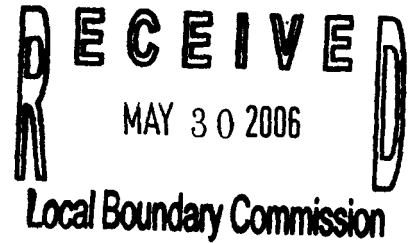


Robert M. Meyer  
#6 Beach Path  
Meyers Chuck, AK 99903  
[rmmever@att.net](mailto:rmmever@att.net)



May 20, 2006

Local Boundary Commission Staff  
550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1770  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3510

Re: Petition by the City of Wrangell to incorporate the city and borough and establish new corporate boundaries.

Dear Sirs:

You have on file several letters from me concerning the incorporation of Meyers Chuck into a regional borough.

Rather than restating all my comments to date, let me simply summarize:

1. Meyers Chuck, like many remote small villages does not easily fit the criteria for establishing borough boundaries, see previous correspondence.
2. Socially, the residents of Meyers Chuck have more in common with residents of Wrangell rather than residents of Ketchikan. Therefore, if Meyers Chuck is to be included in a borough, most residents would rather be associated with Wrangell than Ketchikan. At least, Wrangell representatives have been willing to talk with and negotiate with residents of Meyers Chuck.
3. Clarence Strait is a natural impediment to easy transportation to and from Ketchikan.

Not mentioned in the Wrangell petition for obvious reasons, how will does this petition sit with the invisioned Wrangell/Petersburg Borough?

I have attached copies of my recent letters concerning incorporation of Meyers Chuck into the Ketchikan Borough for your perusal.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Wrangell Petition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Meyer". Below the signature, the name "Robert M. Meyer" is printed in a standard font.

Robert M. Meyer

Robert & Marjorie Meyer  
#6 Beach Path  
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[rmmeyer@att.net](mailto:rmmeyer@att.net)

January 17, 2005

Dan Bockhorst  
Local Boundary Commission  
550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1770  
Anchorage, AK 99501-3510

Re: Annexation of Meyers Chuck

Dear Mr. Blockhorst:

Its mid winter, the Legislature is in session and rumors of annexation are circulating once again. This year, there is a new twist, community members have been contacted by representatives of the Wrangell Borough concerning the possible annexation of our village into their borough. This letter is in response to their initial contact.

In the early 1980's, I was asked by a staff member of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs (we shared the same office building at the time) to draft an unofficial white paper on the incorporation of Meyers Chuck into one of the local boroughs (Wrangell, Prince of Whales, when formed, or Ketchikan).

Based on my analysis, I concluded that in terms of economics and demographics, the Village of Meyers Chuck had more in common with Wrangell and Prince of Whales Island communities than it did with the city of Ketchikan. In terms of services, transportation, etc, the village relied more on Ketchikan than on Prince of Whales Island communities or Wrangell. However, Clarence Strait presented a major impediment to simple and efficient transportation and communications.

Today, the economic and demographic differences between the Village of Meyers Chuck and the City of Ketchikan are greater than they were 20 years ago. Our community has evolved from a fishing community to a summer community. Also, during the past 20 years, improvements in the transportation and communication infrastructure, Prince of Whales Island communities and Wrangell have become the primary support centers for our village. Clarence Strait remains a major transportation impediment for those traveling to Ketchikan or across the Straits to Thorne Bay on Prince of Whales Island.

Therefore, if our village is to be annexed by a borough it should either be included into a Prince of Whales Island Borough, when formed, or into the Wrangell Borough.

However, annexation of Meyers Chuck into any of the existing or planned boroughs does not appear to meet standards laid out in "Article 4 Standards for Annexation to Boroughs". For example, under 3 AAC 110.160 Community of interests: Meyers Chuck lies some 35 miles up Clarence Strait from Ketchikan, 9 miles across Clarence Strait and over 50 miles from Wrangell

preventing simple transportation options. 3 AAC 110.170 Population: Currently, the winter population of Meyers Chuck is less than 10 and in the summer ranges from 35 to 50, this does not seem enough to support annexation into a borough. 3 AAC 110.180 Resources: Meyers Chuck has evolved from a fishing community to a summer community, therefore, economic activities are very limited as is the tax base. Regionally<sup>1</sup>, potential economic activities include logging and mining on the Cleveland Peninsula, primarily US Forest Service lands. 3 AAC 110.190 Boundaries: The Village of Meyers Chuck is located on the north eastern tip of the Cleveland Peninsula and is therefore geographically isolated from Ketchikan (35 miles away) and Wrangell (50 miles away) and Prince of Whales Island (9 miles away, Thorne Bay is the closest community on the Island). Therefore, establishing rational boundaries will tax the cartographer's imagination.

