

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SPECIAL MEETING
ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 9, 2001

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on October 9, 2001, at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Chambers, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson. The purpose of the special meeting was to certify the October 2, 2001, election results and swear in the newly elected assembly members.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Assembly District No. 1
Ms. Sara Jansen, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3
Mr. Dan Kelly, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6
Ms. Kelly Lankford Ladere, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Sandra A. Dillon, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Mr. Michael Gatti, Borough Attorney
Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, Borough Deputy Clerk
Mr. Jim Swing, Public Works Director
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director
Ms. Sandra Garley, Planning Director
Mr. Ron Swanson, Community Development Director
Mr. Kevin Koechlein, Director of Public Safety

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Gerry Keeling, canvass board chairperson.

IV. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

A. Certification of October 2, 2001, Regular Borough Election

Ms. Dillon:

- commented regarding the recount process undertaken during the election;
- acknowledged her staff for their hard work and dedication;
- acknowledged the election officials for their participation;
- acknowledged Gerry Keeling for her participation as an election official and as the canvas board chairperson; and
- invited Ms. Keeling to report to the assembly regarding the canvass board's findings and certification.

Ms. Keeling, canvass board chairperson:

- spoke to the public interest in observing the canvass process during the week;
- noted an error found on the ballots in regard to the sales tax proposition language;
- spoke to the process used for correcting the error and accountability of the ballots thereafter;
- spoke to early and absentee in person voting which took place at the Cottonwood Creek Mall and the Borough Building;
- noted the differences in voting at each location in regard to use of the accu-vote machine and absentee in person ballots and envelopes;

- stated that there was a total of 178 voters who voted early on uncorrected ballots and 196 voters who voted early on corrected ballots, for a total of 374 early voters;
- remarked that 375 questioned ballots were cast at the assorted precinct polls on election day;
- reported that 237 questioned ballots were counted in full, 63 counted partially, and 75 that were not counted for various reasons;
- reported a total of 207 absentee ballots with 10 not counted for various reasons (ie. unsigned, no witnesses, lack of election official signature, etc.)
- commented that of the absentee ballots, 133 were corrected ballots, 70 uncorrected, and 4 special needs;
- reported regarding the challenge made to assembly district 2 and the precincts that were in question, specifically precincts 9 and 23;
- stated that both precincts 9 and 23 were hand-counted;
- noted that precinct 9 received an additional vote as the hand-count revealed a light mark not registered by the accu-vote machine;
- noted an extra ballot in precinct 23 and explained that one individual had voted early and also at the polls;
- reported the total number of poll voters to be 8211 of which, there were 213 absentee ballots were cast and 203 counted; 375 questioned ballots cast and 300 counted; and 4 personal representative ballots cast and 4 counted;
- reported that all 374 early ballots cast were counted; and
- stated the total number of ballots cast in the 2001 election to be 9177, of which, 9092 were counted.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- inquired of Ms. Keeling how the absentee ballots, corrected and uncorrected, were accounted for.

Ms. Keeling:

- responded that those individuals who received an initial absentee ballot were mailed a corrected ballot and given the option to vote on both ballots;
- noted that some voters voted the first ballot as well as the second in an effort to ensure the most accurate ballot possible, in which cases, only the corrected ballot was counted;
- noted that some voters returned only the first ballot;
- noted that some voters only returned the second ballot;
- stated that the postmark and the dates of issue were used to track which ballot had been received; and
- noted that a lack of signature on the reissued ballot in some cases caused the first ballot to be counted and not the second.

Ms. Dillon:

- thanked Ms. Keeling and introduced the members of the canvass board; and
- read the election results into the record.

MOTION: Assemblymember Simpson moved to accept the report of the canvass board and to certify the election results as read into the record by the clerk.

GENERAL CONSENT: The motion passed without objection.

B. Swearing in of Newly Elected Officials

Ms. Dillon swore in newly elected Assemblymember J. Bruce Bush and re-elected Assemblymember Jansen.

