



AAMC Executive Board
Brenda Ballou, President
Brenda Henry, 1st Vice President
April Trickey, 2nd Vice President
Jamie Heinz, Immediate Past President
Dani Snider, Secretary
Renee Krause, Treasurer
Kim Lane, Communications Director
Beth McEwen, Education Director
Portland Highbaugh, Alaska Municipal League

Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks
Annual Business Meeting
December 6, 2022
Dena'ina Center, Anchorage, Alaska

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Ballou (City of Seward) called the Annual Business Meeting of the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks (AAMC) to order at 12:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Ballou.

ROLL CALL

President Ballou called the roll for Executive Board members; all members except Education Director Beth McEwen (City & Borough of Juneau) and Communications Director Kim Lane (City & Borough of Wrangell) were present. **President Ballou** stated that **Melissa Jacobsen** (City of Homer) would act as Parliamentarian. A quorum of the membership was confirmed by Membership Committee Chair **Adena Benn** (Fairbanks North Star Borough).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Annual Business Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021

Lonnie McKechnie (Mat-Su Borough), seconded by **Nova Javier** (Kodiak Island Borough), moved to approve the November 18, 2021 meeting minutes.

President Ballou asked members whether there were any corrections or amendments to the minutes as presented. No corrections were offered.

President Ballou called for objection to the approval of the minutes.
No members objected, and the minutes were approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

President Ballou stated that reports from the following officers were submitted in writing and are included in the agenda packet:

- A. Immediate Past President
- B. President

- C. First Vice President / Conference Planning Committee
- D. Second Vice President / Committee Chairs
- E. Treasurer / Finance Committee
- F. Secretary
- G. Communications Director
- H. Education Director

President Ballou asked whether any Officers wished to add to their reports. **April Trickey** (Fairbanks North Star Borough) requested to add to her report as 2nd Vice President.

April Trickey spoke about the Executive Board's frustration with the change in location and timing of the annual conference. She encouraged members to provide input to the Board via a survey that would go out following the conference; she stated that the Board would like to know how the membership feels.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

President Ballou stated that reports from the following Committees were submitted in writing and are included in the agenda packet:

- A. AML Assistance
- B. Elections
- C. Banquet Décor
- D. Clerk of the Year
- E. Conference Planning (see First Vice President's report)
- F. Education (see Education Director's report)
- G. Exhibitor & Sponsor
- H. Finance (see Treasurer's report)
- I. Fundraising
- J. Legislative
- K. Membership
- L. Mentoring
- M. Northwest Clerks Institute Education
- N. Publications
- O. Records Management
- P. Scholarship

President Ballou asked whether any Committee Chairs wished to add to their reports, and no Committee Chairs made such a request.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of the AAMC 2023 Annual Budget

President Ballou stated that the Executive Board approved the 2023 budget with a number of amendments. She stated that the budget is before the membership for consideration and final approval. She stated that because the conference is in a new location, there are some financial unknowns, but the Board did its best to make predictions.

Michele Turner (Kenai Peninsula Borough), seconded by **Jessica Earnshaw** (City & Borough of Sitka), moved to approve the AAMC 2023 Annual Budget.

Treasurer Renee Krause (City of Homer) reported that she has been wading through the budget process and that former AAMC Treasurer April Trickey has been a big help. She shared that the annual budget process has been overwhelming, and there was a lot of information that was not available or provided in a timely manner due to the many changes. She stated that at one point the general account balance was \$0, and \$15,000 had to be transferred from reserves. She stated that when she drafted the budget, she still did not have all the actual numbers from the Alaska Municipal League (AML). She stated she believes the AAMC is still okay as an organization, but there are still a lot of questions in her mind. She expressed concerns with the budget and offered to answer questions from members.

Jamie Newman (City of Wasilla) asked how much money remained in reserves after the transfer. **Treasurer Krause** replied that she did not know. She stated, however, that the figures presented in the proposed budget reflect the account balances provided by AML as of October 31. When asked by a member if she would expound on her concerns with the budget, **Treasurer Krause** stated that she hesitates to do so in such an open forum.

A member asked whether fundraising dollars go directly to scholarships, and **Treasurer Krause** replied that they do. **President Ballou** explained that registration funds cover the cost of the conference, and fundraising dollars cover scholarships.

April Trickey stated that turnover with AML staff has caused difficulty in communications between the AML and the AAMC. She stated that when she was Treasurer, she was able to obtain information quickly, but that has not been the case for Treasurer Krause. She explained how things have been done by AML and explained that she and Treasurer Krause continue working through issues with AML staff to clean up the AAMC books. **April Trickey** stated that the AAMC saw a loss of about \$11,000 the previous year.

