

DISCUSSION / DECISION on experimenting for a month of two on not publishing the entire assembly agenda in the newspaper to gain feedback

Discussion



Are there any objections for trying this?



City & Borough of Sitka
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Memorandum

To: Mayor and Assembly Members
Cc: Thru Municipal Administrator Mark Gorman 
From: Colleen Ingman, Municipal Clerk 
Date: April 6, 2015
Subject: Publishing of Entire Assembly Agenda in Local Newspaper

In an effort to find areas where the municipality could save money I would like to experiment over the next month or two (depending on how it goes), by not publishing your entire assembly agendas in the newspaper. The agendas would be sent to the radio stations, available on the municipality's website, public library, posted at city hall and available on meeting night. The complete assembly packet is available on the city's web site and at the library.

The only requirement the municipality currently has is to publish the title of ordinances for public hearing (2nd reading) and the time and place of meeting(s). As time has progressed other avenues of publishing the agenda have been made available and are utilized.

Many Alaska clerks are facing budget shortfalls and are looking at ways to save dollars and would like to move in this direction. Fairbanks Borough spends in excess of \$100,000 a year in publishing agendas, and Juneau around \$50,000. Not directly related, but along this line... HB 68 (which is the House Version of SB 36) regarding electronic publication of certain municipal notices (taxpayer notices, foreclosures, etc.) seems to be moving through the House – it was referred to the Rules Committee. It would be a considerable cost savings to municipalities if passed.

Personally, I have no way of knowing how many citizens actually look to their local newspaper for what is on your agenda, or the number that instead rely on radio or go to our web site for that information. Therefore, I suggest an experiment of not publishing the entire agenda in the newspaper as one way of finding out how much citizen's either appreciate it and are willing to continue to pay for it, or how many would rather save the municipality thousands in advertising dollars by getting the information elsewhere.

Attachments

Sitka General Code

1.08.010 Codes of technical regulations.

Upon introduction of an ordinance adopting any standard **published** code of technical regulations, the assembly promptly shall cause at least five copies to be made available for public inspection and shall cause to be **published**, by means indicated in Charter Section 3.02, and together with the notice of hearing, a notice setting out the purpose of the ordinance and the time and place at which it is available for public inspection. No other publication is necessary before adoption, unless after the hearing the ordinance is amended as to its substance. If it is so amended, and also in the event of any later amendment before adoption, the amended sections shall be made available for inspection and notice **published** as earlier provided, and the ordinance as amended shall be subjected to hearing and to all other procedures as though newly introduced. Neither the ordinance nor any of its amendments need be distributed to the public or read in full at the hearings thereon. Publication after adoption shall be by notice declaring such adoption as **published**. The adopted code shall be sold to the public in such form and at such reasonable price as the assembly may direct.

Sitka Home Rule Charter

Section 3.02 Ordinances in General. (Excerpt)

* * *

After an ordinance has been introduced, and unless it is rejected at the same meeting by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of the assembly members, the assembly shall promptly cause the ordinance to be published, together with a notice setting out the time and place for a public hearing on the ordinance and for its consideration by the assembly.

* * *

(c) **Meaning of "Publish."** As used in this section, the term "published" means that:

- (1) At least the title, which shall be a brief summary of the ordinance or sections concerned, together with any required notice, has been published in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the municipality;
- (2) Copies of the ordinance or sections concerned, together with any required notice, have been mailed or faxed to the same newspapers and, in accordance with assembly regulations, to additional newspapers of general circulation in the municipality;
- (3) Copies of the ordinance or section concerned, together with any required notice, have been posted conspicuously for public inspection.

* * *

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS(907) 465-3732 | State Capitol Building, Room 426 | <http://www.repjkt.com>**HB68** [Statement PDF](#) | [Sponsor's BILL Listing](#)**Sponsor****Statement****House Bill 68: Paper Reduction Act**

This bill will cut spending and conserve resources by reducing the number of reports printed by government agencies.

The state spends an estimated \$530,000 a year on designing, printing, and publishing agency reports, an expensive habit that has held over from the times when print circulation was the only available option.

