

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on August 25, 2005, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1 (*arrived 5:16 p.m.*)  
Mr. Bill Allen, Assembly District No. 2  
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3 (*via teleconference*)  
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5  
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6 (*Deputy Mayor*)  
Ms. Betty Vehrs, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, Borough Clerk  
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager  
Ms. Teresa S. Williams, Borough Attorney  
Ms. Lonnie McKechnie, Executive Assistant to the Borough Clerk  
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director  
Mr. Keith Rountree, Public Works Director

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Anderson:

- advised that there would be a brief staff report prior to the introduction of Ordinance Serial No. 05-160; and
- inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

GENERAL CONSENT:      The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. George Troxel, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District.

Mr. Rountree:

- advised that the original part of the Susitna Valley School was constructed in 1972;
- noted that the original roof was designed improperly;
- advised that the renovation to the roof was done in 1982 which created a snow condition in which the snow slides off the roof;
- spoke regarding the additions that were added to the school;
- stated that there are more problems with the roof on the original building than on the additions;
- spoke regarding the reports done by the consultant architect and engineer;
- advised that the snow design load for the Talkeetna area should be 120 pounds per square foot;
- noted that the roof was constructed at 60 pounds per square foot for snow load;
- reported that there is a seismic load problem with the original structure; and
- advised that Burkhart Croft Architects reported that the building should be deemed unsafe in accordance with section 115 of the international building code.

Assemblymember Allen queried the cost of re-roofing the entire building.

Mr. Rountree advised that it would cost \$4.2 million for construction only.

Assemblymember Vehrs queried whether the other schools in the area have been evaluated for the same problem.

Mr. Rountree advised that the other schools have not been evaluated.

Assemblymember Allen:

- opined that a cost benefit analysis needs to be done to replace the entire structure;
- spoke regarding the other building issues at the Susitna Valley School; and
- requested that the Assembly consider approving the portables and then have a cost analysis done to either replace or repair the school.

Assemblymember Colver:

- advised that there is a \$1.2 million appropriation for the renovation project; and
- noted that this is an adequate amount to get an evaluation done to present to the Assembly.

Assemblymember Simpson queried the occupancy issue.

Ms. Clayton:

- spoke regarding the insurance and liability issues; and
- stated that even if the snow load was kept off the roof and an earthquake occurred, the insurance company would not cover anything due to the fact that the Borough is aware that there are structural problems with the building.

Discussion ensued regarding liability issues.

Assemblymember Colver:

- opined that the decisions need to be made jointly with the School District;
- spoke regarding coordinating with the School District on how best to teach the children;
- spoke to the need for considering the human element with the situation; and
- stated that a plan needs to be coordinated to get school started as soon as possible.

Mayor Anderson queried if the funding sources are identified if the work can be performed on Susitna Valley School prior to the time school starts next year.

Mr. Rountree:

- advised that the work could be performed prior to the next school year; and
- spoke regarding the design and construction timeline.

Assemblymember Allen queried regarding personal liability issues should a child become harmed.

Ms. Williams advised that the Assembly would become personally liable if a member were to do something outside the Assembly's authority.

Assemblymember Colver:

- spoke regarding a design/build contract; and
- spoke regarding the need of having a contractor that knows that the design would be ongoing.

Mr. Rountree:

- advised that Burkhart Croft Architects did recommend a design/build contract;
- spoke regarding the renovation timeline of the building; and
- advised that it is important to work with a contractor on the design/build, as designs do not give a good idea of the structural design.

*(Assemblymember Colberg exited the teleconference at 5:37 p.m.)*

*(The special meeting recessed at 5:37 p.m. and reconvened at 5:52 p.m.)*

## **V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION (For public hearing - 09/06/05, 7 p.m., Borough Assembly Chambers)**

1. Ordinance Serial No. 05-160: AN ORDINANCE REAPPROPRIATING \$432,000 OUT OF THE RESERVE FOR MAJOR REPAIR AND RENOVATION, FUND 100, TO FUND 400, SCHOOL DISTRICT PORTABLE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDRESSING THE EMERGENCY SITUATION AT SUSITNA VALLEY SCHOOL.

#### **a. IM No. 05-241**

Mayor Anderson read the above legislation into the record.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colver moved to introduce the legislation as read into the record by the Clerk and set the public hearing for September 6, 2005.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

## **VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Mr. George Troxel, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District:

- advised that the School District has thoroughly analyzed the options in regards to the emergency situation at Susitna Valley School;
- advised that any use of the Susitna Valley School was ruled out due to safety concerns for the students;
- noted that eight options were reviewed;
- advised that the School District took some of the options from the community;
- advised that the Parent, Teacher, Student Association suggested an option to keep the students on campus; however, it would require 14 portables, which would lack a gym and an assembly area for the students; and
- advised that the community wanted to keep the continuity of the 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders together, and not have the younger kids with the older children.

Assemblymember Colver queried how many portables it would take to keep the students at the Susitna Valley School site.

Mr. Troxel:

- advised that 12 more portables would be need;
- opined that the educational program would be lacking; and
- spoke regarding the costs of keeping the students in portables at the Susitna Valley School.

Mayor Anderson queried if the School District had made a decision on what option they will use.

Mr. Troxel:

- stated that they have not decided which option will be used;
- advised that the School District will be working on options in the morning; and
- advised that he does not see another way other than taking the students to Trapper Creek.

Assemblymember Allen queried whether a portable has been considered for use as restrooms.

Mr. Troxel:

- advised that they did consider having a portable for classrooms;
- noted that the number of portables needed to keep the students at Susitna Valley School would be doubled and one of the portables would need to be used for the restrooms; and

- spoke regarding having an active construction site when students are in the area.

Assemblymember Vehrs:

- explained that one of the fears of the community is once the students start being bussed to Trapper Creek that will be the end of Susitna Valley School;
- requested that the School District put something in writing that this is not the intention;
- advised that parents are already enrolling students in other schools so they do not have to have the long bus rides; and
- opined that having students leave the school could have a domino effect that would lower the school's enrollment and make the school non-viable.

School Board President Chmielewski:

- thanked Mr. Duffy and Mr. Rountree for participating in the discussions;
- advised that the School District wants to participate in the designing of the building;
- noted that the start of the school year is coming quickly; and
- commented that he respects Assemblymember Vehrs' comments.

Mayor Anderson:

- noted that it is his understanding that the School District was going to make an announcement tomorrow that they are sticking to the original plan to bus the students to Trapper Creek; and
- queried whether the School District was going to meet with the community again before a final decision is reached.

School Board President Chmielewski:

- stated that they will be flushing out these issues tomorrow; however, busing the students to Trapper Creek seems clear;
- advised that they would be working with the school staff and the Parent/Teacher Association; and
- advised that there is a meeting tomorrow night to discuss with the public the direction that they are going.

## **VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS**

*(There were not comments provided.)*

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

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TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

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MICHELLE M. MCGEHEE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: 09/20/05