

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on June 12, 2007, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Deputy Mayor Lynne Woods for the purpose of holding a joint Assembly/School Board meeting. (Mayor Menard arrived to preside over the meeting at 6:07 p.m.)

**II. ROLL CALL**

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1 (*Deputy Mayor*)  
Ms. Cindy Bettine, Assembly District No. 5  
Mr. Robert Wells, Assembly District No. 6  
Mr. Tom Kluberton, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Mr. Bill Allen, Assembly District No. 2  
Ms. Michelle R. Church, Assembly District No. 3  
Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Assembly District No. 4

School Board members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Jim Colver, Seat A  
Ms. Sarah Welton, Seat B  
Ms. Linda Menard, Seat C  
Ms. Patricia Purcell, Seat D (*via teleconference*)  
Ms. Cheryl Turner, Seat E  
Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Seat F (*School Board President*)  
Mr. Daniel Contini, Seat G

Borough staff in attendance were:

Ms. Michelle M. McGehee, CMC, Borough Clerk  
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager  
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney  
Ms. Amanda E. Charles, Executive Assistant to the Borough Clerk  
Mr. Dennis Brodigan, Emergency Services Director  
Mr. Keith Rountree, Public Works Director

School Board staff in attendance were:

Mr. George Troxel, Assistant Superintendent of Education  
Mr. Scott Schwald, Director of Maintenance

### **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Deputy Mayor Woods inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

Assemblymember Bettine requested that item D be removed from the agenda.

There were no objections noted.

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

### **V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Linda Menard, School Board Member, Seat C.

### **VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

The following persons spoke regarding Su Valley High: Mr. Steve Hicks, Ms. Jenny Krepel, Ms. Duranda Twig, and Mr. Matt Clark.

### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Review School Capital Construction Plan (*pursuant to MSB 2.12.075(A)*)

Mr. Keith Rountree reported on:

- South Palmer Elementary School design review process;
- Big Lake Elementary site and improvement projects;
- Wasilla Middle School renovation project;
- Houston Middle School locker replacement;
- Trapper Creek Elementary roof repairs;
- Big Lake Elementary roof replacement and asbestos abatement; and
- Wasilla High, phase III;

Mr. Brodigan spoke regarding updates on the Su Valley High fire operation.

Mr. Michael Keenan, Acting Chief, Fire Incident Commander:

- provided a presentation on the Su Valley High fire; and
- read the June 12, 2007, official AST report into the record.

School Board Member Turner queried the distance of the forestry services from the school.

Mr. Keenan:

- stated that the helicopter came from Palmer; and
- reported that the engines came from the core area.

School Board Member Turner queried if any of the files were salvaged.

Mr. Keenan responded that he was unsure because he was not present the following day.

Mr. Rountree:

- spoke regarding securing the site at Su Valley High School;
- commented on security at Su Valley High School;
- reported his work on verifying ownership of the materials at the school;
- will be announcing the award of the contract for removal of debris;
- spoke regarding a cease work order being put in place;
- stated that the Borough would be contracting with EHS, an environmental firm, for the demolition of the building;
- reported that the building would be torn down in 45 to 60 days;
- explained that the insurance company requested a look at the existing slab;
- noted that the examination cannot be completed until the debris is removed; and
- requested help from the body.

School Board Member Turner:

- queried if any personal items left in the building were being documented; and
- asked if the insurance would cover the loss of the personal items.

Mr. Rountree deferred to Ms. Clayton regarding insurance questions.

School Board Member Turner queried if there were any animals in the building at the time of the fire.

Mr. Duffy stated that the Borough had no knowledge of any animals being in the building.

Assemblymember Kluberton queried the quality of an inspection if 90 percent of the slab is covered with debris

Mr. Rountree:

- responded that once materials are off the slab, the inspectors can get the test done in a quick manner;
- explained that the inspectors can get a preliminary look if they want; and
- stated that he has given them an as-build drawing.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- queried how much of the \$5.5 million roof replacement has been spent; and
- asked if the remaining funds could be spent towards rebuilding.

Mr. Rountree:

- responded that \$1.3 million has been spent thus far;
- noted that there is \$4.2 million remaining;
- reported that some of the money was grant funds, some borough funds; and
- stated that he has asked finance for input.

School Board Member Menard queried how many acres the school sat on.

Mr. Duffy reported that it was roughly 80 to 120 acres.

School Board Member Menard asked if there had been any conversation regarding constructing portables at the port?

Mr. Rountree:

- stated that there has been no conversation on his part;
- noted that he has been waiting for direction from the School Board and Assembly; and
- reported that the last six portables constructed at the port took 120 days to complete.

Mr. Duffy stated that there has been a lot of interest in constructing portables.

Assemblymember Bettine queried if the portables that were just built for Su Valley High School were safe and intact.

Mr. Rountree affirmed the query.

Assemblymember Bettine queried if the six extra portables from Goosebay Elementary could be used.