Times have changed. This bill requires that state agencies publish their reports on the Alaska Online Public Notice System instead of printing them, and prohibits them from contracting out to graphic designers when there are state employees with the necessary skills available.

Exempt copies that may still be provided when required by federal law, for the state library system, or when designated by the head of an agency. But the changes proposed in this bill will ensure that reports are circulated efficiently and cheaply; are environmentally friendly; don't take up physical space; and can be accessed instantaneously by Alaskans from Nome to Thorne Bay.

This bill will reduce paper consumption and excise waste spending while simultaneously improving Alaskans' access to information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JKT".

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 68(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/1/15
Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES KREISS-TOMKINS, Gara, Stutes

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the preparation, electronic distribution, and posting of reports by
2 state agencies."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 14.56.120(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) Each state agency shall deposit, upon release, at least five [FOUR] copies
6 of each of its state publications in the center. Additional copies of each publication
7 may be requested by the center for deposit in quantities necessary to meet the needs of
8 the depository library system and to provide inter-library service to those libraries not
9 having depository status.

10 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.56.170 is amended to read:

11 **Sec. 14.56.170. Distribution of state publications and research data.** The
12 center may not engage in general public distribution of either (1) state publications or
13 lists of publications or (2) the index of publications and research data. However,
14 unless expressly prohibited by law, the center shall make available to any person, upon

1 request and under procedures established by it, publications, summaries, research data,
 2 indices, and other materials in its possession. **Except as provided in AS 44.99.260,**
 3 **reasonable** [REASONABLE] fees for reproduction or printing costs and for mailing
 4 and distribution of materials may be charged by the center.

5 * **Sec. 3.** AS 44.62.175(a) is amended to read:

6 (a) The lieutenant governor shall develop and supervise the Alaska Online
 7 Public Notice System, to be maintained on the state's site on the Internet. The
 8 lieutenant governor shall prescribe the form of notices posted on the system by state
 9 agencies. The Alaska Online Public Notice System must include

10 (1) notices of proposed actions given under AS 44.62.190(a);

11 (2) notices of state agency meetings required under AS 44.62.310(e),
 12 even if the meeting has been held;

13 (3) notices of solicitations to bid issued under AS 36.30.130;

14 (4) notices of state agency requests for proposals issued under
 15 AS 18.55.255, 18.55.320; AS 36.30.210; AS 37.05.316; AS 38.05.120; and
 16 AS 43.40.010;

17 (5) executive orders and administrative orders issued by the governor;

18 (6) written delegations of authority made by the governor or the head of
 19 a principal department under AS 44.17.010;

20 (7) the text or a summary of the text of a regulation or order of repeal
 21 of a regulation for which notice is given under AS 44.62.190(a), including an
 22 emergency regulation or repeal regardless of whether it has taken effect;

23 (8) notices required by AS 44.62.245(b) regarding an amended version
 24 of a document or other material incorporated by reference in a regulation;

25 (9) a summary of the text of recently issued published opinions of the
 26 attorney general;

27 (10) a list of vacancies on boards, commissions, and other bodies
 28 whose members are appointed by the governor;

29 (11) in accordance with AS 39.52.240(h), advisory opinions of the
 30 attorney general; [AND]

31 (12) notices required by AS 26.30.010(d) and (e) regarding applications

1 for military facility zones; and

2 (13) reports of state agencies, if required under AS 44.99.250.

3 * **Sec. 4.** AS 44.99 is amended by adding new sections to read:

4 **Article 3A. Distribution of Agency Reports.**

5 **Sec. 44.99.250. Electronic distribution and posting.** (a) A state agency that
6 produces and distributes a report shall, if the agency has the technological capability to
7 do so, provide copies electronically and post the report on the Alaska Online Public
8 Notice System (AS 44.62.175). An agency may not produce print copies of reports
9 except as

10 (1) required

11 (A) under AS 14.56.120;

12 (B) by agreement; or

13 (C) by federal law; or

14 (2) requested under AS 44.99.260 or specifically approved by the head
15 of a state agency or the head's designee.

16 (b) A report produced and distributed by a state agency shall prominently state
17 the Internet website where a digital copy and the physical address where a print copy
18 of the report may be found.

