

CITY OF KOTZEBUE

RESOLUTION NO. 26-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KOTZEBUE *NUNC PRO TUNC* DECLARING A DISASTER AS A RESULT OF THE 2026 FEBRUARY SNOWSTORMS.

WHEREAS, the City of Kotzebue (“City”) and its residents suffered an emergency situation due to significant, unrelenting snowfall from consecutive snow storms beginning on February 16, 2026 followed by a second snow storm commencing on February 20, 2026 that caused continuing and critical conditions throughout the City that directly impacted public safety, emergency, response efforts and overall public access to City streets and public well-being in spite of the City’s Public Works Department working continuously to clear the mass amount of snow from City streets and move the snow to City snow dump areas;

WHEREAS, the conditions caused by these snowstorms affect and continue to affect the ability of first responders and public safety personnel and law enforcement officers to safely and efficiently respond to calls for service while also posing serious, increased risks to residents due to their very limited mobility around the City and obstructed access to and on the streets of the City;

WHEREAS, the Acting City Manager as provided and required under his authority a disaster declaration letter to the Northwest Arctic Borough Mayor, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and incorporated by reference herein;

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough has declared a disaster as a result of these February snowstorms as set forth in Exhibit “B” attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein and the Northwest Arctic Borough has entered into a MOA with the City regarding disaster responsibilities as set forth in Exhibit “C” attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein; and,

WHEREAS, this massive amount of snow must be removed for the reasons set out herein and to prevent catastrophic flooding during the Spring thaw and breakup.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Kotzebue *nunc pro tunc* confirms the City Manger’s earlier Disaster Declaration and acknowledges the significant efforts of the City’s Public Works Department and assistance provided by the Northwest Arctic Borough as a result of these February 2026 snowstorms.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Kotzebue, Alaska, this 5th day of March 2026.

CITY OF KOTZEBUE

Saima Chase
Mayor

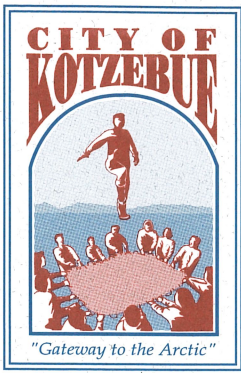
ATTEST:

[SEAL]

Donald Jones Jr
City Clerk

Attachments:

- **Exhibit “A”**: ACM’s February 25, 2026 Disaster Declaration [2 pages]
- **Exhibit “B”**: NWAB February 26, 2026 Disaster Declaration [2 pages]
- **Exhibit “C”**: City and NWAB MOA [2 pages]



P.O. Box 46
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

City Hall
(907) 442-3401

Police Dept.
(907) 442-3351

Fire Dept.
(907) 442-3404

Public Works
(907) 442-3401

February 25, 2026

Mayor Dickie Moto
Northwest Arctic Borough
P.O. Box 1110
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752-1110

Re: Disaster Declaration and Request for Disaster Relief from the City of Kotzebue

Dear Mayor Moto:

As you know, we are in an emergency situation here in Kotzebue due to the significant snowfall resulting from consecutive storm events beginning on February 16, 2026, and a second storm commencing on February 20, 2026. The continuous and heavy snowfall has created critical conditions throughout the City of Kotzebue that directly impacts public safety, emergency response capabilities, and the overall well-being of our residents. Public Works has worked continuously to manage snow removal; however, the accumulation from the initial storm had not been fully mitigated before the second storm impacted our area, compounding hazardous conditions across roadways, emergency access routes, and essential infrastructure.

These conditions are now affecting the ability of first responders and public safety personnel to safely and efficiently respond to calls for service, while also posing increased risks to community members due to limited mobility and obstructed access.

Due to the severity and ongoing impact of these storms, the City of Kotzebue has had to request emergency VIF funding from the Borough in order to secure additional resources and external assistance for snow removal operations. Despite these efforts, the situation remains critical, continues to strain local operational and financial capacity, and public health and safety.

