

**Anchorage Municipal Assembly and Anchorage School Board  
Joint Meeting**

**Assembly Conference Room, Room 155  
632 West Sixth Avenue**

**Minutes for Joint Meeting of May 13, 2005**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Joint Meeting was convened by Acting Chair Coffey at 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Conference Room, Room 108 of the Loussac Library, 3600 Denali Street in Anchorage, Alaska.

**2. ROLL CALL  
2.A. ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY**

PRESENT: Acting Chair Dan Coffey, Pamela Jennings, Dan Sullivan, Paul Bauer, Debbie Ossiander, Allan Tesche, Janice Shamberg (*arriving at 11:30 a.m.*), Chair Anna Fairclough (*arriving at 11:00 a.m.*), Dick Traini (*arriving at 11:45 a.m.*).  
ABSENT: Chris Birch and Ken Stout, excused.

**2.B. ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD**

PRESENT: President Jeff Friedman, Tim Steele, Mary Marks and John Steiner (*arriving at 10:15 a.m.*).  
ABSENT: Vice President Crystal Kennedy, Macon Roberts and Jake Metcalfe, excused.

Also present were Anchorage School District (ASD) Superintendent Carol Comeau, ASD Facilities Maintenance Director Ray Amsden, Deputy Municipal Manager Michael Abbott, Assembly Budget and Legislative Affairs Director Elvi Gray-Jackson and Municipal Clerk Barbara Gruenstein.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Assemblymember Tesche led the pledge.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS JOINT MEETING**

Acting Chair Coffey proposed that the Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2005 be addressed when additional members arrived and a Quorum was achieved. There were no objections.

**4.A. Joint Meeting – of March 18, 2005**

Mr. Steiner moved, to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2005.  
Mr. Sullivan seconded,  
and this motion was passed without objection,  
with Mr. Bauer abstaining,

**5. ADDENDUM TO AGENDA**

Acting Chair Coffey called for Addendum items. Mr. Sullivan requested a brief discussion on the new middle and elementary schools proposed for Southwest Anchorage. Ms. Ossiander requested a discussion on the search for a school site in Eagle River. Acting Chair Coffey added these to the Agenda as items 6.D and 6.E, respectively.

**6. ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

**6.A. Eagle River High School Drainage & Road Issues (Yosemite Drive)**

Deputy Municipal Manager Michael Abbott reported that the Platting Board's decision for improvements to Yosemite Drive, was that the Anchorage School District (ASD) was responsible. It was the opinion of the Municipal Administration that the any improvements were the responsibility of the Municipality and not the School District. They were proposing to challenge the Platting Board's decision with the Board of Adjustment and felt this decision would set precedence for future cases. To Ms. Jennings, Mr. Abbott responded the preliminary estimate of costs for the road improvements was \$950,000 and they were seeking state grants. To Mr. Steiner, Mr. Abbott responded there was a time deadline for appeal and the decision to extend would be up to the Platting Board. Ms. Ossiander stated for the record that all people present at the Platting Board Meeting supported their decision. Ms. Fairclough stated they were requesting transportation money, with Yosemite Drive given high priority.

Mr. Tesche requested that a prepared document be presented to the State Legislature, addressing this issue. Acting Chair Coffey requested Assembly Budget and Legislative Affairs Director Elvi Gray-Jackson to prepare the resolution immediately, to be approved and signed by members present and carried to Juneau for consideration.

Mr. Steiner moved, to approve A Joint Resolution of the Anchorage Assembly  
Ms. Shamberg seconded, and the Anchorage School Board requesting Capital Funds  
for upgrade of Yosemite Drive in Eagle River, Alaska

Ms. Fairclough moved to amend with technical corrections to the resolution, and this was accepted without objection.

Acting Chair Coffey requested a letter accompany the document and be delivered to the State Legislature that day.

and this motion was passed,

AYES: Coffey, Jennings, Sullivan, Bauer, Ossiander, Tesche, Shamberg, Fairclough, Traini, Friedman, Steele, Marks and Steiner.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Birch, Stout, Kennedy, Roberts and Metcalfe, excused.

