

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645 - 907-861-8683

Tim Hale, District 1
Stephanie Nowers, District 2
Dee McKee, District 3
Robert Yundt, District 4
Bill Gamble, District 5
Dmitri Fonov, District 6
Ron Bernier, District 7



Thomas Bergey, District 1
Kendal Kruse, District 2
Kathryn McCollum, District 3
Jubilee Underwood, District 4
Brooks Pitcher, District 5
Ole Larson, District 6
Ted Swanson, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS
350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

JOINT ASSEMBLY/SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

4:00 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The joint Assembly/School Board meeting was held on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ASSEMBLY ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Bill Gamble, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Excused: 1 - Assemblymember Dee McKee

Telephonic: 2 - Assemblymember Tim Hale (entered telephonically at 4:03 p.m.) and Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov

SCHOOL BOARD ROLL CALL

Present: School Board Member Thomas Bergey, School Board Member Kendal Kruse, School Board Member Kathryn McCollum, School Board Member Jubilee Underwood, School Board Member, and School Board Member Ted Swanson.

Absent: School Board Member Ole Larson

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by School Board President Jubilee Underwood.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following persons spoke to concerns with the behavior of members of the Library Board, to concerns with peer review of books of concern, and to the need to protect children from pornographic books: Jackie Goforth and Karen Lewis.

The following person opined that there are no obscene books in libraries. Spoke to concerns with derogatory terms that are allegedly being used toward Librarians and staff, to concerns with comments made by the Library Citizen's Advisory Committee, and to concerns with the lack of response to a public records request she filed: Mary Robinson.

VI. JOINT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Superintendent Report - School Opening

Dr. Randy Trani, School District Superintendent, reported on the opening of the 2024 school year.

B. Building Construction Progress

C. Capital Construction Plan

Cole Branham, Project Management Division Manager, reported on school construction progress and the capital construction plan.

D. District State Legislative Priorities

Katie Gardner, Deputy School District Superintendent, reported on the District's State legislative Priorities.

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

School Board Member Kruse thanked the body for the meeting. Spoke to her appreciation of the exchange of information during joint meetings. Noted that she was happy that good news regarding students could be shared.

School Board Member Swanson thanked the body for working cooperatively on school district needs. Wished everyone a safe trip home.

School Board Member McCollum spoke to her appreciation of joint meetings. Thanked Dr. Traini and Katie Gardner for their reports. Spoke to her appreciation of the hard work of teachers and staff. Stated that she would like to see more students enroll in Mat-S Central School.

School Board Member Bergey stated that School District staff work very hard. Noted that in life and as adults, kids are expected to compete globally. Spoke to the need to continue the uptrend in education milestones and compare the School District on the national and global level and strive to be first amongst that crowd.

School Board Member Pitcher opined that the new Mat-Su Central School is a large building and esthetically pleasing. Stated that he is pleased that its construction is on schedule. Spoke to his appreciation of the efforts to increase student rates. Read a letter of thanks from Assemblymember Yundt.

School Board President Underwood spoke to her appreciation of the bodies working together to improve education. Noted that she has learned quite a bit during her service. Stated that she always looks forward to working together to benefit the community.

Assemblymember Nowers stated that she appreciates joint meetings and the exchange of information presented. Noted her agreement with School Board Member Bergey on preparing children to compete nationally and globally.

Assemblymember Fonov thanked School Board Member Pitcher for reading the farewell letter from Assemblymember Yundt.

Assemblymember Bernier thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Said a prayer.

Assemblymember Gamble thanked Dr. Trani and Katie Gardner for their informative presentations. Spoke in support of the work that teachers do.

Noted that both his children went to valley schools, and both are doing outstanding. Stated that he hopes the School Board will take an active role in the School District's budget.

Mayor DeVries thanked the body for coming and thanked them for their service to the community.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment

For

September 10, 2024, Joint Assembly/School Board Meeting Minutes

(4 pages)


EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 10/01/24