Given the sustained weather impacts, resource limitations, and the elevated risk to public safety and emergency operations, it is both reasonable and necessary to pursue an emergency disaster declaration to ensure the City has the appropriate authority, support, and access to emergency resources to effectively address and recover from these serious, on-going conditions.

Pursuant to Northwest Arctic Borough Code 10.04.030 [Duties of the Department of Public Services] and Northwest Arctic Borough Code Chapter 12.16 [Office of Emergency Management] and Alaska Statute 26.23.140 [Local disaster emergencies], the City of Kotzebue would respectfully request that you declare a Disaster Emergency for Kotzebue because of the unprecedented winter storms in the last several weeks. This would allow the City to start the process of securing funds in the order of \$250,000 to hire private contractors to work with the City's Streets Department to remove this extraordinary amount of snow from the core area of the

Exhibit "A" to Resolution 26-29 for RCCM March 5, 2026

City before break-up begins in several months. These funds would also be used to allow for the overtime of the city snow removal staff and the hiring of temporary employees as required.

As the person responsible for the City's Disaster Emergency Services, pursuant to the Kotzebue Municipal Code 2.41.010, I will also present a Disaster Declaration Resolution to the City Council at our next RCCM on March 5th and forward that fully executed Resolution to your attention.

Sincerely,



KPD Chief Christopher Cook
Acting City Manager
CITY OF KOTZEBUE

cc: Mayor and City Council Members
City Clerk
City Attorney



**Northwest Arctic Borough
163 Lagoon Street
PO Box 1110
Kotzebue, AK 99752**

DISASTER DECLARATION

City of Kotzebue – Substantial and Sustained Snowfall

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough ("Borough") is a home rule borough and political subdivision of the State of Alaska, organized and operating under the laws of the State of Alaska and the Borough's home rule charter; and

WHEREAS, beginning on or about February 16, 2026, and continuing with a second significant storm commencing February 20, 2026, the City of Kotzebue experienced consecutive winter storm events producing substantial and sustained snowfall; and

WHEREAS, the continuous and heavy snowfall created hazardous conditions throughout the City of Kotzebue, adversely impacting public safety, emergency response capabilities, transportation routes, and essential infrastructure in the community with resulting impacts throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, snow accumulation from the initial storm had not been fully mitigated prior to the second storm event, compounding hazardous conditions across roadways, emergency access routes, and critical community infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, these conditions have impaired the ability of first responders and public safety personnel to safely and efficiently respond to calls for service, increasing risks to residents and limiting mobility within the community and throughout the region reliant on Kotzebue as its regional transportation and resource hub; and

WHEREAS, the City of Kotzebue Public Works Department has operated continuously to conduct snow removal operations; however, the magnitude of snowfall has exceeded local operational and financial capacity; and

WHEREAS, exhausting its resources and capacity, the City of Kotzebue requested emergency assistance from the Northwest Arctic Borough, including emergency funding and external resources, to support snow removal, overtime operations, and temporary staffing necessary to protect public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, the severity and ongoing impacts of these winter storm events exceed the response capabilities and available resources of the City of Kotzebue and require coordinated Borough and State assistance; and

WHEREAS, there are insufficient regularly appropriated Borough and local funds to adequately address emergency response, snow removal operations, and recovery needs associated with this event.

