

THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2019

MEETING NO. 2019-33: The Special Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly and Juneau Board of Education (School Board), held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Beth Weldon.

I. ROLL CALL

Assembly Present: Maria Gladziszewski, Loren Jones, Carole Triem, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, Greg Smith, Wade Bryson, Michelle Hale (telephonic), Rob Edwardson (telephonic), and Mayor Beth Weldon.

Assembly Absent: None.

School Board Present: Paul Kelly, Kevin Allen, Emil Mackey, Deedie Sorensen, Elizabeth Siddon, Brian Holst

School Board Absent: Jeff Short

Staff Present: Deputy City Manager Mila Cosgrove, City Attorney Robert Palmer, JSD Superintendent Bridget Weiss, Municipal Clerk Beth McEwen, Chief Housing Officer Scott Ciambor, Library Director Robert Barr, Assistant Attorney Emily Wright, Assistant Attorney Teresa Bowen, CBJ Finance Director Jeff Rogers, JSD Finance Director Sarah Jahn, Code Enforcement Officer Nate Watts, JEA President Kelly Stewart, and Laura Mulgrew

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Weldon noted that she wished to change the order of items on the agenda so that she could begin the meeting with items A. *Budget Prioritization Project* followed by item C. *School Facilities, CIP & Maintenance Team* and then have JSD President Holst lead the remaining agenda items. *Hearing no objection, those agenda changes were approved.*

III. AGENDA TOPICS

A. Budget Prioritization Project

Mayor Weldon asked Assembly Finance Committee (AFC) Chair Jones to give a report about this project. Mr. Jones explained that after the last budget process ended in June, the Assembly voted to start thinking about the fact that we use a considerable amount of fund balance. If we continued down that path, we would in a deficit spending mode within two years. As a result, they have begun the process to look at developing a sustainable budget and what they might do to reduce expenditures and/or increase revenues. Mr. Jones said that they currently have a large stack of cards with all the CBJ programs/services on it and are individually prioritizing those cards in advance of an AFC meeting on November 2. At that meeting, and possibly others, they will be discussing the Assembly's priorities so they can provide direction to the administration at the Assembly retreat in December as to the type of budget the Assembly wants staff to provide during the next budget cycle. He said a piece of that is the mandatory school funding which is at 2.6 mills out of the property

valuation. Mr. Jones said that there are discretionary funds that can be funded outside the cap. Those will all be considered during the budget prioritization project. Mr. Jones then talked about some of the bigger picture items the AFC has been discussing and taking action over the past year including the recommendations from the Child Care Committee, negotiations on three CBJ unions, and other large budget considerations.

B. School Facilities, CIP & Maintenance Team

Mayor Weldon explained that when she was making the appointments to committees this year, she reviewed the Charter language for this group and realized that they are supposed to have four members from the Assembly on this group and she appointed herself as the fourth Assemblymember and assigned Mr. Jones as the chair of the committee. She said she looked at what they did last year and saw that they had Mr. Holst as a non-voting member of the committee so she was not sure whom the board chose to appoint to that committee. She said that for the Assembly's part, they would like to see what needs to be fixed, what the JSD's priorities are on what needs to be fixed, and what we can afford to fix and how the \$1 million that is given to JSD for maintenance is being spent. She noted that this has been called the "Project Team" but she would also like them to look at the name as compared to the tasks they are charged with doing.

The JSD members are Mr. Holst, Ms. Siddon, and Mr. Kelly. Mr. Holst noted that the one item they did request be included in the packet was the list of priorities that JSD produces annually. These items fall in what they consider major maintenance. He said the only change from last year's list to this year's list was the amount estimated for the Marie Drake renovation is higher this year than last. The CBJ Engineering/Public Works department is the staff that works with the committee and provides these cost estimates for the work that needed to be done. Mr. Holst noted that they did add an item this year for the Floyd Dryden roof repair at the end of the list. Otherwise, there has been no change in the order or the value of the projects and the projects have not been funded. In the past, the projects have been funded primarily through the state reimbursement program in which the city would bond and the state would reimburse 60-70% of those costs. That program has not been funded by the state over the past five years and the uncertainty at this time is if and/or when that program will be coming back.

