



LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

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STATE OF ALASKA LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting for February 18, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.
Via Zoom

Chair Larry Wood called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 p.m. Commissioners John Harrington, Clayton Trotter, Ely Cyrus and Clay Walker were present.. Also present were DCRA staff Grace Beaujean and Lynn Kenealy, and Assistant Attorney General Gene Hickey.

Commissioner Cyrus moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Harrington seconded the motion. The motion was adopted 5-0.

Commissioner Harrington moved to approve the minutes for the meetings on November 12, 2024, December 17, 2024, January 21, 2025 and January 28, 2025. Commissioner Walker seconded the motion. The motion was adopted 5-0.

Chair Wood said during this meeting for reconsideration, the LBC would be acting in a quasi-judicial manner and would take up the decisions pertaining to the boundary standard in 3 AAC 110.060 and the best interest of the state standard in 3 AAC 110.065, and that the commission would not be receiving new evidence or hearing new testimony. Chair Wood also said the commission agreed to hear the reconsideration request, and received a responsive brief from the City of Hoonah regarding the Submerged Lands Act, but since the issue was not addressed in a timely manner for reconsideration, it would not be properly before the commission and the LBC would not address it. Nor would the commission take up a responsive brief from the community of Elfin Cove, since it is not a respondent as defined in LBC regulations.

Commissioner Trotter moved to find that the boundary standard in 3 AAC 110.060 is met. Commissoiner Harrington seconded the motion.

Commissioner Harrington said the Xunaa Borough varied slightly from the model borough boundaries. He said the petition embraces an area and population with common interest to the maximum degree possible. Commissioner Trotter said he agreed, and that the excluded communities had a chance to join the borough and refused. Chair Wood said the proposed boundaries exclude the communities of Pelican, Gustavus and Tenakee Springs, and therefore, exclude them from participating in collective decisions regarding the region's resources. Commissioner Harrington said there is a strong disincentive for second class cities in the unorganized borough to tax themselves to pay for education, and until the legislature makes a change, the commission will always be faced with a decision similar to this. Chair Wood said the commission had near universal agreement on the

Larry Wood, Chair

Christopher Coutu, First Judicial District ♦ Ely Cyrus, Second Judicial District
Richard "Clayton" Trotter, Third Judicial District ♦ Clay Walker, Fourth Judicial District

boundaries except for the fact that the three communities of Pelican, Gustavus and Tenakee Springs were excluded.

Commissioners Trotter, Cyrus, and Harrington voted in favor of the motion that the Xunaa Borough petition satisfied the boundaries standard. Commissioners Wood and Walker voted against the motion. The motion was adopted 3-2.

Commissioner Harrington moved that the commission finds Xunaa Borough petition is in the best interests of the state. Commissioner Trotter seconded the motion. Commissioner Walker said he does not think the Xunaa Borough petition meets the best interests standard because it does not extend local government to a significant new population. Commissioner Harrington said that because the proposal extends boundaries to a significant area, the petition does meet the standard. Commissioner Cyrus said that initially the petition stated Xunaa would rely on DNR for planning services outside the townsite area, but that the petitioner clarified that was not their intent. Additionally, he said if the petition standard considers not only financial cost or benefit to the state, but also quality of life of residents, then he believes the petition meets the standard. Commissioner Walker said if the petition is approved with the exclusions, it will be more difficult for the Commission and the state to deal with the exclusions in the future. Commissioner Harrington, Trotter and Cyrus voted yes that the petition meets the best interest standards. Commissioners Wood and Walker voted no. The motion was adopted 3-2.

Commissioner Harrington moved that the December 2024 decision approving the petition be upheld and the motion for reconsideration be denied. Commissioner Trotter seconded the motion. The motion was adopted 5-0.

Chair Wood clarified that a new written decision would be issued within 30 days.

Commissioner Trotter motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Harrington seconded the motion. The motion was adopted 5-0.

APPROVED: December 16, 2025

LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

LARRY WOOD, CHAIR

ATTEST:

JEDEDIAH SMITH, STAFF