

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
ASSEMBLY**

**SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2000**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on December 12, 2000, at the Palmer High School Library, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson. The purpose of the special meeting was a joint assembly/school board meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

- Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Assembly District No. 1
- 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 (entered at 6:25 p.m.)
- Ms. Kelly Lankford Ladere, Assembly District No. 7

Assemblymember absent and excused:

- Ms. Sara Jansen, Assembly District No. 2

School Board members present and establishing a quorum were:

- Ms. Linda Menard, Seat C
- Mr. Bob Johnson, Seat D
- Ms. Helene Antel Brooks, Seat F
- Mr. Daniel Contini, Seat G

School Board member present via teleconference:

- Mr. Mike Chmielewski, Seat E

School Board members absent and excused:

- Mr. Robert Wells, Seat A
- Mr. Carl Gatto, Seat B

Staff in attendance were:

- Ms. Sandra Dillon, Borough Clerk
- Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
- Mr. Michael Gatti, Borough Attorney
- Ms. Elizabeth Manfred, Borough Deputy Clerk
- Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director

School Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Patricia Chesbro, School Superintendent
Mr. Scott Schwald, Transportation Supervisor
Mr. George Troxell, Director of Education
Ms. Julena Felix, Administrative Secretary

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was no objection to the agenda as presented.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Ronnie Shaw, a Wasilla High School student.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Annual Budget, Preliminary Discussion (MSB 2.12.075)

Superintendent Chesbro:

- stated that two new schools will open next fiscal year;
- explained that the new schools will require additional costs for infrastructure;
- commented that the special needs education program is expanding;
- spoke to the increase in employees' costs; and
- remarked that the school district will request the assembly to fund to the state cap.

Mayor Anderson:

- spoke to the joint committee appointed to study school issues; and
- stated that the joint committee will complete a preliminary study of school budget items.

Ms. Clayton:

- related that lapsed funds may be used for pupil transportation if reappropriated.

B. State Legislative Action Needed (MSB 2.12.075)

Mayor Anderson:

- discussed the earlier assembly meeting with local legislators; and
- asked the school district to submit their state legislative priority list prior to the opening session in January.

Superintendent Chesbro:

- spoke to plans for a proposed career technical center;
- commented that no expense amount for the technical center is available at this time; and
- explained that the state will fund programs but not building construction.

School Board Member Brooks:

- stressed that the expansion of a career program provides a local education opportunity currently not provided; and
- requested that an assessment of safety issues be conducted for all schools.

Superintendent Chesbro:

- stated that many career programs target specific groups;
- related that students who do not qualify for programs receive unsupervised time and unsupervised programs;
- discussed start times for a school day and how the start time affects specific age groups;
- reported that boys clubs are now held in several district schools; and
- spoke to the increased pupil transportation costs and the decrease in state funding for this issue.

Discussion continued regarding the assembly and school district coordinating state lobbying efforts.

C. Joint Assembly/School Board Committee (Requested by School Board)

Mayor Anderson stated he will recommend the following appointments to the Joint Assembly/School Board Committee and seek assembly confirmation on December 19, 2000: Mr. Talis Colberg, Ms. Sara Jansen, Ms. Helene Antel Brooks, Mr. Mike Chmielewski, Ms. Patricia Chesbro, and Mr. John Duffy. The committee will meet to discuss an overview of school issues for a one year period with an assembly reevaluation of the committee's performance at the end of the year.

D. School District Fund Balances (Requested by Mayor and Assemblymember Jansen)

Mayor Anderson:

- indicated a desire to change the current policy concerning school district lapsed funds.

School Board member Brooks:

- opined the need for the school district to build a budget reserve;
- commented that the school district would like to develop multi-year budgets;
- discussed the inability to hire teachers prior to student count; and
- spoke to the current practice of purchasing materials versus funding positions.

Discussion continued on the policy requiring the school district to return a portion of lapsed funds to the borough.

The special meeting recessed at 7:30 p.m. and reconvened at 7:40 p.m.

E. Pupil Transportation (Requested by Assemblymember Colver)

Mr. Scott Schwald:

- reported that the state had a six percent shortfall in pupil transportation funding;

- stated that the local district received approximately \$300,000 less revenue for pupil transportation than budgeted; and
- commented that the purchase price and maintenance costs of one school bus equals funding to hire one teacher.

F. School Intern Program (Requested by Assemblymember Ladere)

Discussion followed regarding assembly members and school board members volunteering their time with student interns and a request was made to the school board to develop a government program for student interns.

Mr. Gatti spoke to the development of an intern program and school policies to monitor the program.

VI. SCHOOL BOARD, MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

School Board Member Brooks:

- thanked the assembly members for the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas; and
- voiced her opinion that the school district has developed a positive budget process.

School Board Member Menard:

- stated that insurance costs have increased ten percent in the last year; and
- reported that she will participate in the principal selection for the Ron Larson school.

Superintendent Chesbro:

- thanked the borough staff for assistance on school issues.

School Board Member Johnson:

- thanked the assembly for allowing the school board to use the borough assembly chambers;
- acknowledged borough employee Rodney Segriff for support of school board meetings; and
- thanked Superintendent Chesbro for arranging the joint meeting at the Palmer High School.

Ms. Dillon:

- stated the employee insurance issue will be addressed during the March 2001 joint meeting; and
- invited assembly members and school board members to contact her staff to volunteer for the student intern program.

Mr. Duffy:

- announced that he will meet regularly with school administration to maintain open communication.

Assemblymember Colberg:

- expressed his interest in Assemblymember Ladere's ideas to promote student participation in local government.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- reported on his participation in the Charter School Site Selection Committee;
- commented on recent math benchmark test results; and
- stated that the budget sessions between the assembly and the school district have improved annually.

Assemblymember Colver:

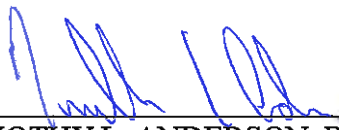
- acknowledged the clerk for the coordination of off-site assembly meetings; and
- spoke to the need to open a charter school next year.

Mayor Anderson:

- thanked the borough and the school district staff for arranging the joint meeting;
- appreciated the new meeting room in the Palmer High School;
- extended an invitation to Superintendent Chesbro to travel with borough staff in March to lobby in Washington D.C. for borough issues; and
- referenced open communication between the assembly and the school district.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.


TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: January 2, 2001