



## LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

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### STATE OF ALASKA LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting for January 6, 2026 at 11 a.m.  
Via Zoom

Chair Larry Wood called the meeting to order at approximately 11:01 a.m. Commissioners Christopher Coutu, and Clay Walker were present. Commissioner Cyrus joined the meeting at approximately 11:05 a.m. Also present were DCRA staff Jedediah Smith, Sally Cox, Sandra Moller and Nichole Tham, and Assistant Attorney General Gene Hickey and Maria Smilde

Commissioner Walker moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Coutu seconded the motion. **The motion was adopted 3-0.**

Lori Weed, finance director with the Department of Education and Early Development commented on the annual report to clarify that REAA facilities and schools are by default owned by the state and conveyance occurs when requested. The department does not initiate transfer of ownership as a strategy to avoid deferred maintenance. Weed suggested deleting the first half of the first full paragraph of the section on education in the draft report to the legislature.

Matt Obermiller, a resident of the Copper Basin, commented that the report is prejudicial in his view, specifically with respect to the language suggesting that boroughs be formed in the unincorporated areas of Alaska.

Commissioner Walker moved to approve the new draft of the annual report to the legislature. Commissioner Coutu seconded the motion.

Commissioner Walker moved to amend the report to incorporate the recommendations from the Department of Education and Early Development. Commissioner Cyrus seconded the motion. **The motion was approved 4-0.**

Commissioner Cyrus moved to remove the second section of the paragraph regarding taxing authority and lack of ability of the REAA school districts to generate revenue. Commissioner Walker seconded the motion. Commissioner Cyrus said he did not see any references that supported the statement. **The motion was approved 4-0.**

Commissioner Coutu acknowledged the public comment alleging the report's bias. Commissioner Wood said the commission has a long history of studying the unorganized borough, and recommending that disincentives to borough formation be remediated, citing the 2003 report on unorganized areas that meet borough incorporation standards, as well as a 2023 article in the Alaska Law Review journal. The motion to adopt the annual report to the legislature passed 4-0.

Assistant Attorney General Gene Hickey introduced Maria Smilde as the LBC's new Assistant Attorney General.

The commission agreed to meet to discuss Administrative Order 360 on Monday, January 26 at 1 p.m.

Commissioner Coutu moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 11:39 a.m. Commissioner Walker seconded the motion. **The motion passed 4-0.**

**APPROVED: January 26, 2026**

**LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION**

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LARRY WOOD, CHAIR

**ATTEST:**

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JEDEDIAH SMITH, STAFF