

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Ninilchik High School
Ninilchik, AK 99639

December 9, 1996

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, President
Mr. Joe Arness, Vice President
Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk
Dr. Nels Anderson, Treasurer
Mrs. Joyce Fischer, Member
Mrs. Deborah Germano, Member
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Member
Miss Megan Corazza, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Walter Bromenschenkel, Superintendent
Mr. John Dahlgren, Associate Superintendent, Planning,
Operations, and Technology
Mr. Richard Swarner, Executive Director, Business Management

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Kubena	Mrs. Kaye Waldsmith
Mr. Paul Fischer	Sen. John Torgerson
Mrs. Karen Mahurin	Mr. Don Oberg
Ms. Terri Woodward	Mr. Rob Robson
Mrs. Bonnie Golden	Mrs. Kathryn Kennedy
Mrs. Shana Loshbaugh	Ms. Michele Vaughn
Mr. Buck George	Mrs. Penny Vadla
Mrs. Nadine Russo	Mrs. Debra Horne
Mr. Elmer Schetzle	Mrs. Mary Mahoney
Mr. Frank Wandering	Ms. Dorene Jackinsky
Mr. Richard Hostetter	Mrs. Mary George
Mr. Bruce Oskolkoff	Mrs. Virginia Cuffe
Mr. and Mrs. Butch Leman	Mr. Mike Chihuly
Mr. Hal Smalley	Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mrs. Gross called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mrs. Gross invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross	Present
Mr. Joe Arness	Present
Mrs. Susan Larned	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Mrs. Joyce Fischer	Present
Mrs. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Miss Megan Corazza	Absent - Excused

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS:

Mrs. Gross announced the purpose of the Special School Board Meeting was to approve plans for reconstruction of the Ninilchik School. Mr. Dahlgren recommended the Board approve requesting the Borough Assembly to contract with Bill Kluge for architectural services for the replacement of the elementary wing of the Ninilchik School. He noted information was provided on insurance replacement costs, timelines for replacement of the elementary wing, and a proposed borough ordinance. He explained the proposed ordinance would exempt from voter approval the requirement of replacing damaged facilities, such as the Ninilchik School, whose costs exceed \$1 million, from insurance funds. He commented the original ordinance's intent was for the use of borough tax money in excess of \$1 million, whereas, this situation would deal with insurance payments which could exceed \$1 million, and require additional fire code and other legal requirements in rebuilding the damaged structure

Mrs. Gross noted the Board was aware that a public survey was being taken on community opinions related to the reconstruction of the Ninilchik School, and were due later in the week. She apologized that the meeting was taking place prior to compilation of the survey results, but it was necessary to hold the meeting prior to the December 17 Borough Assembly Meeting in order to accomplish the tight timeline for reconstruction of the burned portion of the school.

Mrs. Kathryn Kennedy, SBDM Chairperson speaking for herself, displayed a model for reconstruction of the elementary school wing as a two-story structure. Her proposal included space for the grades K-3 and resource room on the first floor, with grades 5-7 as a middle school to be housed on the second floor. She asked the Board to be visionaries for the Ninilchik School. She told the Board that the school was inadequate before the fire, and called attention to the small parking lot, need for a larger library, and lack of an art room or special education room. She noted that the projected enrollment did not accurately reflect current and future growth of the community. She added that Representative Gail Phillips stated the legislature would pick up the cost differences between the insurance repayment and actual costs for replacement of the wing at the school. With this taken care of, possibly a second story could be included in the remodeling plans.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS
(continued):

Mrs. Kennedy read a letter from Karen Encelewski, past SBDM representative, who wrote there was no ideal situation for the school short of a new school. A more realistic goal at present would be to add another story to the elementary wing. She stated that for many years the projections for Ninilchik School have been under projected, and she hoped the Board would support seeking additional funding for rebuilding of the school, and possibly including plans for a second story to the rebuilt structure.

Mr. Elmer Schetzle, former Ninilchik School teacher, told the Board there is a space problem at the school. He felt expanding the school with a second floor to the elementary wing was important. He stated that all former additions to the school, i.e., cafeteria, were built without consideration to growth at the school. He felt the only prudent way to acquire needed space was to build a second story to the elementary wing.

Mrs. Mary Mahoney, parent, commented that growth in the community would only get larger, and proposed that an elementary school be built elsewhere. She commented the parking lot is too small and dangerous. She stated the parking lot was unsafe for elementary students, and there might be safety issues in adding a second story at the elementary wing.

Mr. Frank Wandering, Ninilchik parent, stated it was important for the students to be in a permanent school by the fall. He expressed concern with the temporary facilities and the safety of the students. He felt the students should be the first priority, and his first priority would be that portables be placed on the foundation and a new and better facility be built at another location.