19 (c) Except as provided in (a) of this section, electronic distribution and
20 electronic posting on the Alaska Online Public Notice System (AS 44.62.175) fulfills
21 any obligation in state law to publish, prepare, or present a report, and electronic
22 distribution fulfills any obligation in state law to submit a report.

23 **Sec. 44.99.260. Print copy requests.** A person may obtain, at no charge, up to
24 two print copies of reports from the state library distribution and data access center
25 under AS 14.56.170 each day. A person may obtain additional print copies of reports
26 from the state library distribution and data access center for a reasonable fee under
27 AS 14.56.170.

28 **Sec. 44.99.270. Graphic design for reports.** Notwithstanding AS 44.99.200,
29 when preparing reports, a state agency may not hire contractors to provide
30 photographs or graphics unless

31 (1) no agency employee qualified to perform the work is available; or

1 (2) the agency would use fewer state resources by hiring a contractor.

2 **Sec. 44.99.290. Definitions.** In AS 44.99.250 - 44.99.290,

3 (1) "report" means an official document that a state agency is required
4 by law to prepare and distribute to the legislature or the public without a specific
5 request;

6 (2) "state agency" means a department, institution, board, commission,
7 division, authority, public corporation, committee, or other administrative unit of the
8 executive branch of state government, including the University of Alaska, the Alaska
9 Railroad Corporation, the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation, and the Alaska
10 Housing Finance Corporation.

SENATE BILL NO. 36

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR GIESSEL

Introduced: 2/2/15

Referred: State Affairs, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to electronic publication of certain municipal notices and to
2 publication and electronic distribution of reports by state agencies."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * Section 1. AS 29.45.020(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) If a municipality levies and collects property taxes, the governing body
6 shall provide the following notice:

"NOTICE TO TAXPAYER

8 For the current fiscal year the (city)(borough) has been allocated the
9 following amount of state aid for school and municipal purposes under
10 the applicable financial assistance Acts:

11	PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING PROGRAM (AS 14.17)	\$
12	STATE AID FOR RETIREMENT OF SCHOOL	\$
13	CONSTRUCTION DEBT (AS 14.11.100)	
14	COMMUNITY REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM	\$

(AS 29.60.850 - 29.60.879)

TOTAL AID \$

The millage equivalent of this state aid, based on the dollar value of a mill in the municipality during the current assessment year and for the preceding assessment year, is:

	MILLAGE EQUIVALENT	
	PREVIOUS YEAR	THIS YEAR
PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING	...MILLS	...MILLS
PROGRAM ASSISTANCE		
STATE AID FOR RETIREMENT	...MILLS	...MILLS
OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION		
DEBT		
COMMUNITY REVENUE	...MILLS	...MILLS
SHARING PROGRAM		
TOTAL MILLAGE EQUIVALENT	...MILLS	...MILLS"

Notice shall be provided by

(1) furnishing a copy of the notice with tax statements mailed for the fiscal year for which aid is received; or

(2) publishing in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality a copy of the notice once each week for a period of three successive weeks, with publication to occur not later than 45 days after the final adoption of the municipality's budget; instead of newspaper publication, a municipality may by ordinance provide for electronic publication by posting the notice for three consecutive weeks on a municipal Internet website accessible to the public.

* Sec. 2. AS 29.45.330(a) is amended to read:

(a) A municipality shall

(1) annually present a petition for judgment and a certified copy of the foreclosure list for the previous year's delinquent taxes in the superior court for judgment;

(2) publish the foreclosure list for four consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation distributed in the municipality, on a municipal

1 **Internet website accessible to the public**, or, if there is no newspaper of general
2 circulation distributed in the municipality **and no municipal Internet website**, post
3 the list at three public places for at least 30 days;

4 (3) within 10 days after the first publication or posting, mail to the last
5 known owner of each property as the owner's name and address appear on the list a
6 notice advising of the foreclosure proceeding in which a petition for judgment of
7 foreclosure has been filed and describing the property and the amount due as stated on
8 the list.