Jamie Newman asked whether it is prudent to offer scholarships in the coming year under such financial uncertainty. She wondered whether the membership should ask the Board to restrict scholarship funds until a better financial picture is available.

Kacie Paxton (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), seconded by **Shellie Saner** (City of Kenai), moved to amend the 2023 budget by removing the line item for scholarships and holding those funds until the AAMC has better financial information from AML.

Heidi Geagel (City of Seldovia) questioned whether the AAMC bylaws would prohibit scholarship funds from being held as proposed in the amendment.

Rochelle Rodak (City of Fairbanks) stated that fundraising advertisements and materials state that all funds raised will go directly toward clerk scholarships. She expressed concern with the proposed amendment.

Johni Blankenship (City of Soldotna) asked the maker of the motion to clarify whether it was her intent to restrict the scholarship funds from being used on anything else while they are being held.

Kacie Paxton stated that her intent was to simply hold the scholarship funds until the Treasurer has a better idea of where the organization is at financially.

Treasurer Krause stated that the AAMC gaming account contains about \$6,900, which must be used for scholarships. **President Ballou** asked whether it is required that scholarships be issued or whether the AAMC can reserve the gaming funds for scholarships. **Treasurer Krause** replied that scholarships must be issued.

Kim Stanker (City of Ketchikan) asked for clarification on which scholarships would be affected. **President Ballou** replied that the amendment would affect scholarships provided for in the 2023 budget.

April Trickey stated that the gaming account is separate from other funds. She stated that if the gaming funds are not spent, the AAMC must have a viable reason. She stated that if the gaming funds raised at the conference are not spent, the AAMC could potentially be in violation with state law.

President Ballou asked whether the maker of the motion would like to make a clarification regarding the gaming funds or whether anyone would like to make a secondary amendment to that effect.

Elise Sorum-Birk (City of Valdez), seconded by **Rochelle Rodak**, moved to amend the amendment on the floor by clarifying that the funds be held in reserve in accordance with state law, and if there is a provision in state law that requires the expenditure of funds, that should be reflected in the budget.

President Ballou asked members if there was any discussion on the secondary amendment; there was no discussion.

President Ballou called for objection on the secondary amendment;
no members objected.

President Ballou asked members if there was any discussion on the motion to amend; there was no discussion.

President Ballou called for objection on the motion to amend;
eleven members objected. Confirming that a majority did not object, **President Ballou** declared the motion to amend carried.

Jamie Newman stated she could not support a budget with unknown numbers. She asked if there was any way to vote on the budget electronically at a later time after more information is obtained.

Lonnie McKechnie expressed agreement with Jamie Newman. She stated that if the AAMC is no longer a viable organization, the scholarship funds will do no good.

Rachel Tussey (City of Homer) stated that she was raising her hand earlier to add to the discussion and to ask for the amended motion to be repeated. **President Ballou** asked for the amended motion to be repeated, and **Secretary Dani Snider** (City of Fairbanks) repeated the amendment and secondary amendment. **President Ballou** stated that her understanding is if the funds earned under the gaming permit are required by state statute to be expended, that will be done; she further explained that the motion would preserve all other scholarship funds until clearer numbers are received.

Kacie Paxton asked whether the Board and Treasurer feel there is enough information to move forward when the budget numbers are more solid or whether they would like more action from the membership before the next annual business meeting. **Treasurer Krause** stated that she feels the organization is financially solid, but there are still some questions regarding the financial statement. **President Ballou** stated that whether input from the membership is necessary will depend on what the numbers look like. She commented that the new President will have the authority to call a special meeting of the membership if the numbers require it. **Kacie Paxton** stated that she wants to ensure the Board feels comfortable moving forward and carrying out business with the direction given. **President Ballou** stated that as soon as information is received from the AML, it will be communicated to the membership. She stated that if the 2023 budget is in good shape, the Board could move forward and notify the Scholarship Committee that the funds are available. She stated that if the numbers are a little more concerning, a special meeting could be called.

Di Cathcart (City & Borough of Juneau) stated that, as the Scholarship Committee Chair, she would like to understand the timeline for the Northwest Clerks Institute (NCI) Scholarship, as that process usually begins shortly after the annual conference. **President Ballou** suggested that the Scholarship Committee move forward with the application process as usual but withhold the distribution of funds until further notice. **Shellie Saner** stated that the challenge with that process will be not knowing how much funding is available and how many scholarships can be awarded. **Joann Tilton** (NCI Director) stated she would hate to see the scholarship process be held up. She shared that NCI registration would open in mid-December, and most scholarship applicants usually register knowing whether they would be receiving a scholarship reimbursement.

