

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

**Assembly Conference Room
632 West Sixth Avenue**

Minutes for Joint Meeting of June 2, 2006

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Joint Meeting was convened by Chair Sullivan at 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Conference Room, 1st floor of City Hall, Room 155, 632 West 6th Avenue, in Anchorage, Alaska.

2. ROLL CALL

2.A ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY

PRESENT: Chair Dan Sullivan, Vice Chair Debbie Ossiander, Anna Fairclough, Pamela Jennings, Dan Coffey, Chris Birch, Janice Shamberg, Ken Stout, Dick Traini and Paul Bauer.

ABSENT: Allan Tesche, excused.

2.B. ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

PRESENT: President Jeff Friedman, Mary Marks, Tim Steele, John Steiner, Crystal Kennedy and Jake Metcalfe (*arrived at 11:35*).

ABSENT: Vice President Macon Roberts, excused.

Also present were Anchorage School District (ASD) Superintendent Carol Comeau, ASD Facilities Director Ray Amsden, ASD Assistant Superintendent George Vakalis and Municipal Clerk Barbara Gruenstein.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Chair Sullivan led the pledge.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS JOINT MEETING

4.A. Joint Meeting – March 10, 2006

Ms. Ossiander moved, to approve the Joint Meeting Minutes of
Ms. Fairclough seconded, March 10, 2006,
and this was passed without objection.

5. ADDENDUM TO AGENDA

Assemblymember Bauer requested that the matter of moose on school grounds be added. Assemblymember Shamberg requested to add a matter at the new Muldoon Middle School site. Chair Sullivan added these items as Agenda items 6.C. and 6.D, respectively.

6. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

6.A. ASD Six Year Capital Improvement Plan: July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2012

Superintendent Comeau summarized the fiscal analysis of the MOA Budget. The ASD Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan (*CIP*) involved reserved funds and reflected the recently failed bonds. All community needs in the city needed to be addressed, including school upgrades and new facilities. Ms. Fairclough recommended that the Parks and Recreation Plan be reviewed as a working model which allowed utilization of schools in the summer. To Chair Sullivan, Mr. Steele responded that annually \$40 million of the school budget was designated to pay off bonds.

Mr. Coffey stated the ASD had reported that schools would not receive state reimbursement for bonds approved by voters after November 30, 2008. Projections were based on maintenance and enrollment, with student numbers relatively flat. Superintendent Comeau responded that bond funding was needed for continued school upgrades to meet comparable education specifications across the city and to complete needed school renovations to meet fire and safety codes. To Mr. Coffey, Superintendent Comeau responded they would be reviewing maintenance and renovation priorities, working with ASD staff and the community. Ms. Fairclough recommended consideration of changing the middle school model to accommodate 6th, 7th and 8th grade levels. President Friedman responded that subcommittees would discuss that matter. Mr. Steiner responded the demographics and geographic dynamics also needed consideration, with changes in sections of the community population. Boundary changes would cause additional changes. It was a difficult decision to build a school in an overcrowded area, when student numbers might change. Superintendent Comeau responded that the special education population was increasing rapidly. Extra classrooms were used to accommodate programs for students with special needs. To Mr. Birch, Superintendent Comeau responded the current ASD student population was 49,500. To Ms. Jennings, Superintendent Comeau

responded that the ASD was closely monitoring overcrowded schools. There was a predicted increase of 500 homes in Sand Lake Kincaid Estates. Ms. Ossiander stated that she was reviewing the Title 21 Rewrite to better understand future community needs. To Mr. Bauer, Superintendent Comeau responded the ASD tracked students moving in the community and encouraged parents not to move their children. Numbers of home-schooled students were not registered with the ASD and were difficult to calculate, but the numbers of students in private schools were relatively consistent and were listed in the ASD Capital Improvement Plan. To Mr. Coffey, Mr. Vakalis responded that the 40 acres off of Raspberry Road was still being considered for a school site. Mr. Steiner responded that some schools could accommodate overcrowding better than others, depending upon staff, the facility and the student numbers. Ms. Marks added that considerations were also needed for dealing with mandates of zoning exceptions and the No Child Left Behind requirements. To Chair Sullivan, Superintendent Comeau responded that the majority of students were happy with their schools. Chair Sullivan stated that increased numbers of students in the Minnesota corridor needed to be addressed. Superintendent Comeau stated the ASD had determined that middle school boundaries would be changed, beginning next year, to fully utilize facilities.

Mr. Birch stated that the Mat-Su School District recently saved over \$8 million by contracting out custodial services. Superintendent Comeau responded the ASD had decided against contracting out because custodial staff did much more than cleaning.

To Chair Sullivan, President Friedman responded the Assembly/ASD Joint Relations Committee could address the CIP. Ms. Fairclough, Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, volunteered to participate. Superintendent Comeau responded that the ASD was addressing a state endowment based on oil royalties and had created a resolution to present at the Capitol, but had not found enough interest.