Mr. Troxel responded that those portables had already been placed.

Assemblymember Bettine:

- questioned critical need of the portables; and
- opined that it was a matter of prioritization.

Mr. Troxel:

- responded that it was not that simple;
- stated that the critical needs of all the children is a factor; and
- noted that there does have to be a prioritization of need.

Assemblymember Bettine questioned when the Assembly will see portable availability?

Mr. Troxel noted that there was a need for ten portables.

Assemblymember Bettine queried if that was ten portables in addition to the eight currently at Su Valley High School for the 180 students.

School Board Member Turner clarified that portable need is based on class size.

Mr. Troxel added that some of the portables would be for uses such as bathroom facilities and a library.

Assemblymember Bettine queried when the Assembly would know the prioritization of the borough-owned portables.

Mr. Duffy that it was a school district decision.

School Board Member Colver:

- queried if the Borough staff had contact with the State of Alaska about flexibility of the funding regarding the borough's portion and legislative portion; and
- the possibility of reprogramming some of the funds given the circumstances.

Assemblymember Kluberton requested an assessment on the need of the portables and locations.

School Board Member Contini expressed a need to for expediency on this issue due to the school year fast approaching.

Mr. Duffy:

- gave a quick update on the insurance;
- responded to School Board Member Colver's query that yes, quick reprogramming of funds is a possibility; **b**
- stated that the State Fire Marshals report showed that the findings among the reports were unanimous; which doesn't happen often;
- noted that Ms. Clayton met with the insurance adjuster and they have completed their work;
- reported that he will receive a statement from the insurance company regarding what the policy covers by Monday or Tuesday;
- stated that he has already contacted the advocate (borough representative in insurance negotiations); and
- noted that the insurance company stated that the building must rebuilt within two years.

Mr. Rountree affirmed that rebuilding would be possible within two years.

Mr. Duffy:

- stated that a declaration of disaster is to be drafted with Mr. Brodigan; and
- noted that he will be trying to apply for homeland security disaster funding to help with the rebuilding of the new school.

School Board Member Menard asked if the deductible on the insurance policy was \$100,000.

Mr. Duffy affirmed the query noting it was specific to this situation.

Assemblymember Kluberton requested a special meeting to discuss the revenue and costs, associated with this incident, in order to quickly reach a decision.

Assemblymember Bettine requested that the Clerk add this item to the Assembly agenda.

Ms. McGehee:

- stated it will be added under the manager's report; and
- spoke to Open Meetings Act emergency procedures.

Discussion ensued regarding emergency meetings and appropriating money.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- requested administration to draft an ordinance by the next meeting; and
- stated that there is a need to know how many portables can be found and how many need to be built.

Assemblymember Woods:

- spoke regarding used portables, stating that new isn't the only option; and
- opined that portables are sought outside the borough.

Discussion ensued regarding the cost of purchasing new portables, renting the Senior Center, moving the old portables to the Senior Center, and renovating the Senior Center.

Mr. Duffy stated he would have a report ready for the Assembly's consideration on Tuesday night.

School Board Member Colver:

- queried if anyone has looked at other options;
- opined his concern regarding upgrades to the Senior Center; and
- spoke regarding other cost options and community preferences.

Mr. Troxel:

- stated that Talkeetna Elementary was looked at as a possible site;
- clarified that it would need septic updates as well;
- spoke regarding the cost of portables;
- reported that 12 portables could be leased at \$360,000 per year; and
- concluded that there is residual profit to buying new ones.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- referenced Talkeetna Elementary and the associated travel times in commute;
- pointed out the impact on buses; and
- requested a meeting.

Mr. Duffy suggested July 19, 2007, at 5 p.m.

Ms. McGehee stated that there is a sales tax meeting at 4 p.m. that day.

Discussion ensued regarding a start time for the emergency meeting.

Ms. McGehee noted that the work session was cancelled and an emergency meeting was now scheduled for June 19, 2007, at 4 p.m.

B. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) List *(requested by: School District)*

Mr. Troxel:

- spoke to a six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list; and
- listed the main items on the CIP as the Palmer High School roof, Iditarod School's major renovation, a telephone upgrade, Su Valley High School replacement of generators and related electrical, Houston Middle School, and a new high school for the Wasilla area.

Mr. Duffy requested that Su Valley High School be added to the CIP list.

C. Joint Purchase Agreements *(requested by: Assemblymember Kvalheim)*

Ms. McGehee referenced Assemblymember Kvalheim's handout and available web links for review.

Ms. Menard opined that it was well worth the time to review joint insurance options.

Mr. Duffy stated that he will get with Mr. Troxell and produce a report to summarize this issue to bring closure.

~~D. Policy for Public Use of School Buildings~~  
~~*(requested by: Assemblymember Bettine)*~~

E. New High School in the Borough *(requested by: School Board)*

School Board Member Menard:

- spoke to the need for a new high school;
- noted that several years ago the School Board decided they didn't want highly populated schools;
- commented that they wanted to keep the population under 1,000 students; and
- opined that she would like to see one on Knik-Goosebay Road.

