

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on May 13, 2003, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson for the purpose of discussing bonds.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. J. Bruce Bush, Assembly District No. 1
Mr. Bill Allen, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3
Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6 (Deputy Mayor)
Ms. Kelly Ladere, Assembly District No. 7

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Sandra A. Dillon, CMC, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Ms. Teresa Williams, Borough Attorney
Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, Deputy Borough Clerk
Mr. Jim Swing, Public Works Director
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director
Mr. Ron Swanson, Community Development Director
Mr. Jan Affinto, Project Manager II

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Anderson inquired if there were any changes to the agenda. No corrections were noted.

GENERAL CONSENT: The agenda was approved as presented.

Mayor Anderson noted that Ivan Moore would be giving a presentation regarding the bonds.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by School Board Member Robert Wells.

V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. BONDS

Mr. Duffy stated that Ms. Clayton had prepared a report which summaries proposed school construction projects, proposed park and recreation bonds, mill rate equivalents, and a deferred maintenance list.

School Board President Chmielewski introduced Ivan Moore and spoke regarding his survey of proposed school bonds and packaging of the bonds.

Mr. Moore:

- provided a report of a survey that he conducted regarding the packaging of proposed school bonds, the various grouping options of the bonds, and the success and failure predictions of the packages;
- stated that there is no reassurance regarding the passage of a bond unless a poll returned preliminary results at least 55 percent in favor;
- opined that some bond packages may require an informational campaign to the voters;
- stated that the small bond package has a better chance of passing then does a bond containing the administration building project;
- discussed splitting the larger bond package into smaller packages;
- spoke regarding the popularity of maintenance projects;
- advised placing the charter school projects in its own bond package; and
- cautioned against splitting the projects into numerous bond packages.

Mayor Anderson:

- noted that the issue of school bonds was before the Assembly; and
- queried the Assembly if they wanted to take action regarding the bonds.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the list of deferred maintenance projects;
- the timeliness of the district's presentation of the deferred maintenance list;
- whether or not deferred maintenance was already included in the district's budget;
- review of the maintenance projects by the Department of Education; and
- whether or not the maintenance projects would be eligible for reimbursement.

Assemblymember Allen:

- stated his intent to bring forward a sinking fund; and
- queried if the district had funds to contribute through their operating budget.

Mr. Sherman, Assistant Superintendent of Business, responded that it would be difficult to determine if the district would have funds to contribute to a sinking fund, as no monies were budgeted for deferred maintenance.

Discussion continued regarding:

- the passage of a 2000 bond proposal containing maintenance projects;
- the dates of the election schedule regarding bringing bond legislation forward to the Assembly;
- code requirements of a bond proposition; and
- the availability of advocacy groups and other means to market the bonds to the voters.

(The special meeting recessed at 4:05 p.m. and reconvened at 4:18 p.m.)

Assemblymember Colver spoke to the packaging of the bonds, noting that the Palmer Elementary School had been removed due to lack of support.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colver moved to package the bond propositions into four packages and to formalize bond ordinances as follows:

Package 1

Career center	\$18,600,000
Nutrition service facility	12,000,000
Wasilla area elementary school	12,000,000
Palmer Alternative School Phase II ¹	1,000,000
<i>(primary amendment, See p. 4)</i>	

Package 2

Major repair and renovation (groups in \$200,000 packages)	\$ 4,200,000
Fire alarms	550,000
Siding and doors at Big Lake Elementary School	200,000
Ventilation system at Colony High School	200,000
Palmer Junior Middle School sprinklers and piping	1,200,000

Package 3

Midnight Sun Charter School	\$8,000,000
Academy Charter School	7,800,000

Package 4

Administration Building	\$3,500,000
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¹ The initial draft minutes incorrectly showed this primary amendment as Palmer Elementary School.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the packaging of the bond propositions;
- deleting the Iditarod Elementary School Remodel project from the propositions; and
- the eligibility of reimbursement for the maintenance items.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colberg moved to amend package 2 by deleting the deferred maintenance projects list.

Assemblymember Colberg:

- opined that the maintenance list was not presented in a timely manner;
- reiterated that the Department of Education has not reviewed the projects for qualification of debt reimbursement;
- commented that the list burdens the whole package by containing elements that have no reimbursement; and
- stated that the maintenance list should be brought back in a subsequent year in a timely manner.

Discussion continued regarding:

- the importance of addressing the maintenance projects as the cost of maintenance will continue to increase; and
- taking a proactive approach to maintenance rather than a reactionary approach.

VOTE: The primary amendment failed with Assemblymembers Colberg and Simpson in support.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colver moved a primary amendment to add Palmer Alternative Phase I to package 1.

VOTE: The primary amendment passed without objection

Discussion continued regarding:

- the best way to present the charter school projects;
- the Palmer Elementary School not being built at this time, as the school board has indicated that it is not a priority project due to enrollment figures; and
- the mill rate after the proposed projects have been calculated.

VOTE: The main motion, to direct staff to formalize the bond propositions into four packages and to place into ordinance form, passed as amended without objection

MOTION: Assemblymember Colberg moved to reconsider the motion to package the bond propositions into four packages and to formalize the bond ordinances.

VOTE: The motion to reconsider failed unanimously.

Mayor Anderson noted that the Assembly would discuss park and recreation bonds at this time.

Mr. Swanson provided a staff report regarding the park and recreation bonds and spoke to projects that the Butte community has indicated that they would like to see.

Members of the Assembly reviewed the list of park and recreation bond projects in the amount of \$6,550,000.

Assemblymember Ladere queried if action on the parks and recreation bond propositions would be taken at this time.

Mayor Anderson stated that the staff would like a direction from the Assembly so that they can move forward with drafting an ordinance.

Discussion continued regarding:

- inclusion of the Houston Riverside Trail;
- the possible need for more community input on the projects;
- the need to take the bond proposition to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board;
- joint ownership between the borough and the cities regarding recreational facilities;
- structuring a management agreement with regard to joint projects to address operation costs, etc.;
- providing for funding of a fully completed Palmer ice rink;
- securing a proposal from the city of Palmer regarding their proposal for a Palmer ice rink;
- not getting burdened down by trying to balance the projects throughout the districts;
- the Bogard softball complex; and
- the need for a new maintenance facility and a possible location for the facility.

Assemblymember Simpson encouraged the Assembly to consider whether or not two bond proposals would be viable at the same time in October.

Upon the conclusion of discussion, Mr. Swanson stated he would take the projects to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board and to the cities, and then bring an ordinance forward to the Assembly.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(There were no persons present who wished to testify.)

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember Allen commented that he is withdrawing his previous request to look for a new animal shelter based upon a trip that he took to the facility, noting that the facility is well maintained.

Assemblymember Colver commented regarding the Mid-Valley High School, opining that the Assembly needs to move forward with addressing the requested waiver of the site selection process.

Assemblymember Simpson spoke to financial information that had been requested from the school district, but was never provided.

Mr. Duffy stated that the school district has indicated their need for an emergency waiver to begin locating a site for the Mid-Valley High School and the need to have a decision by May 15, 2003;

Assemblymember Simpson queried whether or not the request includes a waiver of Assembly or school district procurement processes.

Ms. Williams stated that the borough's procurement process would be used.

Discussion continued regarding:

- the school district's emergency need for a waiver based upon their plans to open the high school in the fall;
- the Assembly's timeframe for addressing the district's request; and
- options for scheduling an Assembly meeting to address the issue.

Mayor Anderson stated that the Assembly could discuss the scheduling of a meeting to address the district's request at the 6 p.m. special meeting following adjournment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.