

He Changed His Mind!

ADN - 12/27/17

Support for the mayor's ML&P plan

I commend the mayor of Anchorage for his administration's recently announced decision to pursue the sale of the Municipal Light and Power utility to Chugach Electric. As a longtime customer/member (over 30 years) of Chugach Electric I have experienced excellent, reliable service at a reasonable cost — what more could one expect from such a necessary product? I am sure that the combined utilities will bring economies of scale and increased efficiency to the new entity with a single administration for billing, purchasing and personnel.

Interestingly, I noted that while Chugach serves 68,200 customers with 285 employees (a ratio of 240 customers per employee) ML&P serves 30,800 customers with 230 employees (a ratio of 134 customers per employee). As a Chugach customer and member I hope that the board of Chugach Electric recognizes that some adjustments will need to be made in the current ML&P staffing levels to achieve the preferred customer-to-employee ratio now enjoyed at Chugach. The purchase should be good for both ML&P current customers and Chugach customers. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

— David M. Schauer

MAYOR, ASSEMBLY BYPASS DUE PROCESS IN ML&P SALE

Mr. Mayor: A few weeks ago, after reading the article in the ADN announcing that the municipality and Chugach Electric had agreed in principle to purchase ML&P, I commended you and your administration on the move. Mr. Mayor, I TAKE IT BACK. It seems you and the Assembly are trying to pull a fast one on the citizens of Anchorage by not following the prescribed, by ordinance in the Municipal Charter, procedures required for the city to "sell" a utility.

Additionally, the proposition on the upcoming ballot would change the charter, the constitution of Anchorage, to allow the Assembly to sell a utility without the required due process, just a few little things like a competitive bid process, open to public review, a requirement that it be sold to the highest qualified bidder, and a list of terms and conditions pertaining to the purchase, and the sale can be accomplished only after a vote of approval by three-fifths (that's 60 percent) of the voters. NONE of this has been done — what has been done was apparently accomplished behind closed doors in the proverbial "smoke filled room." Shame on you and the Assembly for trying to do an end run around the rules outlined in the Charter. I intend to vote NO on the proposition and urge everyone to look at the facts and consider your vote carefully.

← date unknown

— David M. Schauer
Anchorage