City of False Pass to Assume the Tidelands Lease between the Aleutians East Borough and Silver Bay Seafoods

MOTION Glen moved to approve Ordinance 27-03.

SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Ordinance 27- 03 authorizes the mayor to negotiate and execute the assignment, assumption, and consent of the dock tidelands lease for the City of False Pass to assume that tidelands lease between the borough and Silver Bay Seafoods. So this is also infrastructure that is currently in the harbor.

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

MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

Resolutions

- **Resolution 27-13**, authorizing the Mayor to negotiate and execute a Contract Amendment with the Law Office of James F. Clark to provide legal representation for the Land Exchange in an amount not to exceed \$157,500

MOTION Brenda moved to approve Resolution 27-13.

SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Resolution 27-13 authorizes the Mayor to execute a contract amendment with the Law Offices of James F. Clark for continued legal representation related to the King Cove land exchange and road project, in an amount not to exceed \$157,500. The additional funding is needed due to the complexity of three pending cases involving the land exchange, the Corps of Engineers Section 404 Clean Water Act permit, and the compatibility determination, including anticipated appeals to the Ninth Circuit. Funding is available through the King Cove Access Project designated legislative grant.

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

MOTION CARRIED Nays: None.

- **Resolution 27-14**, authorizing the Mayor to negotiate and execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove for legal services for the King Cove Road in an amount not to exceed \$75,000

MOTION Glen moved to approve Resolution 27-14.

SECOND Josy seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Resolution 27-14 authorizes the Mayor to enter into an MOU with the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove for legal services related to the King Cove Road, in an amount not to exceed \$75,000. The Tribe has retained Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker to provide legal assistance.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Under the MOU, the Tribe will receive the law firm's invoices and submit them to the Borough for payment. Funding is available through the King Cove Access Project designated legislative grant.

Paul asked

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

- **Resolution 27-15**, authorizing the reappropriation of a portion of the FY2025 Permanent Fund Earnings and the FY2026 Permanent Fund Earnings

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MOTION Brenda made a motion to approve Resolution 27-15.
SECOND Chris seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Resolution 27-15 reappropriates \$2,440,394 in Permanent Fund earnings that were previously designated to cover the projected FY 2026 budget deficit. Because revenues exceeded expectations and expenditures were lower than projected, those funds are no longer needed for the deficit.

Administration recommends reallocating the funds as follows: \$1 million for FY 2027 Community Assistance Grants, \$965,394 for project contingency, \$300,000 for deferred maintenance, and \$175,000 for fisheries research. The deferred maintenance funding may be used for the Sand Point boiler replacement, while the fisheries funding would support research projects and potential grant matching needs.

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

- **Resolution 27-16**, authorizing the Mayor to execute a Borough FY2027 Community Assistance Grant for the communities of Akutan, Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point

MOTION Josy moved to approve Resolution 27-16.
SECOND Glen seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said that Resolution 27-16 authorizes the Mayor to establish an FY 2027 Community Assistance Grant Program for the communities of Akutan, Cold Bay, False Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point. The program is intended to provide one-time financial assistance to communities experiencing budget constraints and help offset essential operational costs. Each eligible community would receive a base amount of \$100,000 upon submitting the required documentation. An additional \$400,000 variable funding pool would be distributed using a 100-point assessment based equally on population and changes in local general fund revenues, with the intent of providing greater assistance to communities experiencing larger revenue declines.

Grant funds may reimburse eligible FY 2027 operational expenses, including fuel, electricity, insurance (excluding health insurance), water and sewer costs, necessary repairs and renovations to community-owned facilities, roads and harbors, and other operational needs approved by Borough Administration. Eligible expenses already incurred during FY 2027 may also be reimbursed.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Communities must submit their requests to the Borough Administrator by November 30, 2026. A grant agreement must be executed before funds are distributed, and each community must maintain supporting records for at least three years.