Ms. Dorene Jackinsky of Ninilchik told the Board that she hoped the purpose of the meeting was to listen to the voice of Ninilchik and take the suggestions made seriously. She did not want the meeting to be one of pacification rather than solicitation. It was her opinion that it is the fundamental right that every community has input into how they want their schools to operate.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS
(continued):

Mr. Richard Hostetter, Ninilchik resident, told the Board that the school parking lot is in the highway right-of-way, and there is no legal permit for this. He noted the parking lot is a dangerous situation, school buses do not use blinking lights when loading and unloading children, and the lighting is inadequate. In addition, snow removal from the highway creates problems, and he felt there should be a separate area for school buses to load and unload. He added he did not feel the driveways were legal. He noted the parking lot was a potential area for student accidents and asked that the Board correct the situation.

Mrs. Penny Vadla, Ninilchik teacher and parent, stated the students needed to get back to the school in an expedient manner, but not with a band aid approach. She felt the elementary classroom in the burned wing were too small. She also felt there was need to provide adequate space, and the needs of a K-12 school were not being addressed. She stated a second story was needed on the elementary wing. If money was not available, at least the footings should be built to support a two-story structure, with completion of the bottom floor and the second story completed later when funding was available. She asked the Board to consider the growing enrollment of Ninilchik in their building program. She felt Ninilchik students should have the same quality of education as other students in the district. She also expressed appreciation for the work already done for everyone.

Mrs. Mary George, Ninilchik parent and PTO Chairperson, spoke as a parent stating she was disappointed the survey results were not complete. She added that people of the community were not completely united on opinions related to what should happen at the school. She stated she did not want a band aid approach taken to the school situation. She commented the Board needed to know about the crowded conditions at the school, parking lot problems, and inadequate space in the gymnasium. She noted that the community population has changed where transient workers have become full-time residents. She also requested the air quality of the school be checked because students and teachers have become sick with the majority of illnesses being in the high school building.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS
(continued):

Mr. Bruce Oskolkoff, Ninilchik parent, asked the Board to consider concerns and alternatives for the school. He stated he did not feel a band aid approach was appropriate and that a new school was needed. He stated the wing which burned was the safest portion of the school, and that the remainder of the school was a time bomb. He also called attention to the hazardous parking lot, concern for health issues with asbestos, etc., and too small of a gymnasium. He noted he did not want to see students injured or killed due to unsafe conditions in the school. He requested the Board look at the bigger problem at the Ninilchik School.

Mr. Gary Oskolkoff, Chairman of the Ninilchik Tribal Council and President of the Ninilchik Tribe, welcomed the Board to Ninilchik and asked the Board to consider what was best for the children while considering the most cost effective means for this. He noted that it would be inadequate to rebuild the elementary wing to its previous size, and building a second story would only bring the school to current needs, but not take care of future years with growth of the community. He felt the opportunity was now apparent to build a new school which would benefit the students now and into the future. He suggested the funds be redirected to the future of the students, and address the quality of education for Ninilchik students which other students in the borough have.

Mrs. Deborah Rice, PTO member, told the Board she and her husband moved to Ninilchik because it was a great place to raise their children. She felt the school was important for the education of their children, but felt the school was too crowded. She commented a second-story wing would be a temporary situation, but a new school was needed in the long term.

Mrs. Nadine Russo, Ninilchik resident, stated she did not see a problem with the age of the school, but recognized changes in time with the need for special services rooms and shuffling of classrooms due to class sizes. She felt a second floor would make a positive change to the school, and she expressed appreciation to the staff in expediting things for the recovery of the school. It was her opinion that the bottom floor should be completed as soon as possible, leaving the second floor as an option.

Mrs. Terri Leman, Ninilchik parent, stated it was stressful having the classes separated at different locations. She did not feel it would be cost efficient to pour money into a second story to the school, and suggested the Board instead look to the future with a new school.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
REPLACEMENT PLANS
(continued):

Mrs. Virginia Cuffe, Ninilchik resident and school employee, commented it would be nice to have all the students back together again, and on the other hand a new school would be a dream come true. She wondered how realistic a new school would be for Ninilchik, where, despite the growth of the area, it would be a gamble to go for a bond issue which could possibly fail, and then nothing would be done to the school. She felt rebuilding the elementary wing with a second story would be more financially sound, although not ideal with parking concerns, etc.

Mrs. Debra Horne, Borough Assembly member, expressed appreciation for the attendance and testimony of the Ninilchik community. She advised that the necessary time be taken to make the wisest decision possible for rebuilding the burned wing of the school. She noted the Borough Assembly would be awaiting a decision from the School Board at their next meeting or possibly January 7. She noted the Borough Assembly will give the recommendation its sincere consideration, and do all they can to go forward expediently so students will be able to be back in regular classrooms.

