

Introduced By: Mayor, Parker
Date: July 26, 2023
Action: Adopted
Vote: 6 Yes, 0 No

CITY OF SOLDOTNA
RESOLUTION 2023-049

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH RESOLUTION 2023-048
PLACING AN ADVISORY QUESTION ON THE BALLOT AT THE NEXT REGULAR ELECTION
TO BE HELD OCTOBER 3, 2023 ASKING WHETHER THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
SHOULD CHANGE ITS REGULAR ELECTION DATE

WHEREAS, the City of Soldotna signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kenai Peninsula Borough on July 7, 2021 for the Intergovernmental Administration of Borough and City Municipal Elections in effect until July 2026; and

WHEREAS, the MOU was approved by the adoption of Joint Resolution No. 2021-001 which was approved by the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly, and the councils of the City of Homer, City of Kenai, City of Seldovia, City of Seward and the City of Soldotna; and

WHEREAS, the MOU states the Kenai Peninsula Borough Clerk's office will program the election(s) and ballot(s) for all regular and special municipal elections, ensure all ballots and equipment is tested and set for municipal elections, will include city candidate and ballot information in the Informational Brochure (aka Voter Pamphlet) as well as other services at a nominal charge to the cities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Soldotna approved the Joint Resolution and signed the MOU in good faith to ensure a long-term relationship and continuity of the administration of elections; and

WHEREAS, if the borough changes its election date the City of Soldotna and all other cities that signed the MOU will be forced to either change their election dates to align with the borough or use unbudgeted tax revenues to purchase their own election equipment; and

WHEREAS, the estimate to purchase election equipment for the City of Soldotna's one precinct is approximately \$19,000, with annual expenses of just under \$5,000; and

WHEREAS, the memo accompanying KPB Resolution 2023-048 provides for pros and cons to consider; and

WHEREAS, the first pro statement states, "historical number indicate there would likely be an increase in voter turnout on even-numbered years when State and Federal elections are occurring on the same day"; and

WHEREAS, the statement fails to mention that historically numbers indicate there is already an increase in voter turnout on even-numbered years for municipal elections regardless of what date the elections are held; and

WHEREAS, the second pro statement states, "voters will only have to remember a single date on which to vote, assuming the cities align local election dates with the borough's regular election date"; and

WHEREAS, the statement fails to mention that the State also conducts a Primary Election on the third Tuesday in August in even numbered years; and

WHEREAS, the fifth pro statement states, "A larger pool of election workers will be needed as there will be two election official teams at each precinct and absentee/early voting locations. Two teams may offer opportunities for more people to get involved in elections and get paid."; and

WHEREAS, the statement fails to mention how difficult it already is to recruit election officials and how it has already one of the most challenging tasks an Election Supervisor faces in administering elections; and

WHEREAS, the final pro statement states, "The Kenai Peninsula Borough voters will decide in one election who is elected to represent them on the local, state, and federal levels"; and

WHEREAS, this statement may actually be a con as voters may actually prefer to know who will be representing them locally prior to voting for state and federal representation; and

WHEREAS, KPB Resolution 2023-048 fails to consider the full impacts of this change and currently does not provide for adequate education to the voters that would be voting on the advisory question.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOLDOTNA, ALASKA:

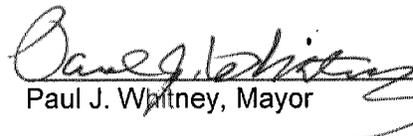
Section 1. That the Mayor and Council of the City of Soldotna oppose KPB Resolution 2023-048.

Section 2. That the Mayor and Council of the City of Soldotna request that Kenai Peninsula Borough form a working group to consider the impacts of such a significant change.

Section 3. That this resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Section 4. Copies of this resolution shall be provided to Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Peter Micciche the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly and the cities of Homer, Kenai, Seldovia and Seward.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL THIS 26TH DAY OF JULY, 2023.


Paul J. Whitney, Mayor

ATTEST:


John Blankenship, MMC, City Clerk

Yes: Carey, Chilson, Hutchings, Nelson, Parker, Wackler
No: None