

George Sullivan Resigns Land Use

Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan, one of five federal appointees to the Joint Federal State Land Use Planning Commission, has resigned from the commission, citing lack of time as his main reason.

"I find that it is impossible for me to meet these demands (of mayor of Alaska's largest city) while simultaneously responding to the important responsibilities of the commission," Sullivan said.

"While the decision is a painful one for me to reach, I know it to be the correct course of action," Sullivan said. "The commission has a vital role to play in determining the future of Alaska and it is of great importance that the appointees

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view their participation with equal importance. My own formal responsibilities preclude this necessary degree of commitment," he said.

The Tanana Chiefs Conference and Doyon Ltd. have recommended the appointment of James Huntington of Galena to replace Sullivan.

Federal co-chairman Jack Horton has been named an Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior and is expected to be replaced on the commission shortly. Horton said if that appointment was not made by the next meeting of the commission, March 26, he would try to attend that Anchorage session.

The commission set aside March 26 as a special session to discuss the so-called "D-2" hearings slated for April and May in about 20 villages.

Joe Josephson, state co-chairman for the commission, said the commission would at this

time complete and approve the agenda for the "D-2" hearings.

The purpose of the hearings is to get opinion from a number of bush residents on use of D-2 lands, the 80 million acres withdrawn by Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton last March for possible inclusion into national parks, forests, wildlife refuges or wild and scenic river systems.

The commission has already agreed to visit the villages in April and May and to send in advance to each village details on what information the commission would like to obtain at these hearings.

The intent is to have rather untraditional hearings, in that the commission will not simply go out, ask what questions it wants answered and leave, but to listen seriously to questions asked them by village residents, whose future will be affected by the ultimate decision on use of D-2 lands.