THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2013

MEETING NO. 2013-02: The Special Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly, held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Merrill Sanford.

I. ROLL CALL

Assembly Present: Mary Becker, Karen Crane, Johan Dybdahl, Loren Jones, Jesse Kiehl, Jerry Nankervis, Merrill Sanford, Carlton Smith, and Randy Wanamaker.

Assembly Absent: None.

School Board Members Present: Lisa Worl, Barbara Thurston, Phyllis Carlson, Destiny Sargeant, Andi Story, Sean O'Brien, Sally Saddler.

School Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Kim Kiefer, City Manager; Rob Steedle, Deputy City Manager; Jane Sebens, Deputy City Attorney; Beth McEwen, Deputy Clerk; Bob Bartholomew, Finance Director; Glen Gelbrich, JSD Superintendent; David Means, Director, JSD Administrative Services.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None.

III. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Joint Meeting With The Board Of Education To Discuss School Board Issues.

Mayor Sanford welcomed the members of the School Board and said this meeting was an opportunity to share information, touch base, and that he would like to see these meetings happen more frequently. He opened the floor to School Board President Sally Saddler.

Ms. Saddler thanked the Assembly for the opportunity to be meet and build on an undertaking they have started to meet one on one with school board and Assemblymembers to visit and strengthen relationships. She met with Jesse Kiehl and said she was able to brag about the level of support that JSD receives from the Assembly and the local legislative delegation. She distributed and reviewed the information in a brochure, "Facts and Figures 2012 – 2013" which provided a quick statistical overview of the JSD.

She noted the three-year reduction of 33 teachers. The graduation rate is 71.4% for 4-year students and 79% for 5-year students. Their goal is 90% (ultimately 100%).

Ms. Saddler distributed the district's strategic plan, which focuses on four main areas: student achievement, highly qualified staff, community commitment and a culture of service and support. She explained graphs with the Measures of Academic Process (MAP), which monitors the performance and progress of students. She said the graphs show a gradual

increase in reading proficiency over the past three years and a more dramatic increase in language usage and mathematics.

Ms. Saddler explained the Dashboard Indicators of Success, which focus on student achievement, professional development, attendance of students and staff, graduation rate, grade level core standards, resource allocation and students entering school ready to learn. Pre-kindergarten experiences insure success in school. She spoke about a joint effort with United Way and community partners to help students learn to read by the time they reach 3rd grade.

Ms. Saddler said the budget committee was restructured to be more inclusive, with 17 committee members. Barbara Thurston is the chair and Brian Holst, JEDC, is co-chair. They are not expecting an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) this year, the governor's budget did not include an increase. There was $25 million, as one-time money in the budget that they hoped would make it through the session. JSD will need to cut a minimum of $1.25 million from its budget in the upcoming year. Although it was a large cut, they were looking at a $6 million cut last year. There has been an increase in assessments to the property in Juneau and that would give the Assembly an opportunity to give an additional $.05 million in formula funding to the cap, as the Assembly has provided in the past. They did not project a significant change in student numbers. She hoped that CBJ would consider continuing funding to the cap allowed, and the School Board would present a balanced budget to the Assembly in March.

Ms. Saddler spoke about a memorandum of agreement with the Sealaska Institute and the Goldbelt Heritage organization to reach out and engage partners.

Mayor Sanford thanked Ms. Saddler for the report and he asked the Assemblymembers for questions.

Ms. Becker how the School Board planned for funding from the Governor's budget. Ms. Saddler said that last year the budget was built assuming there was no increase and there were add-ons that would be added if funding were made available. The prior year the budgeting was done assuming an increase would be received and they learned from that past experience. This year they assume that the $25 million one-time funding would be achieved but no increase in the BSA.

Ms. Thurston said that because the Governor has included the additional funding in his budget, the district feels more confident to budget with this amount anticipated. Juneau's portion is $700-800,000, but nothing was guaranteed. The Governor was promoting this support.

Ms. Story said the board was very pleased with the Governor's support and it was a sign of progress.

Mayor Sanford asked when the legislature might realize the need to forward fund the schools, at least to a base amount a year ahead. Mr. Kiehl said this would mean setting the change in the BSA a year out or more than a year out. The one time it was done, it was done for a three-year period. The increases then were less than inflation, but they were known in advance and it gave districts an incredible planning tool. He sensed it would be immensely valuable. The difficulty he saw was that there was a budget that did not propose any increase, in other words a cut to education in the amount of inflation. It was a resource allocation difficulty and based on legislature negotiation with the Governor. He said an education fund with reserves in the bank is in place but it did not help with the full funding issue. It was important for citizens to

lobby the legislature, and the Juneau delegation was already on board with their support. Ms. Story said the business community and parents need to call and then changes would be made.

