

Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, July 31, 2025  
Teleconference

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Pruhs called the meeting of the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority to order on July 31, 2025, at 9:03 am.

**2. ROLL CALL BOARD MEMBERS**

Members present: Chair Dana Pruhs (Public Member); Vice-Chair Bill Kendig (Public Member); Llewellyn Smythe (Policy Director, DOR); Albert Fogle (Public Member); and Randy Eledge (Public Member).

Members absent: Julie Sande (Commissioner, DCCED); and Ely Cyrus (Public Member).

A quorum was established.

Chair Pruhs requested that Randy Ruaro, Executive Director, introduce the new Board member who is absent. Mr. Ruaro advised that the Governor has appointed Ely Cyrus to the AIDEA Board, replacing Bill Vivlamore. Mr. Ruaro discussed that Mr. Cyrus was born and raised in Kiana, Alaska, and is a resident of the Norwest Arctic Borough. Mr. Ruaro noted that Mr. Cyrus has been a Chairman of the NANA Board and is very familiar with the Ambler Road project. Mr. Ruaro believes that Mr. Cyrus currently runs a small business in Kiana.

**3. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kendig to approve the agenda, as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Fogle.**

**There was no objection to approving the agenda, as presented.**

**4. PRIOR MINUTES – Available August 6, 2025**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public online or in-person who wished to make a public comment. Chair Pruhs closed the public comment period. There was no objection.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kendig to enter into executive session for**

**the purpose of discussing the following: ANWR Seismic Update, Ambler Update, AIDEA Financials, Personnel, Ketchikan Shipyard, other matters related to AIDEA and matters that are subject to specific legal advice, which is subject to the attorney-client privilege. These matters, which if discussed publicly, could have an adverse effect on the finances of AIDEA, and are matters that are attorney-client privileged, and matters involving consideration of issues that by law are not subject to public disclosure due to the executive or deliberative process, privilege, or other law. The executive session and matters discussed therein are proper subjects for an executive session under the Alaska Open Meetings Act, reference Alaska Statute 44.62.310 (C)(1), (3), and (4), and the Alaska Public Records Act. Motion seconded by Mr. Fogle.**

**A roll call was taken, and the motion to enter into Executive Session passed unanimously.**

**6A. EXECUTIVE SESSION: 9:09 am. Confidential and deliberative matters related to: ANWR Seismic Update, Ambler Update, AIDEA Financials, Personnel, and the Ketchikan Shipyard. All of which are subject to the deliberative process privilege, executive process privilege or other legal exemptions from the Open Meetings Act. Also, matters related to AIDEA subject to the attorney-client privilege will be discussed.**

The Board reconvened its regular meeting at 12:15 pm. Chair Pruhs advised the public that the Board did not take any action on matters discussed while in Executive Session. The session was limited to discussion of matters directly protected from public disclosure by the Open Meetings Act.

Chair Pruhs requested Mr. Ruaro to discuss the recommendations to lower the cost of financing on future projects. Mr. Ruaro discussed that AIDEA's executive team is always seeking opportunities to most effectively utilize assets to keep financing costs down on the projects as much as possible and to spread the financing abilities across as many projects as possible, which is consistent with the statutory mission of economic development and job creation for Alaskans. Review of contract and agreement options have occurred that could allow AIDEA to keep financing costs down, allow AIDEA to do more with the current assets, including the bonding, if necessary, and options to keep the bond ratings as positive as possible.

Mr. Ruaro indicated that staff could draft a resolution today that allows the Executive Director to review, research, and possibly enter into forms of contracts and agreements that would allow AIDEA to accomplish as many of the described goals as possible.

Chair Pruhs asked how much time staff would need to draft said resolution. Mr. Ruaro indicated that 15 minutes would probably be sufficient time.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kendig to amend the agenda, adding an item under New Business to facilitate the financial instrument presented by the Executive Director. Motion seconded by Mr. Fogle.**

**The motion to amend the agenda passed without objection.**

A brief at-ease was taken at 12:19 pm.

Chair Pruhs called the meeting back to order at 12:31 pm.