Exhibit "B" to Resolution 26-09 for RCCM March 5, 2026

Ambler Ivisaappaat, Buckland Nunatchiaq, Deering Ipnatchiaq, Kiana Katyaak, Kivalina Kivalieiq, Kobuk Laugviik, Kotzebue Qikiqtabrik, Noatak Nautaaq, Noorvik Nuurvik, Selawik Akulibaq, Shungnak Isirnaaq

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED that a disaster emergency exists within the City of Kotzebue due to consecutive severe winter storms resulting in extraordinary snow accumulation and hazardous conditions posing an imminent threat to public health, safety, and welfare.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that the Northwest Arctic Borough Mayor, pursuant to AS 26.23.140 and other applicable authorities, hereby declares a Borough disaster emergency effective this 26th day of February, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that Borough departments are authorized to take all necessary actions to support emergency response and recovery efforts, including deployment of personnel, equipment, and resources; coordination with the City of Kotzebue and State agencies; contracting for emergency snow removal services; and expenditure of available emergency funds as permitted by law.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that the Northwest Arctic Borough respectfully requests State of Alaska assistance and a State disaster declaration, as warranted, to support emergency snow removal operations, reimbursement of eligible emergency response costs, temporary staffing and overtime expenses, protection of critical infrastructure and emergency access routes, and continued response and recovery operations.

DATED this 26th day of February, 2026.



Dickie Moto, Sr.
Mayor, Northwest Arctic Borough



Northwest Arctic Borough

163 Lagoon Street
P.O. Box 1110
(907) 442-2500 Fax (907) 442-2930
www.nwabor.org

Memorandum of Understanding

1. Purpose.

This Memorandum of Understanding (the “Agreement”) is entered into this 27th day of February 2026 (the “Effective Date”) between the Northwest Arctic Borough (the “Borough”) and the City of Kotzebue (the “City”) (each referred to individually as a “Party,” and collectively the “Parties”) to facilitate the Parties’ response to the City of Kotzebue disaster declaration of disaster for sustained and severe snow accumulation events.

2. Background.

- a. During the month of February 2026, the City of Kotzebue experienced extreme cold temperatures and sustained, severe snow accumulation from storms. The City of Kotzebue has declared an emergency disaster (the “Emergency”) and requested Northwest Arctic Borough assistance.
- b. The Parties have cooperated on Emergency response efforts and wish to detail each Party’s responsibilities as the Emergency Response and recovery efforts continue.

3. City Responsibilities.

- a. The City will retain primary Emergency response and recovery jurisdiction, control, and responsibility to evaluate damage, determine necessary response and recovery efforts, and work with local individuals and businesses to address response and recovery needs.
- b. The City will be solely responsible for submitting timely requests to the Borough for any Emergency reimbursement requests from available Borough, State and/or federal funds.
- c. The City will be solely responsible for contracting with and paying its contractors and employees responding to the Emergency.

4. Borough Responsibilities.

- a. The Borough will assist with recovery efforts and provide personnel, supplies, and equipment in addition to paying actual costs for snow removal and mitigation efforts not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. Should a Borough declaration of disaster be needed, the Borough will work with the City to coordinate, request, and receive State reimbursement for all Borough expenditures.
- b. The Borough will provide general assistance with the City's Emergency response and recovery efforts as requested, and as resources allow.

5. Term.

The term of the Agreement will commence as of the Effective Date and will expire no later than June 30, 2026. If recovery efforts are ongoing, the Parties may renew the Agreement on similar terms and conditions. This Agreement may be terminated by either Party upon 20 days' written notice. In the event that the Agreement is terminated, the Parties will conclude all outstanding reimbursements and documentation requests under this Agreement as soon as practicable.

6. Miscellaneous.

- a. The Agreement does not create, and will not be construed as creating, any rights enforceable by any person or entity not a Party to this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement will be deemed or construed to create the relationship of principal and agent, or of partnership, or of joint venture, or of any association between the Parties with respect to the subject matter of this Agreement and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous, express or implied, written or oral agreements, representations and conditions between the Parties with respect to the subject matter of this Agreement.
- b. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, including by electronically transmitted signature, and each counterpart will for all purposes be deemed to be an original and all counterparts will together constitute the fully executed agreement.
- c. This Agreement may only be modified in writing by the Parties.

The Parties have executed this Agreement as of the Effective Date.

Northwest Arctic Borough

City of Kotzebue

By: Dickie Moto

By: Christopher Cook



Mayor

Acting City Manager