



SPECIAL ASSEMBLY MEETING 2025-16 MINUTES

August 15, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Zoom Webinar Only

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Weldon called the Special Assembly meeting to order at 12:01 PM via Zoom.

B. ROLL CALL

Assemblymembers Present: Mayor Beth Weldon, Deputy Mayor Greg Smith, Assemblymembers Wade Bryson, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, Christine Woll, Paul Kelly, Ella Adkison, Neil Steininger, and Maureen Hall.

Assemblymembers Absent: None.

Staff Present: City Manager Katie Koester, Deputy City Manager Robert Barr, Emergency Programs Manager Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Municipal Clerk Breckan Hendricks.

C. AGENDA TOPICS

1. Resolution 4027: A Resolution of the City and Borough of Juneau Declaring a Local Emergency in Response to the 2025 Glacier Outburst Flood and a Request for State Assistance.

CBJ Charter 3.12(c) authorizes the Assembly to call a special meeting to affirm the Manager's disaster declaration which was issued on August 8, 2025. Resolution 4027 affirms the declaration of a local disaster emergency and requests state assistance. Governor Dunleavy has preemptively issued a state disaster declaration to ensure that the CBJ has access to all necessary resources. The flooding from the glacier outburst flood started August 12, 2025, and is once again unprecedented. The City Manager recommends the Assembly adopt this Resolution.

Mayor Weldon asked City Manager Koester for a briefing.

Manager Koester explained that under CBJ Charter 3.12(c), the Assembly is authorized to call a special meeting to affirm the City Manager's disaster declaration. Resolution 4027 affirms the emergency declaration made on August 8, 2025, in response to the recent glacial lake outburst flood. She emphasized the significance of this year's event, noting that Governor Dunleavy had issued the first-ever pre-disaster declaration for the region, which activated both state public assistance and individual assistance programs. Manager Koester reported the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) has already begun utilizing these state-level resources and is relying heavily on

the assistance as local response efforts ramp up. She concluded her remarks by urging the Assembly to adopt the resolution.

Mayor Weldon thanked the Manager and asked the Clerk if anyone from the public had signed up to testify.

Ms. Hendricks confirmed that no members of the public had signed up in advance for public comment.

Mayor Weldon then opened the floor to Assembly discussion.

MOTION: by Mr. Bryson to adopt Resolution 4027 A Resolution of the City and Borough of Juneau Declaring a Local Emergency in Response to the 2025 Glacier Outburst Flood and a Request for State Assistance and asked for unanimous consent. ***Hearing no objection, the resolution was adopted by unanimous consent.***

Emergency Operations Update – Manager Koester and Emergency Programs Manager O’Shaughnessy.

Manager Koester provided an update on the recent flood event response, highlighting the coordinated efforts between CBJ, Tlingit & Haida, the U.S. Coast Guard, state agencies, and federal partners. An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated, staffed by approximately 150 personnel, and Floyd Dryden was opened as a shelter, though most displaced residents stayed with friends or family.

The flooding from Suicide Basin crested Wednesday morning at 16.6 feet. The HESCO barriers were largely effective in preventing major damage, though seepage was reported behind Meander Way, with up to 2 feet of water accumulating. There were no barrier breaches, but some sections were damaged by tree strikes and repaired using Super Sacks. Public safety concerns remain high, as people continue to enter restricted areas during events. Manager Koester emphasized the importance of public education and livestream coverage that helped keep residents away from danger zones.

Brigadier General Goetz from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is on-site, with continued support from Senator Sullivan and planned visits from Senator Murkowski and Congressman Begich. The Army Corps considers Juneau a case study for future flood response solutions.

Emergency Manager O’Shaughnessy reported that 16 homes were classified and assessed as affected, 25 sustained minor damage, and 6 had major damage, one of which was behind the HESCO barriers. No homes were destroyed. A public hotline [907-500-0890] received over 100 calls, easing the burden on 911 dispatch, and VOAD [Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster] volunteers have assisted with clean-up and support for impacted families.

Next steps include a full assessment of the barriers, cost analysis for maintenance, and a forthcoming Phase 2 proposal for a longer-term solution. Infrastructure damage includes the Mendenhall Back Loop Bridge abutment and a damaged water line, though no water service was interrupted. Internet service was also affected, with restoration efforts ongoing.

Manager Koester concluded by noting the national media attention the event has received, and the urgency of transitioning from temporary protections to permanent infrastructure.

Mr. Bryson asked about the Army Corps' view of the HESCO barriers. Manager Koester confirmed they were very pleased and committed to continued support.

Ms. Woll inquired whether the barriers would need to be raised, as video footage showed water nearing the top. Manager Koester agreed it appeared water came within 6 inches of overtopping in some areas and said a full assessment is underway. While initial planning aimed to protect up to 18 feet, some reinforcement and additional height may be necessary.

Ms. Hall noted that both internet and cell service were out in parts of View Drive and Montana Creek. Mayor Weldon acknowledged the issue, confirming it was affecting much of the Back Loop area. Manager Koester clarified that the fiber optic line is expected to be restored soon, which should resolve the broader service disruptions.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs asked whether more HESCO barriers would be used in areas where seepage occurred, or if installation issues contributed. Manager Koester said it's too early to say, but seepage appeared in high-pressure areas like Meander Way. Further study by the Corps and project managers will inform next steps.

Mayor Weldon added that 15–18 hours of drone footage will aid in understanding barrier performance.

Mr. Smith expressed deep appreciation for city staff and agency partners, crediting the improved response compared to 2023. He specifically mentioned Tlingit & Haida, the National Weather Service, and USGS.

Mayor Weldon noted the National Weather Service received 5,000 website hits on the day of the flood.

Mr. Kelly thanked staff and volunteers, asking about ongoing opportunities for community involvement. Manager Koester directed people to United Way's website for volunteering and donations. Cleanup coordination is in progress, with debris removal beginning Monday.

Mr. Bryson asked about coordinated trash or debris pickup for impacted homes. Manager Koester confirmed debris pickup will begin Monday from the right-of-way, and site-specific assistance will be provided as needed over the coming weeks.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

E. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS - None

F. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Weldon concluded by thanking all partners and staff, noting while Wednesday night brought relief, preparations must continue, as the basin is already refilling. She confirmed another briefing will be held Monday, August 18, 2025, with opportunity for public comment.

There being no further business to come before the Assembly, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Breckan L. Hendricks,
Municipal Clerk

Beth A. Weldon,
Mayor