Chris said he was pleased that the Borough is in a position to assist communities that are struggling with funding needs. He noted that providing assistance initially seemed uncertain but appreciated the Administration's efforts to develop a program that allows communities to request financial support.

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

- **Resolution 27-19**, Authorizing the Mayor to Negotiate and Execute a Lessor Estoppel and Agreement with the United States of America, Acting by and through the Secretary of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Financial Services Division

MOTION Brenda moved to approve Resolution 27-19.
SECOND Chris seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Resolution 27-19 authorizes the Mayor to negotiate and execute a Lessor Estoppel Agreement with the United States, through NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service, related to the Borough's tidelands lease with Silver Bay Seafoods. Silver Bay is seeking a \$40 million term loan from NOAA, which would be secured by Silver Bay's leasehold interest in the property. NOAA requires the Borough, as the lessor, to enter into an agreement establishing and confirming certain rights and obligations related to NOAA's position as the leasehold mortgage holder. The agreement was reviewed by Borough legal counsel, who did not identify any provisions that would negatively impact the Borough. Administration also noted that the Borough entered into a similar agreement for Silver Bay in 2023.

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

- **Resolution 27-20**, authorizing the consent for a change in control of ownership on Grant Aviation's Cold Bay Terminal Sublease

MOTION Brenda moved to approve Resolution 27-20.
SECOND Josy seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION

Administrator Bailey said Resolution 27-20 authorizes the Borough to consent to the change in ownership control of Grant Aviation's Cold Bay Terminal sublease. Grant Aviation's current shareholder, Grant Holdco, LLC, plans to sell its ownership interest to Grant Aviation Holdings, LLC, a subsidiary of ERA Partners. Because the Borough has an existing sublease with Grant Aviation through June 30, 2030, Borough consent is required for the change in ownership. The resolution addresses this consent, while a future resolution will address consent to the new owner and amendments to the existing sublease agreement.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Paul expressed no objection to Resolution 27-20 but noted concerns about Grant Aviation's history of ownership changes and its apparent transfers between investment firms. Despite these observations, the member indicated support for the resolution.

ROLL CALL
MOTION CARRIED

Yeas: Brenda, Glen, Chris, Warren, Paul, Josy
Nays: None
Advisory: Tom, Samantha

Old Business

New Business

- **Cold Bay Dock Damage** - Administrator Bailey reported that the Cold Bay Dock sustained additional structural damage in August 2026, believed to have resulted from a vessel impact or significant loading during a storm. Following an inspection, the State of Alaska recommended operational restrictions, limiting dock access to essential commerce, with reduced vehicle weight and load limits and restrictions on vessel mooring. The Borough filed an insurance claim with APRA on August 26 and is working with HUB International, the State of Alaska, PND Engineers, and the City of Cold Bay to determine repair options. PND is assisting with design, permitting, and contractor coordination. Administration has determined that the damage constitutes an emergency requiring immediate attention. Emergency procurement procedures, including possible sole-source contracting, may be necessary. Although repair costs, contractor availability, and permitting timelines remain uncertain, the Borough is working to restore the dock as quickly as possible.

Paul asked for an update on efforts to expedite the new dock project being designed by PND Engineers. He expressed concern about the project's slow progress and inquired whether there were opportunities to accelerate the timeline.

Administrator Bailey explained that the new Cold Bay Dock project is still approximately three to four years away, with 2029 as the tentative completion goal. The Borough has met with the State and PND Engineers to discuss expediting the project, but environmental permitting and lengthy federal agency review processes remain the primary obstacles. Efforts are underway to move the permitting process forward as quickly as possible. In the meantime, the Borough is prioritizing repairs to the existing dock to ensure it remains structurally sound and operational until the new dock is completed.

Paul mentioned observing a tugboat and barge in Cold Bay around the time the dock was damaged and asked whether the Borough's insurance broker had contacted the vessel operator. Administrator Bailey indicated that others may have reached out but had no information to share at this time. Paul offered to provide the vessel's name to the Clerk after the meeting to avoid identifying the wrong vessel.