**6B. Resolution No. G25-04 Regarding AIDEA Assets and Investments**

Chair Pruhs indicated that Resolution G25-04 is a resolution of the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority authorizing the Executive Director to research and potentially enter into agreements, contracts, or other arrangements. Chair Pruhs requested Mr. Ruaro speak to the resolution.

Mr. Ruaro discussed that Resolution G25-04 walks through the mission of AIDEA to promote and advance the economic welfare and create jobs for the people of the state of Alaska. It also walks through a number of AIDEA's powers, which include the ability to enter into contracts and agreements. Additionally, the resolution addresses AIDEA's ability to create additional accounts in the revolving fund or other funds, and AIDEA's discretion to manage its assets for the greatest possible achievement of the statutory mission. If the resolution is approved by the Board, Mr. Ruaro indicated that he would be authorized to engage in reviewing, researching, and finding opportunities for AIDEA to maximize the benefits of its assets, in terms of keeping financing costs as low as possible for the projects, to spread out the financing ability across more projects, if possible, and to find ways to gain the best positive bond rating possible, which will further decrease financing costs. Mr. Ruaro noted that staff has been engaged in these efforts for some time. The efforts include options at the federal level through the Department of Energy Title 17 Programs, Department of Defense programs related to critical minerals, as well as ways to consolidate and management assets to the maximum extent.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Kendig to approve Resolution No. G25-04, resolution of the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority authorizing the Executive Director to research and potentially enter into agreements, contracts, or other arrangements. Motion seconded by Mr. Fogle.**

Mr. Fogle asked Mr. Ruaro how this type of arrangement will help AIDEA's larger projects move forward in Alaska. Mr. Ruaro explained that different structures, corporate forms, and trust agreements will allow AIDEA to consolidate resources. The more that AIDEA can keep financing costs down, the more likely that the project will receive the green light to move forward to produce the expected jobs and revenues, including royalties for the State and the Permanent Fund. It is to everyone's benefit to find ways to consolidate and maximize the use of AIDEA's assets for the benefit of achieving AIDEA's mission. Mr. Ruaro reiterated the importance of lowering financing costs and keeping AIDEA's bond rating as high as possible in order to assist in achieving AIDEA's mission.

Mr. Fogle asked if there are organizations such as AIDEA in other states participating in similar activities to these. Mr. Ruaro believes there are. He does not know if there is an economic development authority in every state, but most states have an economic development authority.

Mr. Ruaro stated that staff has reviewed with the organization that monitors the development finance authorities and there are numerous opportunities, joint ventures, corporate forms, partnerships, master limited partnerships, trusts, and other options that are used to achieve similar goals of economic development and jobs.

Mr. Fogle asked if the effects of this resolution will help AIDEA with the bonding rating agencies and allow AIDEA to potentially raise funds through bonds for larger projects. Mr. Ruaro agreed.

Mr. Eledge asked Mr. Ruaro for AIDEA's current bond rating. Mr. Ruaro explained that AIDEA does not have a current up-to-date rating. The review work needs to be completed to consolidate assets and revenue, and then a new bond rating can be procured. AIDEA has not issued bonds for quite a while. Mr. Eledge asked if acquiring a bond rating is quite an expense to AIDEA. Mr. Ruaro noted the expense is not insignificant, but it is not into the millions of dollars. Most of the leg-work to support the bond underwriting is completed by staff internally during completion of revenue projections and cash flow work.

Policy Director Smythe asked Mr. Ruaro if there is an approximate timeline that AIDEA has established as it pertains to receiving the next bond rating. Mr. Ruaro indicated that there is no set timeline; however, staff is actively working to collect all of the pertinent information that is needed to support a bond rating. Mr. Ruaro noted there have been preliminary meetings with Moody's. The bond rating will advance, even though AIDEA may not need to issue bonds for an additional period.

Chair Pruhs asked if the resolution on the floor assists in accelerating the process to obtain a favorable bond rating. Additionally, Chair Pruhs asked what the target savings in basis points is for approving the resolution. Mr. Ruaro discussed one of the main goals of the resolution is to achieve a better bond rating, which reduces financing costs for bonded projects. AIDEA has the goal of 50 to 100 basis points improvement in the ultimate financing costs.