Ms. Shamberg recommended overseeing spending and tracking expenditures as new school construction was underway, to avoid extravagant spending. ASD Facilities Director Ray Amsden responded that district employees worked with the builders on-site, closely monitoring construction, to ensure a cost effective facility. The ASD supported including quality materials to withstand wear over time. Expenses were difficult to predict because material costs were continuing to increase and there were additional and expensive state and federal requirements. To Ms. Jennings, Superintendent Comeau responded the ASD maintained open communications with U.S. Representatives, lobbying about federal requirements and mandates. To Chair Sullivan, Superintendent Comeau responded that the ASD had been successful with federal grants, but educational funding was decreasing across the nation. Ms. Fairclough stated that she had lobbied with Ms. Ossiander, Mr. Steiner and Ms. Kennedy for a second school in Eagle River. School standards could be decided by the community, which would increase their involvement and voter confidence. Ms. Fairclough recommended more public relations, sharing the plans for design, study and construction with the public. Superintendent Comeau responded they used a prototype model repeatedly for the elementary schools. Chair Sullivan recommended more signs at the sites, explaining the construction and cost savings. Mr. Steiner supported building quality, long-term facilities and he thought an ASD employee should be appointed to specifically monitor construction. Elementary schools were less expensive than high schools to build. Ms. Fairclough stated that inflation and increased costs of materials were outpacing construction project funding.

To Chair Sullivan, Superintendent Comeau and President Friedman responded that the District Administration had requested an option to address a special election, but they had not made a decision on the matter and were addressing other options.

Ms. Fairclough, President Friedman, Ms. Ossiander, Mr. Steele, Mr. Steiner and Superintendent Comeau concurred that the ASB and the Assembly would continue to jointly address the CIP, community future needs, costs and available funding. Mr. Steele and Ms. Fairclough recommended additional joint meetings to exchange more information and knowledge.

6.B. ASD Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Budget Revision (*Requested by ASD*)

Superintendent Comeau summarized the revised ASD Budget, which reflected the ASD's success with state lobbying. To Ms. Ossiander, Mr. Steiner responded the district was addressing continuing projects and ongoing needs. To Mr. Coffey, Superintendent Comeau, President Friedman and Mr. Metcalfe urged Assembly approval of the revised ASD Budget Revision at the next Assembly Meeting.

6.C. Nuisance Moose at Schools (*Addendum*)

Mr. Bauer stated the potential liability of wildlife on school grounds continued to be a concern and he requested an update on the nuisance moose matter. Superintendent Comeau responded the ASD was working with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (*ADF&G*), using an educational video for students, installing fencing to protect children and educating parents on how to protect children walking to school. All school personnel, including School Resource Officers, were involved when wild animals were on school property. Mr. Bauer stated it had been addressed that all wildlife within 500 feet of school property should be considered nuisance and action should be taken. Superintendent Comeau responded that school principals reported all incidents to the ADF&G. To Mr. Steele, Mr. Bauer responded the Municipality could also be liable for safety on trails, walkways and roads to schools. Superintendent Comeau responded there had been cases of moose encounters where students had been scared, but there had never been a reported injury. Superintendent Comeau stated it was a community issue and everyone needed to work together to ensure student safety. Chair Sullivan concurred and stated that the ASD was doing their part in the matter.

6.D. Muldoon Middle School (*Addendum*)

To Ms. Shamberg, ASD Assistant Superintendent George Vakalis responded that there had been miscommunications between the contractor and subcontractor and all trees had mistakenly been removed at the new Muldoon Middle School

site. Because the contract clearly defined the trees at the northern end of the site, the contractor had agreed to replace the removed trees. To Ms. Jennings, Mr. Vakalis responded that the large building visible from Muldoon Road was the new gymnasium and the building entry was on the frontage road. Chair Sullivan and President Friedman responded this created an opportunity for art students to create an attractive mural.

7. COMMENTS

Mr. Coffey recommended review of the CIP bonding, to exceed the currently-set ratings by the bond rating companies.

Superintendent Comeau announced the ASD was graduating over 3000 seniors, with graduation ceremonies being held throughout the week.

To Chair Sullivan, Superintendent Comeau responded the ASD had responded to a federal compliance requirement to increase girls' participation in sports with a survey to determine students' interest. The sports preference was snowboarding, which the district could not afford. Flag football was the second top choice, which was supported by the Sports Community Committee. Mr. Steele stated the district was developing interest in other sports, including volleyball. The survey showed less popular activities included lacrosse, martial arts and indoor soccer. Ms. Shamberg responded there were teachers who questioned the survey's design and presentation.

To Mr. Traini, Superintendent Comeau responded the normal activity fee per sport for students 7th through 12th grades had increased by \$5.00.

To Ms. Jennings, Chair Sullivan responded the new Sand Lake School site matter was on the Assembly Agenda for June 6th and would be continued to the 20th, to allow the Sand Lake Community Council to participate. Ms. Ossiander responded the Education Committee would also be addressing the matter.

8. SCHEDULING OF UPCOMING JOINT MEETING(S)

To Chair Sullivan, Municipal Clerk Barbara Gruenstein responded that the next Joint Meeting would be scheduled for the middle of September. Notification would be sent out when meeting dates were finalized.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sullivan put the Question on adjourning the meeting.

Ms. Kennedy moved,

Ms. Ossiander seconded,

and the motion passed without objection.

to adjourn the Joint Meeting,

The Joint Meeting was adjourned at noon.

Refer to Document Archives for Signatures

Refer to Document Archives for Signatures

DAN SULLIVAN, Assembly Chair

JEFF FRIEDMAN, Anchorage School Board President

ATTEST:

Refer to Document Archives for Signatures

BARBARA GRUENSTEIN, Municipal Clerk
Date Minutes Approved: September 15, 2006.
MC/BG

(Approved Meeting Minutes are available in the Municipal Clerk's Office, 632 West 6th Avenue, Suite 250, Anchorage, Alaska; telephone (907)343-4311)