



## LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

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### STATE OF ALASKA LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting for March 30, 2023 at 10:00 am  
Anchorage  
Via Zoom Meeting

Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Present at the meeting are commissioners John Harrington, Lance Roberts, and Larry Wood and Ely Cyrus. All commissioners are attending via video teleconference. Also attending the meeting were Rep. Mike Cronk (R-Tok), Dave Stancliff, staff to representative Cronk, Sara Chambers, Jedediah Smith (LBC staff), Sandra Moeller (director, Division of Community and Regional Affairs), Gene Hickey (Dept. of Law), as well as two members of the public who were not identified.

Commissioner Roberts moved to approve a letter of support for House Bill 69 and Senate Bill 79, legislation for reclassification of certain first class cities to second class cities. Ely Cyrus seconded the motion.

Commissioner Roberts moved to amend the statement to lower the population threshold to 350 persons. Commissioner Trotter seconded the motion. Commissioner Harrington said the commission should stay away from specific numbers in making a supportive statement for legislation reclassifying distressed cities, to avoid tying the hands of the Commission. He said the Commission could have a more in-depth discussion at a later time about the issue and develop further recommendations for legislation. A.A.G Gene Hickey suggested the Commission could focus on how the legislation helps Tanana, and suggest a sunset provision to allow the Commission more time to discuss specific recommendations for future legislation. Commissioner Cyrus said he is supportive of streamlining the reclassification process, because many communities might not have the capacity to take on filing a petition. He said this type of action should come from the community, rather than from the state. Commissioner Trotter said he has no preference on the population question, and that the commission should approve a general statement in support, and say as little else as possible. Commissioner Roberts, with consent from the second, withdrew the motion on population.

Commissioner Roberts moved to recommend a process that allows a percentage of the voters in a community to submit the request for reclassification as an alternate path to the city council process, and approval would have to be a local option election. Commissioner Trotter seconded the motion. Commissioner Harrington reminded the Commission they are here to discuss a specific community today. He doesn't feel comfortable making more recommendations today. Commissioner Harrington asked who would be in charge of such an election. LBC staff Jed Smith clarified that in the unincorporated borough, the Division of Elections administers elections for communities where there is no municipal government. Commissioner Wood said there might a community that doesn't have the capacity to run an election. Maybe the commission could recommend the Division of

Election runs an election like the one related to this legislation. Commissioner Roberts said he agreed. With the consent of his second (Trotter), Roberts amended his motion to recommend the Division of Elections administer a local option election on reclassification. The motion to amend passes 5-0.

Commissioner Roberts moved to recommend a two year sunset for the bill. Commission Cyrus seconded the motion. The motion passes 5-0.

Commissioner Roberts moved to amend the main motion requesting authors of the legislation include language requesting the Local Boundary Commission provide recommendations on general reclassification changes. Commission Trotter seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Chair Wood restated the motion in support of the reclassification legislation with the following recommendations: include an alternative path to the request for reclassification from 15% of the registered voters in the community; that a subsequent local option election in the community be administered by the division of elections; that a sunset provision of two years be added to the legislation; and that the legislation direct the LBC to evaluate the reclassification process.

Commissioner Roberts suggested a draft of the letter could be circulated and voted on by email.

Sara Chambers said the Commission does not need permission from the Legislature to recommend changes, and added that voting by email does not comply with the Open Meetings Act.

AAG Hickey suggested the request to the legislature directing the commission to review reclassification might not be appropriate for this legislation.

Roberts, with the consent of his second, removed the request to review the document.

Commissioner Roberts motioned to delegate the LBC Chair testify before the legislature on the bill. Commissioner Trotter seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Harrington said it is vital that the city state what powers it will continue to exercise after its reclassification.

Chair Wood asked whether any members of the public wished to comment on any non-agenda items. There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:18 pm.

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION**

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LARRY WOOD, CHAIR

**ATTEST:**

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JEDEDIAH SMITH, STAFF