Chair Pruhs commented that level of basis points improvement is significant to projects like Ambler Road where there are hundreds of millions of dollars in bonds. Mr. Ruaro agreed. He noted that the larger the project, and the larger the duration of the financing, the dollars become very significant, very fast.

Mr. Eledge commented on the few mega-projects that AIDEA is reviewing. He is pleased that AIDEA is moving forward with looking at the bond rating to improve the position, and appreciates the time that it will take to accomplish the goal. Mr. Ruaro agreed.

Chair Pruhs noted that 1% on a one-billion-dollar bond is \$10 million a year. Mr. Eledge and Mr. Ruaro agreed. There were no other comments or questions.

**A roll call was taken, and the motion to approve Resolution No. G25-04 passed unanimously.**

## **7. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

## **7A. Project Updates**

Mr. Ruaro discussed that the 404 Permit filing is complete with the Army Corps of Engineers. Expedited permitting has been requested under President Trump's executive orders. AIDEA's project manager has contacted the Army Corps of Engineers and will stay in close contact moving forward. Mr. Ruaro noted that the method used for delineation of wetlands was developed by AIDEA's hydrologist and complies with the U.S. Supreme Court decision. He believes the work is solid, and will allow the project to move ahead quickly. There were no comments or questions.

## **7B. Next regularly scheduled AIDEA Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 6, 2025**

Chair Pruhs noted that the next scheduled AIDEA Board meeting is August 6, 2025. He asked Mr. Ruaro if there are any critical items to be discussed at that meeting or if the meeting can be postponed. Mr. Ruaro explained the one item of note is related to the Ketchikan Shipyard.

Chair Pruhs asked if a meeting could be called at any time to address the Ketchikan Shipyard item. Mr. Ruaro agreed. Chair Pruhs asked Mr. Ruaro if staff is currently in discussion with a potential operator. Mr. Ruaro agreed.

Chair Pruhs suggested to postpone the August 6, 2025 meeting, subject to staff's recommendation. There were no objections. The meeting date will be at the call of the Chair.

## **8. BOARD COMMENTS**

Mr. Fogle applauded and expressed appreciation to Mr. Ruaro, Kent Sullivan, Legal Counsel, and staff for their efforts in undertaking the opportunity to pool AIDEA's resources and for the innovative thinking to lower the cost of completing projects in Alaska. He believes this will pay dividends now, for future generations, and for future AIDEA Boards. He reiterated the excellent leadership of Mr. Ruaro.

Vice-Chair Kendig echoed Mr. Fogle's sentiments, and gave additional words of appreciation to Mr. Ruaro and staff for their time and efforts regarding the Ketchikan Shipyard.

Policy Director Smythe expressed appreciation for staff's work, and specifically thanked Mr. Sullivan for explaining the documents provided.

Mr. Elledge stated that these are very exciting times for Alaska, including all of the projects that may be close to starting and the projects that have already begun. He commented that this is a wonderful opportunity for him, as a Board member, to understand what staff is contending with and progressing. He thanked staff.

Chair Pruhs thanked staff for their efforts for today's Board meeting. He commented that he had conversations with John Binkley and John Shively, Alaska Railroad, regarding the possibility of conducting a joint Board meeting to facilitate synergies between both Boards and between both organizations to perpetuate joint effort and opportunities. Chair Pruhs noted that he requested

Mr. Ruaro to contact Bill O'Leary, Alaska Railroad, to facilitate a joint meeting with the Board. Mr. Ruaro indicated that he spoke with Mr. O'Leary. A structure is being developed, and the information will be circulated to the members.

Chair Pruhs commented that his initial vision, subject to change without notice, is that both Boards would visit electronically and in-person to discuss ideas, concepts, and how to parlay resources and expertise to benefit the state. After which, a small Board group would be created between the two organizations to facilitate forward movement of the vision. Chair Pruhs noted that it is a priority of the Governor to facilitate the collaboration. Chair Pruhs indicated that AIDEA will remain diligent to review current and future opportunities to determine how AIDEA can best participate. There were no other comments or questions.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business of the Board, the AIDEA meeting adjourned at 12:48 pm.



Randy Ruaro, AIDEA Executive Director

Secretary