Mr. Abbott reported that the Municipality and the ASD were studying interim steps that could be taken while road improvements were completed. ASD had taken responsibility for lighting the parking lot area and would support the pedestrian access between the school and the subdivision. Superintendent Comeau responded they had also assigned two school resource officers to assist with traffic and other concerns. To Ms. Shamberg, she responded that traffic concerns were a duty of the resource officers. To Ms. Fairclough, Mr. Abbott responded the homeowners' association had rejected the proposal of their being responsible for the lighting. Additional options were discussed for road access to the school. Ms. Ossiander stated the Number One concern of the community was improvements needed to Yosemite Drive. Ms. Comeau and Ms. Fairclough each stated it was important to advocate correction of the issues and having the new high school open on time.

#### 6.B. Potential Charter Changes: Salary & Emoluments Commission

Mr. Steele stated there were seven days following certification of the election before board members were sworn in, which required a Special Meeting. Their Legislative Committee was going to petition the legislature to change state law to allow the swearing in at their next regularly scheduled meeting. To Mr. Coffey, Mr. Tesche responded the Commission on Salaries and Emoluments was set in the Anchorage Charter. To Mr. Steiner, Municipal Clerk Barbara Gruenstein responded the Salary and Emoluments Commission was an independent body and their decisions were law and it was not the decision of the Assembly to have this issue as a ballot proposition. Mr. Coffey stated that Ms. Gruenstein was staff to the Salary and Emoluments Commission and she would report on this issue at the next quarterly meeting.

#### 6.C. Girdwood: Crow Creek Neighborhood Development

Mr. Freidman had received calls from citizens who were concerned that Heritage Land Bank (*HLB*) would be involved with the residential housing development and the proposed schools would not be developed in time. Ms. Comeau responded there was a rumor that the Forest Service may be adding fifty new employees to the area. Mr. Coffey stated that the Winner Creek Ski Area was another large development in Girdwood, planned for the future. The school facility was already overcapacity and the construction of the community center and the library had not been started. The ASD was concerned with the timing of the housing development. Mr. Freidman stated the community councils were trying to slow down the development of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan until the new facilities were approved. Deputy Municipal Manager Michael Abbott responded the Anchorage School Board and the Assembly would be given updates on the housing development. Mr. Freidman also requested updates on the library and community center development, which would provide a school classroom in a crisis situation. Mr. Steele stated that Girdwood residents had considered that the Crow Creek Development needed to be addressed as a priority. To Ms. Comeau, ASD Facilities Maintenance Director Ray Amsden responded the library would be equivalent to one classroom size and there would be funding for planning next year.

HLB Land Management Officer Art Eash joined the meeting to report that HLB had presented the Girdwood land use plan Tuesday night. The plan recommended adding 710 homes to the Crow Creek Road Development; with a forecast of 1600 people and they had supported adding additional land for ASD use. HLB would keep all parties informed of the development. Mr. Eash reported that development might begin by 2007 and would span the next fifteen years. The time table, including building infrastructure and putting in utilities, was dependent on DOT completing the Crow Creek Road improvements. To Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Eash responded the plan would be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission and then by the Assembly. HLB was considering selling 10-15% of the property directly to private individuals. Mr. Friedman was concerned that school classrooms and employees would not be ready for this timeline.

Ms. Comeau stated the ASD demographer had time estimates and had addressed affordable housing for school staff. To Mr. Tesche, Mr. Amsden responded the ASD would address the concept of proceeds from land sales being used to pay costs of the infrastructure and school development. Mr. Friedman stated the city should be responsible for these costs. Mr. Steele concurred. Ms. Ossiander stated Title 21 included provisions for large developers to set aside property for schools. Mr. Coffey stated the Community Development Authority and the Administration would be involved with the issue.