- **Quarter 2 – Aleutians East Borough Strategic Plan Update** - Administrator Bailey presented the Borough's plan covering March 1, 2026, through February 20, 2027, for informational purposes. Bailey highlighted the progress made through the second quarter and noted that the plan is a living document that will continue to evolve. A resolution will be presented at the next Assembly meeting to formally approve the plan retroactively.

Reports and Updates

- **Administrator's Report**

Sand Point School DEED Grant - Administrator Bailey reported that the Sand Point School DEED project is progressing well. Amendment No. 3 was executed on August 17, 2026, providing additional state funding. The Borough is working with the State to reconcile project expenses and obtain reimbursement for costs already incurred. UIC was expected to return to Sand Point to complete the remaining substantial completion checklist items, with the project anticipated to wrap up soon.

Sand Point K-12 School Doors and Locker Replacement DEED Project - The project includes approximately \$383,000 in state funding and a \$106,000 Borough match. The work was included as additive alternates to the school rehabilitation project. Six reimbursement requests have been submitted to the State and are currently under review. Since the Borough has already paid its share, no additional Borough funding is anticipated. The project is expected to be closed out within the next month or two.

Sand Point Pool - Sand Point Marine began work on August 2, 2026, and has removed the existing liner, revealing corrosion in the underlying material. Preparation work is ongoing, with construction of the new wall box scheduled for mid-September, foam installation planned for mid-to-late October, and gel coating and lane markings expected to be completed by early November.

King Cove School Lighting Project - Administrator Bailey reported that Megawatt completed the LED lighting replacement project before the start of the school year. The Borough plans to use the remaining \$4,000 to purchase additional lights for future replacements. Once the funds are spent, the EECBG voucher can be closed out.

Sand Point Harbor Float Project - Power Technique North America conducted training for the Sand Point Harbor crew on August 25–26 on the operation of the newly purchased portable fire pump. Closeout documents for both the MARAD grant and the State of Alaska funding have been submitted. The Borough is awaiting approval and final reimbursements, with project closeout anticipated by the end of September or mid-October.

School Mechanical Maintenance - the boiler work in Akutan has been completed. A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been issued for the replacement of the Sand Point School boilers and maintenance work at three Borough-owned facilities: the school, administration office, and fourplex. Proposals are expected by September 29, with a resolution anticipated in October to award a contract and move the project forward.

King Cove Road Update - Administrator Bailey provided updates on three pending legal cases involving the King Cove Road Project.

The Land Exchange Litigation received a court decision on August 18, 2026, identifying violations of ANILCA Title XI, the Endangered Species Act, and the Refuge Act. However, the Court also upheld several aspects of the land exchange decision. The adverse findings are expected to be challenged.

In the Corps of Engineers Section 404 Clean Water Act Permit Litigation, the State suspended the permit following the land exchange decision, prompting environmental groups to withdraw their motions for temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions.

In the Compatibility Determination Litigation, the Court denied Defenders of Wildlife's request for a temporary restraining order on August 31, 2026. Defenders subsequently appealed to the Ninth Circuit and sought an injunction pending appeal.

With no court order currently preventing work, construction began on September 1, 2026, while litigation continues.

Cold Bay Dock Repairs - On August 14, 2026, the Borough was informed that a portion of the Cold Bay Dock was damaged. The State of Alaska has inspected the dock, and it was determined that the

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

access trestle to the Cold Bay Dock sustained structural damage consistent with a significant vessel-related loading event. The Borough has issued an insurance claim to APRA and is working with the State of Alaska, PND Engineers and the City of Cold Bay on determining a solution.

Annual Report – was published and a link was provided in the report.

Mayor Osterback asked Warren and Gary if they are moving gravel now in King Cove for the road. Gary reported that gravel mining and stockpiling are underway for the King Cove Road Project, with gravel placement expected to begin within the next few days. The Commissioner and Chief of Staff Tyson Gallagher plan to visit King Cove the following Thursday to review the project's progress. Drone footage is also being arranged to provide visual updates, which may be made available online for the Assembly and public to follow construction progress.

Glen asked about the maintenance director position. Administrator Bailey said she hasn't had a chance to draft it. But it is on the to-do list.

- **Executive Assistant's Report**

Deeptree, Inc – IT Provider - Rebecca Mothershead with Deeptree will be in Sand Point on September 14th, then head to King Cove on the 16th before returning to Anchorage on the 18th. While she is in both communities, she can assist with any tech items.

Essential Air Service - Second letter to USDOT regarding Essential Air Service (EAS) was received on August 17, but no response has been received. The Borough plans to follow up in mid-to-late September and continues to advocate for reliable and sustainable air service in the region. Administration has also explored alternative options to improve air service, but available solutions remain limited and do not adequately address the region's needs.

Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update - The draft risk assessment has been reviewed and the draft plan is now available for public review on the Borough's website and Facebook page. Assembly members have also received copies and are encouraged to review the document. A virtual public meeting is being planned for the following week to gather additional community input. Fairweather Science is expediting the project, with a goal of having the draft plan ready for adoption by October. Residents are encouraged to participate in the ongoing survey to ensure input from communities throughout the region is included in the plan.

Other Items

- Met with USFWS to discuss displaying an educational display on Steller's eiders in the Cold Bay Terminal.
- Working in Operations Hero to get work orders assigned and closed out for each school.

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

North Pacific Fishery Management Council - The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) will meet October 8–13 at the Egan Center to elect officers and adopt groundfish and crab harvest specifications. The Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel will meet October 5–7 and October 7–9, respectively.

The Ecosystem Committee will meet October 5–6 to discuss potential revisions to the Groundfish Management Policy and improvements to Council communications. Final groundfish specifications are scheduled for adoption in December.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Nominations for the Advisory Panel and Scientific and Statistical Committee remain open through October 31. The October meeting will also mark the first meeting for new Council members Chad See and Forrest Bowers.

Alaska Board of Fisheries - The Alaska Board of Fisheries Work Session is scheduled for October 28–29 at the Egan Center to review Agenda Change Requests (ACRs) and other business. Written comments are due October 13, and the Aleutians East Borough will sponsor an off-site meeting room (Room 5) during the session.

The Board of Fisheries Process, Management and Research Needs Committee is also expected to meet, although a date has not been confirmed. Additionally, a Joint Protocol Committee meeting between the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Board of Fisheries is scheduled for October 16 in Anchorage to discuss trawl fisheries and other issues. Written comments are accepted through October 9, and in-person testimony will be permitted.

Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission - The Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) met on September 2 and voted to adopt new regulations establishing the Cook Inlet East Side Set Net administrative area, as authorized by HB 117. Both Commissioners, Tracy Welch and Chair Rick Green, supported the regulations. The Commission also approved several fee adjustments, including both increases and reductions. The meeting and presentations are available on YouTube.

Municipal Land Entitlement – Following an audit, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) determined that the Aleutians East Borough has fulfilled and exceeded its municipal land entitlement of 7,633 acres. The Borough currently has 4,251 acres conveyed and 3,627 acres approved for conveyance. As a result, DNR is closing out approximately 492 acres of conditionally approved land at Salt Water Lagoon. The draft AEB Municipal Lands Report has also been updated, with plans to include an appendix of Borough-owned municipal tidelands in the next draft.

Fisheries Debates - Ernie Weiss reported attending the gubernatorial fisheries debate in Kodiak, which featured four candidates and was also attended by representatives from APICDA and Trident. He noted a last-minute change in candidate participation that occurred after his written report was submitted. A recording of the debate is available on YouTube, and a congressional debate is scheduled for Saturday.

- **Fishery Analyst's Report**

AFSC Cod Tagging Project - An update was provided on the Cod Tagging Project, noting that the remaining three NOAA technical memorandums have been published and the findings are being incorporated into cod stock assessments. The Borough is also moving forward with an additional genetics study in collaboration with Dr. Laura Spencer of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center. The study will analyze 96 tagged cod samples to determine sex and examine potential migration patterns, providing valuable information for future stock assessments. The approximately \$21,957 project will be funded through the fisheries research budget.

Additionally, the project team attended a three-day writing workshop in Seattle, where members advanced their data analyses, finalized manuscript outlines and figures, and assigned the remaining writing tasks in preparation for publication.

Unimak Acoustic Telemetry Project - with ongoing data analysis and preparation of research findings. The project team is exploring two upcoming funding opportunities through the North Pacific Research Board to expand the acoustic array network and establish a sustainable, long-term monitoring program. The proposed expansion would include partnerships with local fishermen for array maintenance, a sustainable funding model, and improved systems for collecting, analyzing, and sharing data.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

The importance of continued tagging research was emphasized following a recent Groundfish Plan Team meeting, where stock assessment authors presented how the project's tagging data are being incorporated into a new spatial cod assessment model. The findings could have implications for understanding seasonal cod migration and future fisheries management. Additional tagging was requested, reinforcing the need to expand the project in a consistent and cost-effective manner.

Salmon Tagging Pilot - The research team continues to analyze data and prepare manuscripts while developing a proposal to expand salmon tagging efforts. The proposed expansion includes additional acoustic research and the release of new tags on chum and sockeye salmon in June of next year.

The team is also exploring ways to use satellite tagging data to quantify chum salmon conservation achieved by local fishermen through the adaptive management program. The goal is to document and publish these conservation efforts. Additional funding opportunities and potential equipment support are being explored to expand the research.

Others - An update was provided on participation in the September North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) meeting as an Advisory Panel member, where several research proposals with potential benefits to regional fisheries were reviewed. Work is also underway on a survey to collect information about salmon excluder use among the local fishing fleet. The survey results will be summarized and provided to Council staff for presentation at the upcoming Joint Protocol Committee meeting.

Tom asked Charlotte whether there are any available estimates or percentages indicating how much the Eastern Bering Sea cod population contributes to the Western Gulf of Alaska cod population.

Charlotte explained that the cod assessment model currently under development will provide a more detailed estimate of how much Eastern Bering Sea cod biomass contributes to the Western Gulf of Alaska. Preliminary estimates from stock assessment authors suggest that a 30% migration rate would represent approximately 3% of the Bering Sea biomass, while a 50% migration rate would increase that contribution to approximately 6.8%. She emphasized that even these relatively small percentages could represent a significant contribution to the Western Gulf cod population.

Assembly/ Mayor's Comments

Warren provided an update on the King Cove Road Project and recognized several local residents who successfully completed their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and are preparing to begin work. He reported that approximately 29 people are currently employed on the project, with plans to hire another 10 workers in the coming days.

Construction is progressing rapidly, with crews working extended hours to haul, crush, and stockpile gravel and rock for the first 2.8 miles of roadway and future bridge construction. Warren also highlighted the involvement of the local Tribe, including an arrangement to use the Tribal Hall for meals, which will generate additional revenue for the community.

He expressed satisfaction with the project's progress and noted that efforts will continue during the winter to secure funding for the remaining road construction toward Cold Bay. Ongoing litigation in the Ninth Circuit remains a consideration as the project moves forward.

Aleutians East Borough
Regular Assembly Meeting Minutes

Public Comments

Next Meeting Date

October 8, 2026, 2026 Regular Meeting

Adjournment

Chris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Glen. Meeting adjourned 3:54 PM____


Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

ATTEST


Beverly Rosete, Clerk