

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2009

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Friday, April 24, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, Jeff Friedman, presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, Jeff Friedman Presiding

Board Members Present: Jeff Friedman, Crystal Kennedy, Pat Higgins, Macon Roberts, John Steiner, Jeannie Mackie, and Tim Steele

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Rhonda Gardner, Ed Graff, Leslie Vandergaw, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jane Berglund, Eric Tollefsen, Heather Sawyer, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Kathleen Plunkett, Robin Siegfried, the press, and other interested people.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Steiner noted that School Business Partnership STAR Awards will be held on Monday, April 27, 2009. These awards honor businesses that have been very supportive of the school district.

Mr. Friedman reported that this is the last meeting for outgoing board member, Macon Roberts. He noted that it had been a real pleasure to have served with Mr. Roberts over the past six years.

Mr. Roberts stated that he was honored to have served the community for the last six years. He thanked the voters and the public who had supported him. He also thanked his fellow school board members with whom he has had the pleasure of working. Mr. Roberts introduced members of his family who were in attendance including his son, Dillon, his niece, Pearl, and her husband, Dennis, along with his nephews, Alfunso, Anthony, and Octavius.

Mr. Roberts indicated that he would like to be remembered not so much for what he has done but rather for how he got to this position. He hoped that his story would be an inspiration for others. He explained that he began life as the middle child in a family of eleven children in the Mississippi Delta. His parents were sharecroppers who were never able

to vote because of their color. In his youth school was secondary to the crops being brought in even though his parents would have liked for the children to have gone to school. He shared how difficult it was to be in the cotton fields watching as the school bus passed by full of students laughing at those who were not so fortunate. That experience motivated him to do as much as he could and study as hard as he could when he did get a chance to go to school. It was not until his tenth grade year, when he began driving the school bus, that he was able to attend school every day. In spite of the hardship Mr. Roberts explained that he was able to excel during the last two years of school and that, during that time, he developed a hunger for education and a hunger for helping people. When he graduated from high school he pursued a college degree with majors in both sociology and psychology. After moving to Anchorage Mr. Roberts worked as a counselor at McLaughlin for several years. Following that he worked as a probation officer for fifteen years. Looking back Mr. Roberts believed that he was able to relate so well with people because he had been in the same position that many of those individuals found themselves in. He believed that the difficulties he faced and the challenges he had to overcome in order to get an education provided him an important perspective as a board member. He was pleased to be able to serve as evidence that you really can be anything that you want to be if you work hard enough at it. Mr. Roberts thanked all of the people who helped him along the way and indicated that it has been a pleasure for him to serve.

Mr. Steele voiced his appreciation to Mr. Roberts for his service and the unique perspective that he brought to the board. Mr. Steele noted that the public does not get to see the board's executive sessions where personnel issues and student discipline issues are addressed. He explained that Mr. Robert's participation and expertise in those meetings have changed people's lives. Mr. Steele stated that Mr. Roberts is truly going to be missed.

Ms. Mackie noted that while she has only had the opportunity and privilege of knowing and working with Mr. Roberts for a brief time she appreciated his kindness, his wonderful advice and words of encouragement. She believed that Mr. Roberts has set a great example of what a board member should be, present and active in the community and advocating for students who have the most need.

Mr. Steiner pointed out that Mr. Roberts has been a great connection to the community. He has been both an invaluable asset to the board and a

wonderful representative of the board in the community. Mr. Steiner thanked Mr. Roberts for his service.

Mr. Higgins voiced his appreciation to Mr. Roberts for his valuable advice over the years both before and during their time together on the board.

Ms. Kennedy expressed that one of the things she has always admired about Mr. Roberts is that he is the epitome of a southern gentleman. She remarked that Mr. Roberts invariably knew half the people at any meeting she had the opportunity of attending with him. Mr. Roberts is so gracious about making a point to meet people and to get to know them. She wished him the best and noted that he will certainly be missed.

Mr. Friedman added that the things that Mr. Roberts has taught the board over the years will stay with the board and will continue to have a dramatic impact on the lives of children and the employees of the district.

Ms. Comeau voiced, on behalf of the community, the staff and the students, what a wonderful board member Mr. Roberts has been. She appreciated his tenacity in advocating for all of the district's children. She noted that he will leave a real legacy for those who will follow and she thanked him for that. Ms. Comeau presented Mr. Roberts with several gifts to commemorate his time on the board.

C. ADJOURNMENT OF 2007-2008 – SINE DIE

ACTION:

Moved by: Macon Roberts	To adjourn the 2008-2009 School
Seconded by: Pat Higgins	Board Sine Die.

With no objection the 2008-2009 School Board was adjourned Sine Die by unanimous consent.

D. OATH OF OFFICE OF NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

The Honorable Judge Timothy Burgess administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Anchorage School Board members Jeff Friedman, Crystal Kennedy, Jeannie Mackie and Kathleen Plunkett.

E. ORGANIZATION OF 2009-2010 SCHOOL BOARD

Superintendent Carol Comeau presided as temporary chair until a new president was elected.

1. Nominations for President:

Mr. Jeff Friedman nominated Mr. John Steiner for president. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Tim Steele.

With no other nominations, Mr. Steiner was declared President by unanimous consent.

Ms. Comeau turned the gavel over to President Steiner.

Mr. Steiner called the new session of the Anchorage School Board to order.

2. Nominations for remaining officers:

Ms. Crystal Kennedy nominated Mr. Tim Steele for Vice-President, Ms. Kathleen Plunkett for Treasurer, and Ms. Jeannie Mackie for Clerk. The three nominations were seconded by Mr. Pat Higgins.

Ms. Crystal Kennedy moved for unanimous consent for the nominated slate of officers. With no objection, the nominated slate of officers was approved by unanimous consent.

F. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Steiner thanked his fellow board members for their support. He voiced his hope that the board will make progress over the upcoming year. He also hoped that the board will actively work to support the administration and provide guidance in the direction they believe the district should move.

Mr. Steiner introduced his wife, Chris, and his daughters, Diana and Megan.

Mr. Steiner noted that the board looks forward to working with the community and the staff for the education of our children for success in life. They also look forward to continued input from staff and the community toward that end.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Meeting of April 24, 2009, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:57 p.m.

John Steiner, President

Jeannie Mackie, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved