

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
Mokie Tew, 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
Vacant, District 5
Ole Larson, District 6
Ted Swanson, District 7

MEETING MINUTES

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS
350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

JOINT ASSEMBLY/SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

6:00 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Edna DeVries.

II. ASSEMBLY ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Assemblymember Tim Hale, Assemblymember Stephanie Nowers, Assemblymember Dee McKee, Assemblymember Mokie Tew, Assemblymember Dmitri Fonov, and Assemblymember Ron Bernier

Excused: 1 - Assemblymember Robert Yundt

SCHOOL BOARD ROLL CALL

Present: School Board President Thomas Bergey (telephonic), School Board Member Kendal Kruse (telephonic), School Board Member Kathryn McCollum, School Board Member Jubilee Underwood, School Board Member Ole Larson, and School Board Member Ted Swanson.

Excused: School Board Member Jacob Butcher.

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 Member Jubilee Underwood.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The following persons spoke in opposition of School Board Policy 9110: Wyatt Perkins, Finn Gagnon, Noah Hill, Declan Marr, and Kevin Wolfort.

The following persons spoke in opposition to books being banned in public libraries and in opposition to limiting the rights of others regarding books: Mae Williams, Mary Robinson, Myles McDonald, and Dixie Banner.

The following person spoke in support of school not being in session on election day: Ron Swanson.

The following persons spoke to concerns of pornographic books available in Borough libraries and opined that librarians should be defunded: Jackie Goforth, Karen Crandall, and Karen Lewis.

VI. ASSEMBLY ITEMS OF BUSINESS

AM 23-107 Approval Of Election Officials For The November 7, 2023, Regular Borough Election.

Ms. McKechnie read the legislation into the record.

Assemblymember Nowers moved to adopt AM 23-107.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Assemblymember Hale, Assemblymember Nowers, Assemblymember McKee, Tew, Assemblymember Fonov, and Assemblymember Bernier

VII. JOINT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Building Construction Progress and Review of Capital Construction Plan (Required by Borough Code)

Tom Adams, Public Works Director, Reported on building construction progress.

B. Discussion Regarding the Use of Schools as Election Precinct Locations and the Possibility of Closing Schools on Election Day (Requested by Assemblymember Yundt)

Ms. McKechine advised that it was Assemblymember Yundt who requested this agenda item. Noted a constituent called him with concerns about adults being in schools at the same time as children on Election Day. Related that Assemblymember Yundt proposed that Election Day could be scheduled as an in-service day for teachers. Noted that teachers would work, but students would not be there. Stated that the Alaska State Division of Elections has requested no school on election day next year.

23-114 Superintendent Report

Dr. Randy Trani, School District Superintendent, reported on the beginning of the school year student enrollment.

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

School Board Member Swanson thanked the public for their testimony. Thanked the Assembly for hosting the meeting.

School Board Member Larson stated that he enjoys the joint meetings. Stated that he is happy that both bodies are working together more closely on behalf of students. Thanked the public for their testimony. Stated that it was good to see the public in attendance.

School Board Member McCollum spoke to her enjoyment of joint meetings. Stated that they are helpful. Thanked Dr. Trani for his presentation.

School Board President Bergey thanked those that provided testimony and attended the meeting. Stated that he appreciates the good communication between the bodies.

School Board Member Kruse stated that she appreciates the effort that goes into meetings, which she finds enjoyable. Thanked the body for the meeting.

School Board Member Underwood stated that she too enjoys the joint meetings. Noted that she is pleased to see so many students coming to participate and being involved in local government. Stated that she is in support of having in service for on Election Day.

Assemblymember Fonov thanked those who came for the meeting and stayed for the duration. Noted that students are always welcome to Assembly meetings. Spoke to his appreciation of the information received.

Assemblymember Nowers thanked the students for providing testimony. Noted that it takes courage to speak in public and thanked them for their attendance. Related that the Assembly funds the School District but does not have any purview over school district issues. Gave advice on how to provide public testimony. Thanked the body for the meeting.

Assemblymember McKee stated that she is glad to see students participate in the meeting. Encouraged them to continue to be involved.

Assemblymember Tew thanked the students for having the courage to testify. Shared that it is even hard for him to speak in public. Opined they did a great job articulating their concerns. Spoke to his appreciation of the meeting and the information received.

Assemblymember Bernier echoed the comments of those that spoke before

him. Opined that the Career and Technical High School education curriculum is great and that the Borough needs more of that. Spoke to his love of the Future Farmers of America program, which gave him a good foundation in many things. Said a prayer.

Assemblymember Hale advised that he had joined the meeting at roll call. Thanked the students for providing testimony. Encouraged them to continue to be involved.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.



Mayoral Signature and Clerk Attestment

For

September 12, 2023, Joint Assembly School Board Meeting Minutes

(5 pages)


EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 12/19/23