School Board Member Turner:

- stated this item was on the agenda due to a request from the Site Selection Committee; and
- opined that they need direction from the body.

Ms. Welton spoke regarding placement of need and priority on the CIP list while considering the current demographics.

Mr. Duffy stated it takes three to five years to build and open a school.

School Board Member Purcell stated that there is currently research taking place to find a suitable site for the next high school.

F. Requirement on Noticed Meetings Re: Joint Assembly/School Board Committee on School Issues *(requested by: Assemblymember Wells)*

Assemblymember Wells spoke regarding the Open Meetings Act.

School Board Member Turner queried if the laws were the same for the Assembly and for the School Board.

Ms. McGehee affirmed the query and deferred to the School Board's attorney.

### **VIII. SCHOOL BOARD, MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS**

Mr. Spiropoulos stated he would be in court tomorrow presenting oral argument regarding adult entertainment in the borough.

Mr. Duffy:

- noted a need to advertise for the Joint School Board/Assembly committee meetings;
- opined his appreciation for the cooperation and collaboration between the School Board and the Assembly during this year's budget season; and
- stated he would be meeting with Washington State ferry personnel for details on operation planning and funding.

Ms. McGehee stated that she would work with administration on developing the meeting.

School Board Member Menard:

- opined that she wants the demolition on Su Valley High School done promptly; and
- noted that there is already infrastructure at the current site and thus no need for a new site.

School Board Member Welton:

- opined that there needed to be an awareness to change;
- spoke regarding how the district has many over crowded schools;
- stated that there is a need for the portables at those previously assigned schools; and
- concluded with what hurts one part of a community hurts other parts of the same community.

School Board Member Turner:

- thanked members of Su Valley community who spoke under audience participation;
- noted that she would be in touch with Mr. Steve Hicks;
- reported that she visited the Su Valley High School site last week; and
- opined that he thinks, and hopes, the community will be very vocal.

School Board Member Colver:

- thanked the Assembly and the Mayor for the outstanding funding for the School District in the budget;

- expressed his appreciation on the feedback for the new process;
- opined his desire to move quickly on Su Valley High School matter; and
- stated that he would appreciate email updates on the school.

School Board Member Contini:

- opined that he thinks it is wise to stay at the current Su Valley High School site; and
- stated that he wants the School Board to be involved in process.

School Board President DeVilbiss:

- requested to be on notice for meetings before August 1, 2007;
- opined his desire to stay on the current site for Su Valley High School;
- stated that the School Board will be advertising a thanks to the Assembly in the local papers for funding the enhanced program into the FY08 budget; and
- spoke regarding advertising in the Talkeetna paper inviting feedback on the Su Valley High School site.

Mr. Spiropoulos spoke regarding the OMA and how advertising needs and rules change during emergencies.

Assemblymember Wells opined his desire to quickly move forward on the Su Valley High School matter.

Assemblymember Bettine:

- opined her want for funding in the budget for portables;
- expressed her belief that she thinks it is better to have extra funds for expedited projects; and
- noted a desire for a district 7 school board member at times like this.

Assemblymember Woods:

- stated that she was at a conference for Girl's State Junior High regarding governments; and
- reported that she spoke at the conference regarding local government.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- spoke to the benefits of the Senior Center;
- noted the availabilities for the student body to gather at-large where it is not available in portables;
- stated that it would not be feasible to put portables on the parking lot at the Su Valley High School site due to construction vehicles and materials needing the area;
- noted that if the portables were put in the parking lot there would be a need to tear down surrounding foliage and fields to make room for the construction equipment to move;
- stated that he does not support having portables put at the current site;
- spoke regarding gathering input from the community, and
- noted that the community did not attend this evening's meeting because they know they are represented appropriately.

School Board Member Turner queried if the Baptist Church had been considered as a possible temporary site for students.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- stated that the church expressed concerns;
- noted that the church has a need to run their own programs at the same time; and
- concluded that the church did say they want to help.

Mayor Menard:

- commented that he had looked at the Senior Center as a possibility;
- stated that he will see what different legislative committees have to say about expediting the reappropriation of the unused money;
- opined his support regarding used portables;
- commented that he would be out of town for the next meeting on June 19, 2007;
- reported that he had entertained the CEO of Harley Davidson while on his visit to the Borough;
- spoke about the positive relationship between the School Board and the Assembly; and
- noted his appreciation regarding the budget process.

Mr. Troxel:

- opined his appreciation of the budget process;
- commented on attending upcoming meetings regarding Su Valley High School; and
- expressed a need for a back up plan.

Ms. McGehee extended a happy birthday to Mayor Menard.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The special meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

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CURTIS D. MENARD, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

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MICHELLE M. MCGEHEE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: 08/07/07