Anchorage Answers

As of May 25, the Anchorage self-response rate for the 2020 Census, measured as a response to the mailers sent out by the Census Bureau, was 58.9%. You can take the 2020 Census online, over the phone or by paper. Learn more at 2020census.gov.

May Highlights

The Assembly approved EO 2020-4(S-1), a proposal by the administration, which provided additional financial resources to address the Municipality’s COVID-19 response. Of note was two last-minute additions to provide funding for pilot programs for rental assistance and small business / non-profit assistance, totaling $1M for each program. Expenses accrued in response to the pandemic are reported to the Assembly every 15 days and are available to the public.
Upcoming Items

In addition to the Highlights from May, here’s what’s on the horizon over the next month for the Assembly.

Emergency Extension

On June 2, the Assembly voted 9-2 to extend the emergency declaration past its current June 5 deadline. The emergency declaration will continue through July 31st. The extension allows the mayor to procure supplies more quickly, and allows flexibility to accommodate work from home. These considerations are especially important in light of the recent spike in cases around the state, including Anchorage.

Taxi Cab Permit Fees

The administration put forward AO 2020-52, an ordinance discounting Title 11 permit fees for taxi cabs in 2020, including inspection and annual permit fees, by 50%. This was brought forward as a recommendation from the Mayor’s Economic Resiliency Task Force.

Succession of Powers

The administration put forward AO 2020-21 in February, which was meant to ensure that emergency powers could be exercised in the temporary absence or incapacity of the Mayor or other delegated authority. This item was postponed once again to a meeting in August to allow for the Assembly and administration to further discuss and hopefully come to alignment on the line of succession. The line of succession supported by the Assembly through an amendment is: municipal manager, then the Assembly Chair. No further public testimony will be heard on this item, but members of the public are free to email the Assembly their thoughts.

Property Owner Privacy

Assembly Members Forrest Dunbar, Meg Zaletel and John Weddleton have put forward AO 2020-50, an ordinance to allow property owners to request that their property not be searchable by name. Some of the specific criteria outlined in the ordinance include being a survivor of sexual assault, sexual abuse, or domestic violence. This ordinance is scheduled for public hearing and a vote on June 23.

Alcohol Tax

The administration has put forward the implementation ordinance for the voter-approved alcohol tax, AO 2020-57. This ordinance will establish the procedures to administer, collect, and enforce the alcoholic beverages retail sales tax. This ordinance is scheduled for public hearing and a vote on June 23.
Mandatory Masks

Assembly Members Meg Zaletel and Forrest Dunbar put forward AR 2020-193, a resolution requesting the Mayor issue an order or regulation requiring all individuals during their time of employment have a cloth face covering or better mask. This item failed on a 5-6 vote after a healthy debate. The Mayor still has the authority to pass a mask requirement for businesses as part of his power under the emergency declaration.

COVID-19

Together We Can

The Assembly has finished its first series of roundtables as outlined in our COVID-19 response plan, “Together We Can.” Check out our Assembly website to get updates on future meetings and opportunities to weigh in on the allocation of federal stimulus approved by the Alaska State Legislature.

For information on the current Municipality’s COVID-19 response, as well as the “Maintenance” phase, please visit this website.

If you are struggling with job loss, income loss, or food insecurity, please call 2-1-1 to be connected to available resources that are right for you.

Zoning Update

Assembly Members John Weddleton, Meg Zaletel, Austin Quinn-Davidson and Mayor Berkowitz have put forward AO 2020-58, an ordinance to allow homeless and transient shelters in the B3 Zoning District.

Currently, these facilities can only be built in PLI (Public Lands and Institutions) zoned lands. Public hearing for this item will be on July 14.