

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD/ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY
QUARTERLY JOINT MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 1997

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was convened at 10 a.m. by School Board President, Debbie Ossiander, in the Anchorage School District School Board Room, 4600 DeBarr Avenue.

B. ROLL CALL

ASSEMBLY MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Begich, Pat Abney, Bob Bell, Ted Carlson, Cheryl Clementson, Dan Kendall, Kevin Meyer (10:15 a.m.), Joe Murdy, Fay Von Gemmingen, Charles Wohlforth, and George Wuerch

ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Debbie Ossiander, Kathi Gillespie, Dave Werdal, and Peggy Robinson-Wilson

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Lorraine Ferrell, Kelly Haney, and Harriet Drummond

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Christal, Superintendent; Janet Stokesbary, Chief Financial Officer; Grace Likeness, Executive Assistant; the press and other interested persons.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

D. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Minutes of October 29, 1996 - Joint Anchorage School Board/Anchorage Municipal Assembly Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Anchorage School District's Proposed FY 1997-98 Financial Plan

Debbie Ossiander reported that the District's budget was unanimously approved by the Board. While it contained a significant increase, half of it was directly related to voter approved and mandated construction. She reported that no money was budgeted for salary increases. The Board was working for hard freezes. Ms. Ossiander stated that the budget contained more money for textbooks, supplies, aides and

improving reading. In addition, funds for science, for more parental choice, and for maintenance and custodial coverage were allocated. Student fees were also reduced.

The group discussed setting March 18 as a tentative Budget Work Session between the Assembly and the School Board.

Cheryl Clementson inquired about the need for the District to provide earthquake insurance.

Debbie Ossiander reported that the District was appealing that mandate and hoped they wouldn't be forced to pay it. However, the Board included it in their budget in order to be prudent.

Cheryl Clemenston volunteered to work with the Board to bring forward a Resolution at the Assembly level to address this issue.

Kevin Meyer initiated discussion relative to what would happen to the earthquake insurance money if the District was successful in its appeal. He expressed interest in meeting with someone to discuss the budget.

Discussion was initiated about the timeline for the appeal process for the earthquake insurance.

Bob Bell initiated discussion about the need for the bus bonds and questioned whether the local share would be reduced if the earthquake insurance money and money for bus bonds wasn't in the budget.

George Wuerch inquired if an alternative could be that we proposed a change in the earthquake insurance requirement, i.e., a Resolution that says provide one or the other.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson offered to provide information from the Alaska Association of School Boards that might be helpful.

Fay Von Gemmingen voiced that she heard from Robert Gottstein that the mandate would not be successful.

Pat Abney initiated discussion about the foundation formula.

Joe Murdy inquired why school buses are budgeted in two different areas--the bond and the budget.

Debbie Ossiander explained that the condition of the buses was declining. If the bond's are not successful, the funds will be still be available in the budget.

Joe Murdy supported this item being a part of the operating budget.

3. Update On Anchorage School District's Business System Implementation (Plans and Progress)

Bob Christal reported that the District has been working on a very critical project to replace our current Business Systems with new, state of the art software systems. Because of the importance of this project a Business Management System Review Committee was organized to review the procedures and processes associated with the project and to make recommendations for changes.

Bob Bell initiated discussion about Mr. Rasmussen being excluded from serving on the software committee.

Norm Holthouse explained that Mr. Rasmussen was not asked to serve on the software RFP committee due to the possibility of a conflict of interest.

Bob Bell questioned the basis for the software to be separate from the hardware and why a joint effort was not in place.

Janet Stokesbary reported that the District took the approach that we needed to look at our software needs rather than our hardware needs. She reported the District is still in the process of selecting software. However, it has been narrowed down to the top three vendors.

Bob Christal reminded the group that he spoke with Mr. Crawford about this a few years ago.

Norm Holthouse reported that there was no considerable savings if services were consolidated.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson reminded the group that this topic was discussed with the Consolidation Committee.

Kathi Gillespie explained that the District was trying to get a software package that addressed our needs now as well as in the future.

Dan Kendall inquired why the District was separating the software purchase from the hardware. He felt vendors might be able to provide better software if their hardware was purchased.

Norm Holthouse explained that the industry approach was to buy the software first. The software will determine which hardware will be needed.

Bob Christal explained that our ultimate goal was to get the best package for the best cost. He added that one of the packages the District was looking at will run on the Municipality's machines. If that occurred, it certainly would be a benefit, however, the District was not letting that dictate their plan.

George Wuerch noted that the District Accounts Payable/Purchasing needs didn't appear to be much different from the Municipality's needs.

Debbie Ossiander offered that the District would be willing to have an extended conversation with Mr. Wuerch on this topic.

4. School Boundary Review

Debbie Ossiander brought the Assembly up to speed on the boundary results. She reported that the District was attempting to use their resources as best they could in the face of difficult community reaction.

Bob Christal reported that the whole issue in this community is choice. He stated that when a school exceeds 100 percent capacity, a lottery process for exceptions is initiated.

Bob Bell inquired how exceptions will be made if both schools are over 100 percent.

Kathi Gillespie pointed out that outside of grandfathering, once schools are over 100 percent, students can not zone exempt.

Bob Christal reported that cases need to be dealt with individually and through the appeal process. He added that while there will not be a massive amount of appeals granted, we will look at each case individually.

Dan Kendall inquired about overcrowding at Chugiak and why it wasn't included in the boundary changes.

Debbie Ossiander reported that the distance in transporting Chugiak High School students to Bartlett proved to be very difficult.

Kathi Gillespie brought forward that it was also the issue of different funding communities, i.e., Anchorage, Chugiak, Girdwood. It was more complex than it appeared.

5. Election Of School Board Members By District

Peggy Robinson-Wilson commented that traditionally the District has more minorities on the Board than the Assembly.

Dan Kendall voiced that this is an issue that the voters should decide.

Kevin Meyer stated that the Abbott Loop community felt they didn't have a voice in the boundary issues and would have preferred a Board representative from their area. He supported Dan Kendall's opinion of having this go to the voters.

Kathi Gillespie reported that two or three Board members attended their meetings and helped them come up with boundary alternatives.

Joe Murdy was not against putting the issue on the ballot. He had no problem with allowing the people to make the decision.

Debbie Ossiander expressed fear that a particular area that is underserved or does not have as vocal a representative may not be able to articulate that areas needs. She addressed the issue of higher need schools vs. lower need schools.

6. Anchorage School District/Municipality Of Anchorage Consolidation Efforts

Mark Begich announced that if any Assembly member wants to pursue consolidation, they need to do so on their own time. This item has been discussed many times and the issue is dead because there is no item of action.

Bob Bell voiced support for this item to be on the table.

Pat Abney felt discussion of this topic was a waste of time and energy. She stated that the best people in the community have told us this is not worth our effort.

Bob Christal reminded the group that the last action on this topic was taken at a follow-up meeting to the last Joint School Board/Assembly meeting.

Kathi Gillespie stated that there was consolidation interest as issues arose.

Pat Abney reminded the group that at the last consolidation meeting there was discussion about reporting to the Education Committee. To her knowledge that did not take place.

Cheryl Clementson recalled that this discussion did occur.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The Joint Meeting was recessed at 12 noon and the group reconvened into a Work Session at 12:01 p.m. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Debbie Ossiander
Debbie Ossiander
Anchorage School Board

Mark Begich
Mark Begich, Chair
Anchorage Assembly

March 24, 1997
Date

11-4-97 By Assembly