#### 6.D. Proposed new Middle School and Elementary School for South Anchorage (*Addendum*)

ASD Facilities Maintenance Director Ray Amsden reported on the newly designated school sites. The new middle school site in southwest Anchorage was proposed for the northeast corner of Sand Lake Road and Dimond Boulevard. There were two sites identified for the new elementary school for south Anchorage. Each site had been approved by the School Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission and would be addressed by the Assembly in two weeks. To Ms. Jennings, Mr. Amsden responded there would be no offer made on these sites until Assembly approval. To Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Comeau responded that following Assembly approval, a purchase price would be negotiated with the land owners. Mr. Steiner stated that school site location was important and the community needed to be involved. Modified boundaries could bring relief, but would require additional bussing and would be temporary fixes. Ms. Comeau spoke of the priorities of needed schools in the district. To Mr. Coffey, she responded there would be a district-wide middle school boundary study in 2006 and they would keep the Assembly informed. To Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Steele responded there had been an unpredicted increase of kindergarten students this year and it was difficult to

make future predictions for school site locations and more analysis was needed. To Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Amsden responded that there currently was not an alternative site for the middle school in Sand Lake. Ms. Jennings responded that residents did not want the school in the gravel pit. To Ms. Jennings, Mr. Amsden responded that noise was a factor for the areas close to the airport and development included design mitigation. To Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Friedman and Ms. Comeau responded an ASD representative would attend Sand Lake Community Council meetings. To Mr. Bauer, Mr. Coffey responded that a meeting could be arranged with the School Site Selection Committee to review the school site proposals. Mr. Steiner responded the challenge would be to negotiate with property owners and the developers for the preferred sites.

6.E. School Site Selection Committee Reports (Addendum)

Ms. Ossiander supported allowing voters to approve site acquisitions. With the increased population predicted for Eagle River, she urged consideration to secure sites for future needs while good sites were still available. Ms. Marks concurred. Ms. Ossiander stated that voters had already approved money for schools in the area and there had been discussions of a potential site acquisition in the Powder Ridge area. To Mr. Friedman, Ms. Ossiander responded that the School Site Selection Committee had not deliberated about this school. Ms. Comeau stated there was growth in Eagle River, Chugiak and Eklutna and it was important to complete a demographic study to predict future growth patterns. Mr. Amsden stated the ASD was working directly with the demographer and the Planning Department on the issue. Ms. Ossiander stated that while it was difficult to predict growth, it was still important to acquire land now, regardless if the property was used immediately or not. Mr. Steele concurred it was important to stay ahead of development, moving on opportunities to acquire good properties at reasonable prices. Mr. Steiner stated the Administration had determined they could complete one site selection per year, and the committee had determined that sites for a middle school and an elementary school in South Anchorage were a priority. Because the Administration did not have staff to complete the study, a consultant would be contracted. Ms. Marks encouraged communication with the Eklutna Village for possible land negotiations for future needs in that area. Ms. Fairclough responded they had discussed Eklutna options. Mr. Tesche stated that the Base Alignment Commission had announced the downsizing of the Air National Guard Base. Ms. Fairclough stated that Elmendorf was forecasted to downsize. Deputy Municipal Manager Michael Abbott responded there would be consolidation of Fort Richardson and Elmendorf and the process would involve five phases.

7. COMMENTS

Ms. Jennings stated there would be a fund raiser for the Japanese Immersion Program on Saturday night at the Sheraton Hotel and urged community support. She was teaching Junior Achievement to Kindergarten students at Gladys Wood Elementary School and had enjoyed the experience.

Mr. Bauer stated that he was looking forward to discussions at the next School Site Selection Committee Meeting.

Ms. Shamberg stated that Oceanview Elementary School was conducting a citizenship project and students were learning what was involved with becoming a citizen.

8. SCHEDULING OF NEXT JOINT MEETING None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Fairclough called the Question on a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Ossiander moved, to adjourn the Joint Meeting.  
Ms. Jennings seconded,  
and this motion was passed without objection,

The Joint Meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

JEFF FRIEDMAN, Anchorage School Board Chair

DAN COFFEY, Acting Assembly Chair

ATTEST:

BARBARA GRUENSTEIN, Municipal Clerk  
Date Minutes Approved: September 16, 2005.

(Approved Meeting Minutes are available in the Municipal Clerk’s Office, 632 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 250, Anchorage, Alaska; telephone (907)343-4505, or found on the Municipal Web Site at [www.Muni.org](http://www.Muni.org))