

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on September 8, 2015, at the Borough Assembly Chamber, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Larry DeVilbiss for the purpose of conducting a joint Assembly/School Board meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Jim Sykes, Assembly District No. 1
Mr. Matthew Beck, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Steve Colligan, Assembly District No. 4 (*arrived at 6:02 p.m.*)
Mr. Dan Mayfield, Assembly District No. 5
Ms. Barbara Doty, Assembly District No. 6
Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Mr. Ronald Arvin, Assembly District No. 3 (*Deputy Mayor*)

School Board members present and establishing a quorum were:

Ms. Deborah Retherford, Seat A
Ms. Sarah Welton, Seat B
Ms. Susan Pougher, Seat C
Mr. Ole Larson, Seat D
Mr. Kelsey Trimmer, Seat E
Ms. Donna Dearman, Seat F
Mr. Ray Michaelson, Seat G

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Moosey, Assistant Manager
Mr. George Hays, Assistant Borough Manager
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor DeVilbiss inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

Assemblymember Sykes stated that he would like to invite comments from the School Board Members regarding electronic cigarettes after Item E on the agenda.

Mayor DeVilbiss queried if there was any objection.

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

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Ms. Jamie Newman, Deputy Clerk.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(There was no one present who wished to testify.)

VI. JOINT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Mr. Moosey requested to take up items “A” and “D” together.

Mayor DeVilbiss queried if there was any objection.

There was no objection noted.

- A. Building Construction Progress And Review Of Capital Construction Plan *(MSB 2.12.075(A))*
- D. Bogard Road Construction Update *(Requested by Dr. Paramo)*

Mr. Brad Sworts, Acting Capital Projects Director, reported on capital construction progress and the Bogard Road construction update.

- B. Report On Common Core Math Testing, Particularly In Lower Grades *(Requested by Mayor DeVilbiss)*

Dr. Paramo, School District Superintendent, reported on the common core math testing.

The body asked questions of Dr. Paramo.

- C. School Enrollment Update *(Requested by Dr. Paramo)*

Dr. Paramo, School District Superintendent, provided an update regarding student enrollment.

- E. Adverse Childhood Experience (ACES) Report *(Requested by Assemblymember Doty)*

Dr. Paramo, School District Superintendent, reported on how adverse childhood experience impacts child development.

- F. Electronic Cigarettes

Assemblymember Sykes:

- summarized the legislation recently adopted by the Assembly regarding electronic cigarettes.
- queried the impacts of electronic cigarettes within the School District.

Dr. Paramo reported on the impacts of electronic cigarettes within the School District.

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

School Board Member Michaelson:

- spoke to the large increase in student enrollment;
- noted that he appreciated the report on the common core testing; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

School Board Member Dearman:

- spoke to her appreciation of the joint meeting;
- opined that the population growth in the Borough is a good thing;
- opined that the term common core needs to be eliminated and the language Alaska State Standards should be used;
- spoke to concerns that the words common core are divisive;
- noted that the expectation of implementing common core standards was to ensure all children do well in their education;
- spoke in support of the body working together; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

School Board Member Larson:

- spoke to concerns with the decrease in State revenue;
- spoke in support of the education system within the Borough;
- provided a history on how the education system worked a number of years ago;
- spoke in support of the blended learning opportunities currently provided to students;
- commented that it is confusing that the different sections of the Bogard Road project have different names; and
- invited the Assembly to bring questions to the School Board, should they have any.

School Board Member Welton:

- spoke in support of joint meetings with the Assembly;
- stated that she appreciates the exchange of information;
- commented on items that she believes impact child development academically;
- spoke in support of the infrastructure improvements that are nearing completion; and
- thanked the body for their participation in the meeting.

School Board Member Retherford:

- spoke in support of sharing information with the public so that they understand the educational standards of the School District; and
- spoke in support of the 15 positions that were added at the School District.

School Board Member Trimmer:

- spoke in support of the blended learning opportunities in the School District;

- noted that testing allows an opportunity to provide additional assistance that children may need; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

School Board President Pougher:

- spoke to a number of conversations that she had during the fair with parents of school age children;
- noted that many of the comments from parents were very positive;
- stated that online courses are not necessarily easier than in-class courses;
- related that the School District is working very hard to provide learning choices for parents and children; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

Assemblymember Doty:

- commented that she has been impressed with the educational choices within the School District;
- spoke to her appreciation of the way the entire School District is viewed as a single campus;
- noted the importance of considering childhood trauma and how it impacts learning; and
- requested to have driver education and personal financial management added to the curriculum.