Mayor Anderson opened audience participation.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Three minutes per person.)

Karen Bretz (Alaskans for Efficient Government, Secretary/Treasurer):

- spoke to the assembly regarding the status of the collection of signatures for their effort to move the legislature from Juneau to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough;
- stated that 40,000 signatures are required in order to have the initiative placed on the ballot;

- noted that approximately 25,000 signatures have been received to date;
- reported that the group is hoping to have the issue placed on the ballot for the November 2002 election;
- remarked that Alaskans for Efficient Government is in need of contributions to continue their efforts; and
- noted potential economic benefits to the borough and small businesses.

Robert Monsen:

- commented that he is also a sponsor of the initiative to move the legislature; and
- also spoke to the need for contributions.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colver moved for reconsideration of the 2001 election certification.

VOTE: The motion, to reconsider, failed unanimously.

VI. MAYOR AND ASSEMBLY COMMENTS

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- stated that some of the saddest and happiest times of his life has come from his participation on the borough assembly;
- noted his feelings toward past issues of the assembly including the ordinance addressing junk and trash;
- spoke to road paving that was accomplished during his term in office;
- acknowledged newly elected Assemblymember J. Bruce Bush;
- commented regarding railroad ties and the parking lot on Lazy Mountain;
- spoke to the group home conditional use ordinance that is currently being drafted;
- noted that the ordinance would impact many residents in the area;
- asked the assembly to continue the work on Wolverine Road;
- noted the need for additional study regarding the Matanuska-Susitna River;
- commented regarding the Lake Louise airport;
- stated that the residents of Lake Louise are looking at a bylaw change which will allow community councils to let nonresident property owners and tax payers vote regarding community council business;
- also commented regarding a rewrite of the borough's comprehensive plan, a model of the service area concept, land sales, early voting, and support of term limits;
- corrected a statement that he had previously made by noting that he had not objected to entering the executive session to discuss the Hatcher Pass Management Agreement; and
- conveyed that he is looking forward to working on the school board.

Assemblymember Lankford Ladere:

- acknowledged the administration for the reconstruction of the Willow Area Community Organization (WACO) Building; and
- noted a sewage problems in Talkeetna and acknowledged the department of public works for their efforts in that regard.

Assemblymember Bush:

- stated that he is looking forward to working with the assembly and serving the residents of the borough.

Assemblymember Simpson:

- wished Assemblymember DeVilbiss luck in his future endeavors;
- acknowledged Assemblymember Jansen for her past efforts and stated that she looks forward to working with her in the future; and
- welcomed Assemblymember Bush to the assembly.

Assemblymember Colberg had no comments to present.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- appreciated the efforts of Assemblymember DeVilbiss over the past six years;
- congratulated Assemblymembers Bush and Jansen on successful campaigns; and

- acknowledged all other candidates who participated in the 2001 election for their efforts.

Assemblymember Colver:

- congratulated Assemblymembers Bush and Jansen;
- acknowledged the efforts of Assemblymember Jansen;
- spoke to the outcome of the sales tax proposition; and
- spoke to the need to maintain a non-partisan approach.

Assemblymember Jansen:

- thanked Assemblymember DeVilbiss for his service to the borough and his community;
- welcomed Assemblymember Bush;
- thanked the members of the assembly for their thoughtful consideration regarding issues placed before them;
- stated that it is important to maintain a good working relationship; and
- commented that she looks forward to her continued service to the borough.

Mayor Anderson:

- presented the borough seal to Assemblymember DeVilbiss for his years of service;
- congratulated Assemblymembers Bush and Jansen for successful campaigns;
- acknowledged all candidates who participated in the 2001 election;
- spoke to the fund-raising efforts of our local firefighters;
- distributed pins on behalf of the firefighters;
- spoke to a collaborative effort of the assembly; and
- noted that he would be recognizing a mayoral tradition and reassigning assembly members' seats at the horseshoe.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: November 6, 2001