MEETING NO. 2012-32: The Special Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly, held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Merrill Sanford.

I. ROLL CALL

Assembly Present: Mary Becker, Karen Crane, Johan Dybdahl, Loren Jones, Jesse Kiehl, Jerry Nankervis, Merrill Sanford, Carlton Smith, and Randy Wanamaker.

Assembly Absent: None.

Staff Present: Kim Kiefer, City Manager; Rob Steedle, Deputy City Manager; John Hartle, City Attorney; Bonnie Chaney, Budget Analyst; Bob Bartholomew, Finance Director; Rorie Watt, Engineering Director; Hal Hart, Community Development Director; Barbara Berg, Library Director; Jane Sebens, Deputy City Attorney; Deb Senn, Law Office Manager; Mary Norcross, Controller; Randy Wiley, Treasurer.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Without objection, Mayor Sanford removed Resolution 2632 from the Consent Agenda to hear public testimony.

A. Resolution 2632

A Resolution Expressing Assembly Support for the Extension of Electrical Power Along the Veterans Memorial Highway.

Administrative Report: Attached. The manager recommended Resolution 2632 be adopted.

Public Comment:

Karla Hart said she just learned of the meeting today and was caught off-guard. She referred to an email she sent to Mayor Sanford asking where the resolution’s referenced project was in the CBJ Comprehensive Plan, and what the public discussion had been on the issue. Considering the audience participation and the letters in the packet, it was clear that there was communication with some parties in the community. When she spoke to people in the community and a reporter at KTOO, people were not aware that this was an issue. This issue was kept quiet and was briefly discussed at the Assembly Retreat. She had heard no public discussion or notice about this issue or meeting and this was an important topic. She felt the project was being pushed through. The resolution seemed disingenuous and if the CBJ were truly concerned about reducing greenhouse gas, CBJ would not be encouraging more development way out the road, which would encourage driving to and from town. She did not see the public safety need for streetlights out the road. Emergency communications is accomplished through cell coverage and if more were needed, another cell tower would be in
order. Improving property values was not the CBJ’s role and doing so would increase taxes, which could offset any reductions or savings in energy costs, thus no net gain. There is no significant interest from the few people who live out the road that they want this. The Comprehensive Plan called for housing to be developed as “in-fill” in already developed areas, so this does not tie in to the development of affordable housing. She said this issue was premature, irresponsible and not respectful of the community. There were also no costs associated with the project and she asked if the state funded this project, would there be other community projects that went unfunded from state dollars. This seems to be pushed through by some private interests.

Mayor Sanford said this had been on the books and discussed for a number of years, and Southeast Conference had discussed this issue for over a year. He referred to the letters of support provided at the meeting for the project and it was intended to aid economic development in the area.

Ms. Hart said most private individuals were not members of Southeast Conference and it was not a public venue for Juneau citizens.

Assembly Action:

MOTION, by Dybdahl, to adopt Resolution 2632. He asked for unanimous consent.

Mr. Jones objected. He said he shared some of Ms. Hart’s concerns. Many of the letters in the red folder were dated back to March and April of 2012, and he asked if there had been a proposal to the legislature for this project in the last session. Was there a cost estimate for the project?

Mayor Sanford said he believed it would be approximately $15 – 20 million from the governor’s budget.

Mr. Wanamaker said Duff Mitchell was present and thought he may have a cost estimate. Mayor Sanford asked Mr. Mitchell to address the Assembly.

Mr. Mitchell said he had not brought the “Dryden Larouse Study” done locally that discussed the project with substations but it was just under $20 million.

Mr. Jones asked if this would be a project the CBJ was requesting as the city, or would it lend support of an initiative the Governor was doing on his own and would not go against any capital improvement projects on CBJ’s current list.

Mr. Sanford said this was the reason for the quick action on this resolution, was to submit this support for the project to be included in the Governor’s budget as his proposal to move forward, in theory not to “count against” Juneau projects.

Mr. Jones removed his objection.

Hearing no further objections, Resolution 2632 was adopted.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.
V. ASSEMBLY COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Wanamaker shared a draft list of participants to attend as panelists for a Housing Forum, which he hoped to finalize for the Assembly’s Ad Hoc Housing Committee meeting on Friday, December 7, at 1 p.m., in the Chambers. The list included lenders, developers, landowners, and realtors, and if there were other interested persons that had in-depth experience across a broad range of housing issues, he asked those people to contact him.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – 5:48 p.m.

Signed: ________________________  Signed: ________________________
Laurie Sica, Municipal Clerk  Merrill Sanford, Mayor