COMMUNITY HISTORY

In 1881, the Committee on Town Laws voted for a new name for the town of Juneau. “Juneau City” won the vote overruling “Harrisburg,” and “Rockwell.” In 1882, the change was officially made by the U. S. Post Office Department who dropped the word “City” making the official name “Juneau.”

The “City of Juneau” was incorporated and became Alaska’s state capital in 1900.

In 1881, the town of “Douglas” was established as a mining community. Prior to that time, Douglas had also been referred to as “Edwardsville,” presumably after an early resident and miner H. H. Edwards.

The “City of Douglas” was incorporated in 1902.

In the transition from territory to statehood and in accordance with provisions of the 1959 Session Laws of the State of Alaska:

• The City of Juneau was established as a home-rule city in October 1960.
  ① A Manager-Council form of government was established. The Council had seven members with the Mayor as presiding officer.
  ② The boundaries of the new City of Juneau remained as previously drawn.

• The greater Juneau Borough was incorporated as a first class borough on September 30, 1963.
  ① The form of government established included a nine-member Assembly with a President as presiding officer and an Assembly-elected administrator. Representation on the Assembly was composed of three members from the City of Juneau, one member from the City of Douglas, and five members from outside the cities of Juneau and Douglas.
  ② The boundaries of the Greater Juneau Borough included Holkham Bay in Stephens Passage; the Alaska-Canadian Boundary Line encompassing Peak Nos. 79 and 98 of the Ice Field; Eldred Rock Light; Lincoln Island; Point Young; Point Arden Light; Midway Island Light; and Point Coke.

• The City of Douglas was established as a home-rule city in October 1966.
  ① The City of Douglas Council consisted of six Councilmen and the Mayor.
  ② Boundaries of the City of Douglas remained as previously established.

• The City and Borough of Juneau was incorporated as a unified City and Borough on July 1, 1970.
  ① The City and Borough of Juneau Assembly has nine members with the Mayor as presiding officer. It is a strong Manager form of government.
  ② The newly created boundaries of the City and Borough of Juneau consolidated the City of Douglas, the City of Juneau, and the Greater Juneau Borough.
  ③ The City and Borough of Juneau is a home-rule municipality, exercising the powers granted to it by the Constitution of the State of Alaska. As part of its preamble to the Charter, the City and Borough of Juneau’s mission is to “provide for local government responsive to the will of the people and to the continuing needs of the community.”

By Marian Miller