Michele Turner asked if the Board feels confident that it will receive answers from AML within the next few months or whether hiring a third-party auditor should be considered. **Renee Krause** referenced page 11 of the agenda packet and pointed out that there was \$37,960 in the general account as of October 31. She continued by stating that there was \$6,923.81 in the gaming account and over \$34,000 in the reserve account as of the same date. **Renee Krause** confirmed that she knows those figures to be a fact. She clarified that what is not accounted for is a little over \$6,500 in a report of undeposited funds from August and the revenues taken in since November. She

stated she did not intend to create concern that the AAMC is not a viable organization. She stated the AAMC has funds and can continue doing business.

Rochelle Rodak stated that over \$6,000 has been earned in gaming funds at the 2022 conference in addition to what is already in the gaming account. She indicated that there should be enough funds in the gaming account to move forward with scholarships in the interim.

April Trickey stated that the Executive Board made several amendments to the proposed budget before it was presented to the membership. She stated the Board ensured that expenses were less than revenues for items such as the Athenian Dialogue. She commented that the Board cut the budget by at least \$18,000, and she reminded the membership that a budget is only a projection. She stated that the AAMC bylaws state that the budget must be approved at least three days prior to the end of the calendar year, and she encouraged the membership to approve the proposed budget. **April Trickey** stated the unknown is the cost of the current conference, but she believes the AAMC would be pretty close to breaking even. She stated the important thing is to make sure registration costs cover conference expenses. She stated that if there are major changes, the Board would need to communicate with the membership. She stated that the Executive Board needs input from the membership.

Debbie Speakman (City of Kachemak) stated that scholarship funds can be held in perpetuity – even in the gaming account – as long as the AAMC reports the gaming revenues.

President Ballou asked members if there was any more discussion, and there was none.

President Ballou asked all voting members who were opposed to approving the AAMC 2023 Annual Budget, as Amended, to stand. No members stood, and President Ballou declared the motion to approve the AAMC 2023 Annual Budget carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. Election of Officers

President Ballou asked Taylor Lee, Elections Committee Chair, to come forward.

Taylor Lee (City of Ketchikan) listed the members of the Elections Committee. She listed the three positions up for election to the Executive Board: Second Vice President, Education Director, and Secretary. She reported that Beth McEwen was the sole candidate for Education Director, Dani Snider was the sole candidate for Secretary, and there were no candidates for Second Vice President. She clarified that nominations for Second Vice President would be taken from the floor.

Taylor Lee called for objection to reelecting Beth McEwen as Education Director; no members objected.

Taylor Lee called for objection to reelecting Dani Snider as Secretary; no members objected.

Taylor Lee asked for nominations from the floor for the position of Second Vice President. **Brenda Henry** (Mat-Su Borough), seconded by **Kacie Paxton**, nominated Lori Strickler (City of Bethel) from the floor. **Lori Strickler** accepted the nomination. **Taylor Lee** called for other nominations from the floor; no other nominations were given.

Taylor Lee called for objection to electing Lori Strickler as Second Vice President; no members objected.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Alekka Fullerton (Haines Borough) asked when there might be feedback regarding the dates for next year's conference. **President Ballou** commented that the AAMC conference was switched back this year to the way it used to be when it was held just prior to the AML conference. She stated that the change to the date and location of the conference in 2022 did not originate with the AAMC, but the AAMC tried to make the best of it. She stated that the Executive Board has had conversations about the change to the date and location and will continue to discuss those issues.

Brenda Henry stated that the AAMC Conference Planning Committee will hold a meeting on Friday, December 9 to discuss how things went at the conference and to begin putting together a survey to send out to the AAMC membership to gather feedback prior to any decision-making.

Alekka Fullerton expressed hope that the AAMC would have input on the issue, and she listed several challenges that came with the changes.

Kacie Paxton requested that the AAMC Executive Board form three ad-hoc committees to review, research, and report back on the following topics: 1) AAMC Treasurer and accounting duties and whether to continue contracting with AML for accounting services or have the Treasurer take on those duties; 2) the timeline and venue of the annual conference, including a survey of the AAMC membership; and 3) whether to remain in conjunction with the AML for the AAMC annual conference. **Kacie Paxton** thanked the Board for its work throughout the year and for putting on a great conference; she commented that it has been a difficult year.

President Ballou apologized to the guest speakers who were waiting for the next education session to begin. She asked the membership to reserve further comments for later in the evening at the annual banquet.

Michele Turner thanked Renee Krause and April Trickey for providing the membership with information about the annual budget and for allowing for a good discussion.

Jamie Newman thanked President Ballou and members of the Executive Board. She expressed concern about AAMC's trend of dipping into its reserves.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the membership, **President Ballou** declared the meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

Brenda J. Henry for

Brenda Henry, MMC *for* Brenda Ballou, MMC
President



D. Danyielle Snider, MMC
Secretary

Minutes Approved by Executive Board: January 11, 2023

Ratified by AAMC Membership: December 5, 2023