


Kenai Peninsula Borough
Office of the Borough Clerk

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wayne Ogle, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

THRU: Wayne Ogle, Assembly President

FROM: Holly Montague, Deputy Borough Attorney
Johni Blankenship, Borough Clerk 

DATE: December 21, 2018

RE: Resolution 2019-006, Directing the Kenai Peninsula Borough Clerk to Establish an Election Stakeholders Group to Explore Implementing Optional Election Models to Better Serve Kenai Peninsula Voters and Ratifying a State of Alaska Commission for Human Rights Conciliation Agreement (Ogle)

In 2015 a complaint was filed with the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights ("ASCHR") regarding the accommodations offered to visually impaired voters. The KPB's accommodations are similar to those of municipalities throughout the state. However, in October of 2018 the ASCHR investigation resulted in a finding of probable cause of discrimination.

The borough clerk would like to move forward with accommodating visually impaired voters' ability to vote independently and privately. Therefore, assembly ratification of the conciliation agreement is sought authorizing the borough clerk to explore different options to provide accessible voting methods for all. Specifically included in this exploration will be an evaluation of a by-mail voting system and the establishment of vote centers open for two weeks prior to the election, as well as a review of other options.

The conciliation agreement also requires a stakeholders group be formed to evaluate election methodologies which includes a member representing the visually impaired community. The stakeholders group would also include municipal managers from within the borough, two members of the borough's canvas board, one member representing the League of Women Voters, two assembly members and a member from each city council. Staff support would

be provided by the borough and city clerks, the borough attorney's office, borough IT and GIS.

The borough clerk looks forward to exploring ways to increase voter participation and making exercising the right to vote more accessible for all eligible voters. Your support of this resolution is appreciated.