Assemblymember Colligan:

- spoke to the number of really great kids that are in the School District that are lost in the focus of fixing problems;
- spoke to the educational standards in America;
- opined that there are countries that do a much better job educationally;
- stated that as an employer, the biggest issue he encounters is work ethic;
- noted that being smart is meaningless if you have no work ethic;
- spoke to the need for long range transportation planning; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

Assemblymember Beck:

- stated that if someone had asked him where the best off road experience was a month ago, he would have referred them to Assembly District 1;
- joked that now, the best off road experience is on Arctic Avenue in front of Palmer High School;
- spoke in support of having driver education in the School District;
- spoke to the challenges in accessing the schools that are impacted by the Bogard Road project;
- stated that he is honored to participate in the education of children within the School District;
- spoke to his appreciation of the School District and the learning opportunities that are provided; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

Assemblymember Halter:

- spoke in support of funding for the School District remaining at a level that meets educational needs;
- spoke in support of the road bond projects within the Borough;
- noted his confidence in the School District's ability to provide appropriate educational opportunities;
- stated that he is glad to hear that the divisiveness of common core will be eliminated; and
- thanked the body for the meeting.

Assemblymember Mayfield:

- stated that he would like to see driver education and personal finance in the school curriculum;
- spoke to his concerns with School District testing and to his hopes that there will be progress in the future;
- related all the positive input he has received regarding Joe Redington, Sr. Junior/Senior High Schools;
- spoke to the need to have adequate facilities for children to learn in; and
- commented that he is learning a lot from the joint meetings.

Assemblymember Sykes:

- spoke in support of the cooperative nature of the relationship between the School Board and the Assembly;
- stated that he is glad to see that the Alaska standardized testing allows for children to learn in an environment that is best for them;
- spoke to his concerns with the common core curriculum;
- stated that he is pleased with the varied approaches to learning that are available to students and their parents;
- complimented Ms. Helen Munoz for convincing the School District to include personal finance in their curriculum; and
- thanked the body for the productive meeting.

Mayor DeVilbiss:

- spoke to interviewing with the trade unions last week;
- stated that there were a couple of unions that expressed interest in incorporating their trades into the School District's curriculum;
- spoke to the number of schools that are located within a singular area that could be positively impacted by completing the extension of Seward-Meridian; and
- queried if there is a date for the Potato Bowl.

Dr. Paramo stated that it is scheduled for October 2.

(The meeting recessed at 8:20 p.m. and reconvened at 8:30 p.m.)

(The School Board exited the meeting at this time.)

VIII. ASSEMBLY ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Letter To Governor Walker – Requested Items In Governor’s Budget

Ms. McKechnie:

- reported that the marijuana initiative has been turned in to the Clerk’s Office;
- advised that if the sponsors are able to get enough signatures that it would go on the October 2016 ballot, as it is too late for this year’s ballot;
- stated that the Review Board will be meeting this Thursday to test the ballots and the Accu-vote machines; and
- summarized her plan to begin conducting interviews and hiring for the Deputy Clerk position.

Mr. Moosey:

- advised that there have been no comments from the Legislature regarding reimbursement for bond funding;
- noted that it is a year-to-year budget decision and could change next year; and
- stated that he will continue to monitor that closely.

MOTION: Assemblymember Colligan moved to approve the letter to the Governor as written by Mr. Moosey.

MOTION: Assemblymember Sykes moved a primary amendment to include \$1,000,000 for erosion control and flood prevention.

VOTE: The primary amendment failed with Assemblymembers Beck and Sykes in support.

MOTION: Assemblymember Sykes called for the question (to stop debate).

VOTE: The motion failed with Assemblymembers Beck, Halter, and Doty opposed and Assemblymembers Colligan, Mayfield, and Sykes in support (required five votes).

MOTION: Assemblymember Beck moved a primary amendment to include the South Gateway Visitor’s Center and direct the Manager to go to the Mat-Su Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to provide a dollar amount if the primary amendment is approved.

MOTION: Assemblymember Beck moved a secondary amendment to strike the words “and direct the Manager to go to the Mat-Su Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to provide a dollar amount if the primary amendment is approved” and inserting “\$5,000,000” in its place.

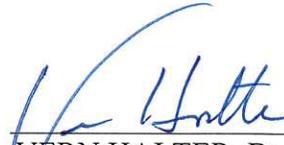
VOTE: The secondary amendment passed without objection.

VOTE: The primary amendment passed as amended without objection.

VOTE: The main motion passed as amended without objection.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.


VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 12/01/15