As a private citizen, I am concerned about tax "Quid pro quo" i.e. what benefits if any, will accrue to local property owners for taxes paid. Because the population of Ketchikan is so much larger and so dissimilar from that of Meyers Chuck, I doubt that our voices will be heard and consequently, they will not be able to meet our needs. Therefore, taxes will greatly exceed any benefits accruing to the village. Since Meyers Chuck is more similar to the villages on Prince of Whales Island and to Wrangell, I feel that they will be more responsive to our needs and tax rates will be more closely related to services provided.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Meyer

Robert Meyer

cc: Casey Peavy, Meyers Chuck

1. In my opinion, this is the crux of annexation discussions and has nothing to do with the village of Meyers Chuck. The drive is to secure any revenues coming from potential logging and mining activities on the Cleveland Peninsula and not to provide governance for the residence of Meyers Chuck. Resources are at the core of any annexation discussions. Proponents of annexation appear to believe that potential logging and mining activities on the Cleveland Peninsula have the promise of producing revenues. However, the reality of these wishes must await actual proposed projects and future project specific economic analyses. Now, its all wishful thinking. Also, if these activities do occur, they will probably occur on US Forest Service lands any revenues will accrue to the State regardless to where the boundaries are drawn.

Further, I doubt that either of the two existing Boroughs wants the liability of providing governance for the residence of Meyers Chuck.

Robert M. Meyer  
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[rmmeyer@att.net](mailto:rmmeyer@att.net)

January 10, 2006

Honorable Mayor  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough  
334 Front Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mayor:

As a small business owner, fisherman, a resident of Meyers Chuck and a signatory of the partition objecting to the proposed annexation of Meyers Chuck by the Ketchikan Borough, I am forwarding you my comments on the boroughs proposal to annex the Village of Meyers Chuck.

In my opinion, the force driving the proposal to expand a borough boundaries has nothing to do with the village of Meyers Chuck. It is driven exclusively by the Borough's wish to collect taxes from future economic development on nearby forest service lands. The Borough wants the funds without having to provide any services to support future development or for Meyers Chuck residents. The proposal is a rationalization for the annexation of noncontiguous lands and as such, does not provide an analysis of the costs and benefits to local residents or the state.

Your proposal to extend the Borough's its boundaries to include the communities of Hyder (delayed) and Meyers Chuck violates one of the basic tenets of our form of government, that ours is a government of and for the people. Your proposal violates this basic tenet, the people of Meyers Chuck have not been included in the planning process. Therefore, by definition, what the Borough is offering is not government by the people. Further, by failing to consult with the residents of Meyers Chuck during your planning process, you are violating the second part of above mentioned tenet, that government is for the people. Your proposal offers nothing positive for our community. Your proposal offers only land and sales taxes and the loss of our polling station with out any off setting services. The notion of tax "quid pro quo" is missing.

In addition to violating our tenets of governance, your proposal makes little economic sense. The expressed reason for expanding the borough's boundaries is to capture rents from possible future timber and mining activities. These rents are currently collected by the US Forest Service and returned to the state and local governments impacted by said activities. For the most part, rents are based on net profits and royalties, therefore, borough taxes would be deducted from net profits and therefore available for distribution would decrease. As a result, the net amount of revenues accruing to the borough would be little changed.

The proposal's model boundary was based on information almost half a century old and inspite of your claim otherwise, the boundary is no longer valid. For one thing, Ketchikan is no longer the service center for all of Southern Southeast Alaska. Changes in the region's transportation,

**communication and economic infrastructure has changed over the past 40 years. Currently, freight, dry goods and perishables, are for the most part, obtained from businesses located on Prince of Wales Island. Sales taxes from the purchase of goods and services in Ketchikan offset the borough's cost of providing these goods and services.**

**While operating our fish buying station in Meyers Chuck, our fish were delivered into Petersburg and not Ketchikan. Clarence Strait is clearly a major impediment to the movement of freight and services between Meyers Chuck and Ketchikan.**

**The assertion that the borough would provide education services for our community is laughable. We have been there before. Years ago, the residents of Meyers Chuck tried to persuade the Southeast Island School District (SISD) not to build a school in Meyers Chuck. We tried to explain to the District that there were not enough children and young families residing in Meyers Chuck to keep the school open. And, sure enough, except for the first two years, District employees had to import students to keep the school open. The imported students left the community as soon as the official student count was taken.**

**Meyers Chuck still does not have the number of year round young families or families with children to justify opening a school. Given the current economic trends, the communities demographics are not expected to change.**

**I also question the socioeconomic data contained in your proposal. Meyers Chuck, it is primarily a retirement and a summer Community. In spite of what your consultant alleges, residents of Meyers Chuck are not wealthy and for the most part are living on retirement incomes. Based on personal knowledge, your consultants average income for the community and therefore projected tax receipts is greatly overstated.**

**The proposed boundary changes will serve as a disincentive to future development. The proposal will add an additional layer of government that developers will have to cope with and there by increase the cost of their project with out providing any benefits.**

**In sort, your proposal will provide no benefits to the people of the State, the Borough, Meyers Chuck or potential developers.**

**Further, I doubt that the Borough has examined the potential costs of providing an additional layer of governance for the residence of Meyers Chuck. It seems only reasonable that if we are to begin paying borough taxes then we will begin demanding services beyond the non-existent library and educational services identified in the proposal.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposal to irrationally extend the borough's boundaries.**

**Sincerely**

**Robert M. Meyer**