



April 21, 2022

The Honorable Jonathon Kreiss-Tomkins  
Chair, House State Affairs Committee  
Alaska State House  
State Capitol Room 411  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 271 – AIDEA Membership; Responsibilities

Dear Chair Kreiss-Tomkins

Please know that we register your and the public commenters' concerns about AIDEA's public engagement process. As AIDEA's Executive Director, I represent the full organization in stating that we take those concerns very seriously and have worked over the past year to address areas where we can improve to be more responsive, as well as show where we are contributing to the public process. Several questions were raised regarding our policies and procedures regarding public engagement around our Board meetings which I would like to define below:

- The public has the opportunity to sign up to receive email and/or text notifications regarding the start time of an AIDEA Board meeting and when the AIDEA Board returns to public session from executive session. The link to sign up is posted in multiple locations at [www.aidea.org](http://www.aidea.org), including the homepage and each individual AIDEA Board agenda since the posting for the December 1, 2021, AIDEA Board meeting.
- In addition to this notification feature, all AIDEA Board meetings for the calendar year are posted to [www.aidea.org](http://www.aidea.org). Linked agendas with supporting documentation are posted one week (i.e., seven days) prior to an AIDEA Board meeting. Changes to these dates are infrequent and updated on the website in a timely manner. An archive from 2008 onwards is available as well for previous meetings.
- The posted agenda contains links to documents that may be considered by the Board for the public's review and comment before the meeting. All of these details are posted on the AIDEA web site, accessible by the public, and includes the start time as well as guidance for signing up to text notifications.
- AIDEA has a policy and a practice to review all public comments. We recognize the commitment taken by those parties to provide us with their comments and want to make sure those comments are heard within the organization. The homepage of our website provides notification of board meetings and requests any interested parties to submit their public comments, including name and contact information, to [AIDEAcomments@publicinput.com](mailto:AIDEAcomments@publicinput.com). A reminder is also included on the posted agenda. Comments received at this address prior to the scheduled Board meeting are shared with and reviewed by AIDEA staff and all Board members.

- AIDEA records its meetings so that the public's comments made at the Board meeting can also be subsequently reviewed by the public, the Board, and staff. These public comments are part of the record of the Board proceedings and the transcript form is an assurance that a record of comments is being kept. AIDEA staff also has a policy of responding to questions put to the Board, although please know that we are limited to being able to respond to those parties who provide us contact information. This is why we often refer callers to the [AIDEAcomments@publicinput.com](mailto:AIDEAcomments@publicinput.com) for submitting public comment or questions.

Per AIDEA's Bylaws (Article III, Section 2), for regularly scheduled meetings we are required to give not less than 5 days' public notice of time, place, and subject of the meeting. In practice, we provide notice of our scheduled board meetings at the beginning of the calendar year and the subject matter agenda (with linked documents) at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

For special meetings (Article III, Section 3), which are very rare in occurrence and may be called by the Chair of the Authority with at least 48 hours' notice to the members of the Authority, AIDEA shall provide the public with "reasonable notice." The Open Meetings Act requires "reasonable public notice" for open meetings (AS 44.62.310(e)). The statute does not define the number of days required for reasonable public notice.

Here is the full text of the notice section of the OMA statute:

(e) Reasonable public notice shall be given for all meetings required to be open under this section. The notice must include the date, time, and place of the meeting and if, the meeting is by teleconference, the location of any teleconferencing facilities that will be used. Subject to posting notice of a meeting on the Alaska Online Public Notice System as required by AS 44.62.175(a), the notice may be given using print or broadcast media. The notice shall be posted at the principal office of the public entity or, if the public entity has no principal office, at a place designated by the governmental body. The governmental body shall provide notice in a consistent fashion for all its meetings. [Alaska Stat. Ann. § 44.62.310 (West)]

### December 23 2020 Board Meeting

In follow-up to several questions raised by committee members regarding this special meeting and the procedures observed by AIDEA, we have reviewed the record and provide the following details for your review and consideration:

1. Timeline for Events leading to Special Meeting	<b>Mon, Nov. 30, 2020</b>	Public notice of regularly scheduled AIDEA Board meeting published. <a href="#">Link</a>
	<b>Mon, Dec. 7, 2020</b>	Bureau of Land Management (BLM) posts Detailed Statement of Sale ( <a href="#">DSS</a> and <a href="#">Amendment 1</a> ) for participating in the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Lease Sale in the non-wilderness Section Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). <a href="#">Link</a>
	<b>Wed, Dec. 9, 2020</b>	Regularly scheduled AIDEA board meeting. <a href="#">Link</a>
	<b>Fri, Dec. 18, 2020</b>	Public notice of Special AIDEA Board meeting published. <a href="#">Link</a>
	<b>Wed, Dec. 23, 2020</b>	Special AIDEA Board Meeting. <a href="#">Link</a>

	<b>Thu, Dec. 31, 2020</b>	Deadline to submit qualified bids in the BLM Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Lease Sale.
2. Public Comment Procedures observed at Special Meeting	<p>Dec. 23, 2020 special board meeting agenda noticed that Public Comment would be <u>2 minutes per person, for one and a half hours</u>.</p> <p>Per meeting minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Pruhs called the meeting to order at <b>3:36 p.m.</b></li> <li>• Agenda Item 5: Public comment started at <b>3:55 p.m.</b> and Chair Pruhs identified that it would be reserved for 90 minutes, 2 minutes per person. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>41 callers</b> during public comment portion of Dec. 23, 2020 AIDEA Board meeting</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Public comment closed at <b>5:34 p.m.</b> and Chair Pruhs notified that he would close the public comment section of the agenda.</li> </ul>	
3. Written Public Comment	<p>Between December 18, 2020 and December 23, 2020:  <b>334 written public comments were received</b> at publiccomment@aidea.org  <b>331 responses to public comments issued by</b> AIDEA staff</p>	

Overall, we do comply with the requirements established for public corporations and strive to be better for many of the reasons highlighted by the House State Affairs Chair and Committee Members. AIDEA staff, as directed by our Board, actively seek to engage with public commenters and be responsive to the public. Our minutes reflect comments from our Board where public comments have been raised on subject matters under discussion and have requested staff to respond to questions raised by those commenters. I provide this as background and hope that this information is helpful in context on the important matters you are reviewing.

Respectfully,



Alan Weitzner  
AIDEA CEO/Executive Director