Mr. Wanamaker said he would like to see the facts of the unfunded liability to the teacher's retirement system for Juneau. Mr. Means said Mr. Bartholomew would be presenting that information at the following Assembly Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Becker said the more serious problem is what is expected from the communities to pay for the district. Now there is a cap of 22%, but if that changed, there would be more concerns.

Mr. Gelbrich said some programs had been restructured, such as school nursing, and in paring back, we have brought in some things that offer good promise for providing services. The number one factor in children learning is the teacher. The skill level and attitude of the teacher is primary. We are investing time and energy into developing standards, teacher training, and the resources they need to do the instruction. There is a paring back and an investment in new ways of doing things.

Mr. Smith asked about an efficiency review, and was there external help to do so. Mr. Gelbrich said an internal efficiency review was being done and they were using the services of a process and performance management group, America Performance and Quality Center from Houston, Texas for the cost of $20-30,000 last year. We are training people internally to go through prescribed procedures, look at a process or system, define and redefine that system. They have a $6,000 contract with them to provide support to staff this year and next year the budget would be $0, as it would be done internally. He said each year a parent provides registration information for students, and there are multiple forms for permissions for students in the packets. They set a standard to reduce redundancy and find efficiencies. They were moving to on-line registration and consistency from school to school.

Mr. Nankervis said that parenting is equally vital if not more important as a number one factor for student success and graduation rates. He asked how the district addressed the situation of teachers who are not good teachers. He compared city employee performance evaluations and hoped that the school district had the same procedure. Mr. Gelbrich said the district had the same process and is working with school supervisors to encourage this. It was a hard cultural shift. The realities of the bargaining agreements and state law was that the best window to do performance evaluations was in the first three years of the teaching career, but the misnomer was that it was impossible. Due process requirements escalate dramatically when a teacher begins a fourth year of teaching.

Ms. Story said the district was working with the Center for Educational Leadership to improve performance of supervisors and teachers and the board was aware of the importance of quality of teachers. We are encouraging administrators to provide good feedback to teachers so we all can improve and create a good workplace environment.

Ms. Carlson said a few years ago, the district reviewed the teacher evaluation process and adopted a new process, and statewide the State Board of Education looked at a new system for evaluating teachers, which will incorporate student outcome and performance as part of that.

Mr. Dybdahl said he has been frustrated with the situation in which the Assembly has given as much as it can to the district budget and there were still needs. He asked if the savings in efficiencies was being shifted to the teachers. Mr. Gelbrich said they were trying to shift an

increasing percentage of resources to the classroom and not into salaries per se, but things that would otherwise be reductions.

Mr. Dybdahl said he attended boarding school and they were all required to work so many hours a week. Mangling sheets is no longer done, but working in maintenance, working in the kitchens, taught light skills and those skills were valuable. He asked if there were a way to look at this for some cost savings.

Mr. O'Brien said the distinction between the big world of changes we can make and the financial realities of reduced revenue, we know we can have the greatest impact with high quality teachers and teacher development – this makes a difference and it is tangible. The training has a measurable impact. We need to think about not just what needs to be done but narrow it down to the things that make the biggest impact and we are attempting to be transparent.

Ms. Worl said pulling in parents and getting them involved helps with the success and pulling the community programs in, such as for literacy, can help. When the parents come in and help, they see the needs and they can be advocates in the legislature.

Mr. Kiehl asked about the non-teaching employees and how many were in the classrooms. Mr. Means said there were approximately 120 special needs assistants in the classroom, and 40-50 people in the schools in positions such as library and office staff, and 36-37 custodians, and the people in the district office. Mr. Kiehl said it appeared that 85% were in the classroom. Unless the base student allocation grows, the additional $.5 million CBJ is allowed to contribute is not really new money. It would be additional money the state did not have to contribute and our required local effort goes up, but the cap does not rise, so the total budget for the school does not increase, the state's portion decreases. The state needed to step up to avoid shifting the cost of schools to the municipality.

Ms. Kiefer said she and Mr. Gelbrich have looked for efficiencies to be achieved between both CBJ and JSD.

Ms. Becker said with the change from defined benefits, there was a concern that we would lose teachers – is there a big turnover in Juneau? Mr. Gelbrich said this has not been an issue that has come to their attention, due to the number of positions they had lost due to budget cuts. Ms. Becker said she was encouraged with the teacher training, and fitting this in to their day with support was good and will help with moral, as there were a lot of new things added to the plate of the teachers. The instructional aides have a lot of responsibilities – are they getting training as well? Mr. Gelbrich said most of that professional development training was related to a specific area of disability, the curriculum, and how to be a part of a team.

IV. ASSEMBLY COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS – None.

V. ADJOURNMENT – 5:58 p.m.

Signed: _____
Laurie Sica, Municipal Clerk

Signed: _____
Merrill Sanford, Mayor