

ALASKA MINERALS COMMISSION

Meeting Notes

November 14, 2024

IN ATTENDANCE:

Alaska Minerals Commission (AMC): Chair Enric Fernandez, Vice Chair Justin Seavey, Chris Kennedy, Tisha Kuhns, Victor Ross

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED): Sally Russell Cox, Division of Community and Regional Affairs Staff to the AMC

Members of the Public: Cheyenna Kuplak, Doyon Limited.

KEY OUTCOMES:

- The Commission advanced its annual reporting process while prioritizing critical issues like permitting predictability, local benefits from mining, and public transparency.
- Follow-up actions included coordination on report revisions and planning for the next meeting.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call:

- Chair Enric Fernandez called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.
- Roll call confirmed quorum and introductions included Commission members, and State and public attendees.
- Declarations of Conflict of Interest (AS 39.52): No commissioners had conflicts of interest to report.

II. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:

- Corrections were noted for agenda items IV and V referencing the incorrect year of the annual reports: Item IV: the 2023 report should be changed to 2024 report; Item V: 2024 report should be changes to 2025.
- The agenda was approved as corrected. Commissioner Tisha Kuhns moved to approve the agenda as corrected. Vice Chair Justin Seavey seconded the motion.
- Minutes from the previous meeting were also approved. Commissioner Tisha Kuhns moved to approve the meeting minutes. Vice Chair Justin Seavey seconded the motion.

III. Recap of Previous Meeting

- Chair Enric Fernandez referred to the testimony of Mr. Allan Nakanishi highlighting a critical continuity issue in the Department of Environmental Conservation's Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program due to upcoming retirements of experienced staff. Chair Fernandez noted that other departments

might be in a similar state where staffing is going to be an issue for permitting predictability and continuity in the future.

IV. Review 2024 Report:

- Members evaluated and suggested edits for the 2024 report.
- Discussions focused on enhancing the Commission's public-facing landing page with consistent messaging.
- Members were reminded to contribute visuals to illustrate the report.
- **Top Priorities:**
 - Continued emphasis on advocating for a comprehensive mineral development plan for Alaska, including workforce development, infrastructure needs, and permitting process improvements.
 - Integration of critical mineral strategies into state planning was flagged as a priority.

V. Propose and Discuss Changes for the 2025 Report:

- Members agreed to refresh and update recurring topics while introducing new issues.
- Specific focus areas included:
 - Predictability and efficiency of permitting processes.
 - Sustaining institutional knowledge in permitting agencies amid pending retirements.
 - Redistribution of mining license taxes to benefit local communities.
 - Enhanced support for geological surveys and collaboration with state agencies.
- **Collaboration on Report:**
 - Members decided to email edits individually to Sally for compilation and redistribution.
 - Drafts will be shared for review and approval before finalizing the report.
- **Assignments:**
 - **Page 1: Alaska Minerals Commission:**
 - Use this text for the AMC website [Note: completed]
 - **Page 2: Commissioners:** Enric to update this section
 - Enric - Add note about how the public can apply to join that the AMC and join in.
 - **Page 4: Introduction:** Enric to update
 - **Page 5: Top Priority:** All Commissioners help update this section
 - This point is still valid.
 - Need to highlight progress completed by the SOA. Susitna Road, defense of Ambler. Other.
 - **Infrastructure:** Enric – review and edit
 - **Page 6: Workforce Development:** Justin

- **Education:** Victor
- **Continued State Support:** Tisha
- **Page 7: State Priorities**
 - **1. Predictability of the State of Alaska Permitting Timeframes:**
Justin
 - i. Focus on continuity of staff/government.
 - **2. Reallocate portions of the State of Alaska mining license tax to communities, while precluding targeted local severance taxes:** Enric to work with Victor
 - Consider adding more on how communities could benefit.
- **Page 8: 3. Support the Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys:**
Tisha

VI. Public Testimony:

- A public attendee expressed gratitude for the Commission’s efforts but did not provide formal testimony.

VII. Schedule Next Meeting:

- A follow-up meeting was scheduled for **Friday, November 22, 2024, at 10 a.m.**
- Members were encouraged to continue working on assigned report sections to maintain progress.

VIII. Adjournment:

- The meeting concluded at 11:02 a.m.