Mr. Holst said that he believes the committee will be looking at those major projects on that list rather than focusing on the \$1 million JSD uses to address the other CIP needs. Mayor Weldon commented that they will be looking at all of the projects, including those CIP projects receiving the \$1 million funding JSD manages. Mr. Jones also explained that while JSD provides their priority list to the Department of Education and they provide a copy to the Assembly, none of those projects came through the CIP process to the AFC. He said that part of the issue is that if JSD has \$1 million in sales tax funds and there is \$4 million needed in roof repairs and the \$1 million is spent on things that do not include a roof, then the remaining amount falls to CBJ and they want to discuss that process during the committee meetings.

The CIP process goes before the Assembly Public Works and Facilities Committee and Planning Commission in December and January and then that list is forwarded to the AFC for review during the budget cycle. Mr. Jones noted that the school project priorities somehow dropped out of the CIP priority cycle that is considered by the Assembly and they hope to have those discussions and bring

those back so they get included in the CIP list that is reviewed and approved during the budget process.

Assembly and School Board members then discussed in greater detail the JSD and CBJ processes related to the CIP list and also the effect of the state moratorium on the school debt reimbursement program. The concern expressed by all is what the next steps might be if the state decides to continue the moratorium on the reimbursement program and at what point the Assembly and JSD decide that the projects can no longer wait on the state for funding and pursue alternative funding options. That is going to be a main focus of this joint committee and both bodies will be hearing more about that as the committee begins its work.

C. JSD Priorities for School Year 2019-20 (former item B.)

JSD presented a slide show that highlighted the below programs and priorities. School Board members answered questions from Assemblymembers and received their input on the JSD programs and priorities.

- Increasing the number of students reading at grade level by grade 3
- Enhance Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) integration throughout the district
- Increase and improve **high school offerings** through increased collaboration between high schools
- Strengthen **Tlingit language/culture integration and community partnerships**
- Increase **kindergarten readiness** through community partnerships supporting early education

Other highlights for the year included recognition for excellent staff and teachers including Angie Wright receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and Pam Garcia being a semi-finalist for Alaska Teacher of the Year. They are also proud of the Tlingit Culture/Language Policy and tie that into a statewide effort.

D. October 26, 2019 School Board Retreat Recap including Strategic Plan

The JSD current strategic plan is sun-setting this year so they are in the process of developing a new five-year strategic plan. They have been asking the question:

“What are the most important things JSD should focus on in the next five years to help Juneau’s children be successful in learning and life?”

They encouraged Assemblymembers to answer that question as well. Each Assemblymember then provided some of their answers to that question. The answers included some of the following:

- Focusing more on vocational/technical courses rather than the greater focus being on those wanting to go to college,
- Offering real-world/life skills courses,
- Fostering a love of lifelong learning with an emphasis on children having successful reading skills by grade 3,
- Continuing to incorporating arts and humanities studies in the curriculum,
- Supporting literacy and civics and general information about trades and other potential career avenues,
- Fostering students who will be critical thinkers and who need to learn history, philosophy, literature, arts.

E. School Enrollment Numbers/Funding Level Adjustment due to Enrollment Change

Mr. Holst provided information on the enrollment numbers and finances as follows:

- October is official enrollment count.
- FY20 Enrollment Oct 25: 4611 (34 above projection)
- FY20 Projection: 4577
- Funding implication: Increase of \$1,272,000
- Increased Foundation: \$1,034,000
- Increase to the available Cap: \$238,000

Mr. Jones said that since many of the new Assemblymembers have not gone through the school budget process, he provided a brief recap on how the state's funding formula is calculated and how that fits into the overall CBJ budget calculations.

F. Healthcare Discussion: JSD Employee Participation in CBJ Health Plan

Mr. Holst stated that health care costs are a big part of everyone's budgets and at a recent School Board meeting, the board passed a resolution to ask the State of Alaska to evaluate the costs and benefits of health care plans for Alaska, in particular to reduce the burden of health insurance costs on Alaska public school districts.

He said that what is driving this issue is that in 2008, health care costs were 10.385 of the JSD budget and in 2018 those same health care costs accounted for 15.06% of the JSD budget.

JSD and Assemblymembers discussed the CBJ self-insurance pool. CBJ HRRM staff is open to bringing JSD into the CBJ's self-insurance plan and has been having active discussions with union groups about that issue.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Weldon reminded everyone that the Assembly Committee of the Whole meeting at which the Child Care issue will be discussed would be convened after this special meeting concluded. *There being no further business to come before the Assembly, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.*

Signed: _____
Elizabeth J. McEwen
Municipal Clerk

Signed: _____
Beth A. Weldon
Mayor