9 * **Sec. 3.** AS 29.45.440(a) is amended to read:

10 (a) At least 30 days before the expiration of the redemption period the clerk or
11 the clerk's designee shall publish a redemption period expiration notice. The notice
12 must contain the date of judgment, the date of expiration of the period of redemption,
13 and a warning that all properties ordered sold under the judgment, unless redeemed,
14 shall be deeded to the municipality immediately on expiration of the period of
15 redemption and that every right or interest of a person in the properties will be
16 forfeited forever to the municipality. The notice appears once a week for four
17 consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation distributed in the
18 municipality **or on a municipal Internet website accessible to the public**. If there is
19 no newspaper of general circulation distributed in the municipality **and no municipal**
20 **Internet website**, the notice is posted in three public places for at least four
21 consecutive weeks. The clerk shall send a copy of the notice by certified mail to each
22 record owner of property against which a judgment of foreclosure has been taken and,
23 if the assessed value of the property is more than \$10,000, to all holders of mortgages
24 or other liens of record on the property. The notice shall be mailed within five days
25 after the first publication. The mailing shall be sufficient if mailed to the property
26 owner and to the holder of a mortgage or recorded lien at the last address of record.

27 * **Sec. 4.** AS 44.62.175(a) is amended to read:

28 (a) The lieutenant governor shall develop and supervise the Alaska Online
29 Public Notice System, to be maintained on the state's site on the Internet. The
30 lieutenant governor shall prescribe the form of notices posted on the system by state
31 agencies. The Alaska Online Public Notice System must include

- 1 (1) notices of proposed actions given under AS 44.62.190(a);
- 2 (2) notices of state agency meetings required under AS 44.62.310(e),
3 even if the meeting has been held;
- 4 (3) notices of solicitations to bid issued under AS 36.30.130;
- 5 (4) notices of state agency requests for proposals issued under
6 AS 18.55.255, 18.55.320; AS 36.30.210; AS 37.05.316; AS 38.05.120; and
7 AS 43.40.010;
- 8 (5) executive orders and administrative orders issued by the governor;
- 9 (6) written delegations of authority made by the governor or the head of
10 a principal department under AS 44.17.010;
- 11 (7) the text or a summary of the text of a regulation or order of repeal
12 of a regulation for which notice is given under AS 44.62.190(a), including an
13 emergency regulation or repeal regardless of whether it has taken effect;
- 14 (8) notices required by AS 44.62.245(b) regarding an amended version
15 of a document or other material incorporated by reference in a regulation;
- 16 (9) a summary of the text of recently issued published opinions of the
17 attorney general;
- 18 (10) a list of vacancies on boards, commissions, and other bodies
19 whose members are appointed by the governor;
- 20 (11) in accordance with AS 39.52.240(h), advisory opinions of the
21 attorney general; [AND]
- 22 (12) notices required by AS 26.30.010(d) and (e) regarding applications
23 for military facility zones; and
- 24 (13) reports of state agencies, if required under AS 44.99.250.

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29 do so, provide copies electronically and post the report on the Alaska Online Public
30 Notice System (AS 44.62.175). An agency may not produce print copies of reports
31 except as

1 (1) required

2 (A) under AS 14.56.120;

3 (B) by agreement; or

4 (C) by federal law; or

5 (2) requested under AS 44.99.260 or specifically approved by the head
6 of a state agency or the head's designee.

7 (b) Except as provided in (a) of this section, electronic distribution and
8 electronic posting on the Alaska Online Public Notice System (AS 44.62.175) fulfills
9 any obligation in state law to publish, prepare, or present a report, and electronic
10 distribution fulfills any obligation in state law to submit a report.

11 **Sec. 44.99.260. Print copy requests.** A person may obtain a print copy of a
12 report from the state library distribution and data access center under AS 14.56.170.

13 **Sec. 44.99.270. Graphic design for reports.** Notwithstanding AS 44.99.200,
14 when preparing reports, a state agency may not hire contractors to provide
15 photographs or graphics unless

16 (1) no agency employee qualified to perform the work is available; or

17 (2) the agency would use fewer state resources by hiring a contractor.

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22 division, authority, public corporation, committee, or other administrative unit of the
23 executive branch of state government, including the University of Alaska, the Alaska
24 Railroad Corporation, the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation, and the Alaska
25 Housing Finance Corporation.