

Tempers Run High at Assembly Meeting

Friday, 04 January 2013

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

It was a tense atmosphere in the borough assembly chambers Thursday night as the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly wrapped up its regular meeting.

The assembly introduced an ordinance that seeks to amend borough code and make information about borough contracts more readily available to the public. It also requires the borough manager to notify the assembly about certain contracts that may pose a conflict of interest between the borough and assembly members or their immediate family. The assembly passed the first reading 4-2, with Assemblyman Mel Stephens and Assemblywoman Louise Stutes voting against it. Stephens chose to address the reasoning behind his vote during assembly member comments.

-- (Borough Meeting 2 :27 "I think that ordinance is...the execution and performance of a contract.")

But after almost five minutes of detailed allegations and questions regarding a prior contract between Lynch and the borough, point of order was called. Borough Mayor Jerome Selby asked Stephens to wrap up his comments. Four minutes later point of order was called again, this time by Assemblyman Dave Kaplan.

-- (Borough Meeting 3 :04 "Speculation or gossip about the...point of order. Where is this going.")

Mayor Selby stepped in to help address the matter, but was met by disagreement from Stephens.

-- (Borough Meeting 4 :46 "These questions have been...at these meetings. So you are finished.")

Stephens appealed the point of order, an appeal that was seconded by Stutes. The matter was put to assembly vote and failed in another 4-2 vote. Next up in assembly member comments was Stutes, who took the opportunity to explain her support of Stephens' appeal.

-- (Borough Meeting 5 :23 "Well I wasn't going to have a comment...all I'm going to say, thank you.")

Assemblywoman Carol Austerman echoed a statement made by Assemblyman Aaron Griffin during his comment period about the appropriate time and place to address issues like the ones raised by Stephens.

-- (Borough Meeting 6 :39 "So I totally agree that assembly...already been there and done that.")

The ordinance that was originally put to vote during the meeting addresses borough code, not a certain contract in particular. That ordinance will now move to a public hearing which will be held during the January 17 borough assembly meeting.