Mr. Hal Smalley, KPEA President, stated a list of concerns about the fairgrounds building were given to the School Board this evening. He noted there is a perceived situation of air quality concerns at both the fairgrounds building and the high school. These issues had been brought to the attention of the principal. Mr. Smalley suggested the district allow time with pay, not sick leave or Workers' Comp., for those employees with respiratory problems until such time as the problem is corrected, and employees be reimbursed 100% for asthmatic medication, eye solutions, and prescriptive medications due to the current air quality conditions, if there is an air quality problem. He questioned whether it is safe or wise to have students in these buildings.

Mrs. Karen Mahurin, KPESA President, echoed Mr. Smalley's comments, and asked the Board to look into the employees' situations where there are health sensitivities. She noted taking sick leave and Workers' Comp. are a financial detriment to the employees for a problem which was not their fault.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS
(continued):

Mr. Buck George, Ninilchik resident and custodian, stated he received calls where employees were having health problems. After meetings with the administration, the employees were guaranteed the building would be cleaner than before the fire. However, a memorandum from Nancy Boardman, Borough Safety Manager, indicated that the ventilating system at the school had not been cleaned, and this will probably be accomplished over Christmas break. He was concerned about student and employee health problems because this had not been taken care of as promised. He commented that as a parent, he was appalled about the situation.

Mr. Mike Chihuly, Ninilchik parent, told the Board the school is in need of expanded space, and a second floor to the elementary school was a minimum of what is needed. He asked that the Board look to a larger facility in the future. He pointed out deficiencies in the gymnasium as being too small for competitions, an inadequate sound system, inadequate and unsafe parking area, lack of desks, lack of a hockey rink, and an unmaintained track.

Mr. Butch Leman, Ninilchik parent, reiterated that the Board should be farsighted and look to the future of the Ninilchik School for a new facility. He called attention to safety issues of an unsafe parking lot for both students and others using the parking lot. He commented that the area along the highway could be better used for commercial activities, and a new school should be at a better location. He noted he felt rushed in a decision being made now because the survey would not be returned until December 10, when the community wishes would be known.

Mrs. Kathryn Kennedy noted the survey did not include cost figures but it was estimated a new school would cost between \$10 million to \$30 million, whereas, a two story addition could cost less than \$1 million, which would not require a public vote. She added it was her opinion that if the community did everything to take care of the immediate situation, the public would then approve a bond issue in the future for a new school at Ninilchik.

Mr. Richard Hostetter requested the Board conduct a study to see if they had an adequate water supply at the school for the next twenty years. He added he did not feel the septic system was legal.

NINILCHIK SCHOOL
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS
(continued):

Mr. Butch Leman questioned whether building a second story would delay building a new school in Ninilchik in the future. Mrs. Gross responded that the Board has no additional money other than the money which will be received from the insurance company to build the original space up to current codes. She stated the Board could recommend that a second story be added, but it does not have the available funding. She added there has been no state funding for schools in many years.

Senator John Torgerson told the Board and audience the state construction list was published before the Ninilchik fire and, therefore, this project was not on the list. On the major maintenance list, the Homer handicap access has a #70 listing. He stated any local projects would be competing with projects from throughout the state. He urged the Board to work toward considering a second story addition. He noted this could be added to the listing if the Department of Education or others worked toward this effort. He stated he knew of no "slush fund" or any other fund for this purpose. He concluded his remarks by announcing the Department of Transportation was working on the situation to lower the speed on the highway near the fairground area.

Mr. Rob Robson, Borough Public Works Director, explained he had looked at the options for rebuilding of the school. He noted they included rebuilding the school as is, with safety considerations such as asbestos abatement, bringing the facility up to code requirements, and an option for a second story. He noted costs will vary depending on what the scope of the replacement project is and what insurance payments will be agreed upon. He presented estimates for construction costs on the recent Tustumena Project, and abatement and reconstruction costs for informational purposes. He noted the second story would compromise floor space since stairways and an elevator would be needed to comply with ADA requirements. He stated timing was critical to have students back in school by mid-August, and all steps of the timeline needed to follow the charted course. Mr. Robson responded to other questions related to construction possibilities, costs, code requirements, and replacement items. Mrs. Fischer questioned whether medical expenses occurring from air quality would be covered by the insurance company. Mr. Robson responded that would be handled through the borough risk manager.

RECESS:

At 8:50 p.m., Mrs. Gross called a recess.

RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:

At 9:02 p.m., the Board reconvened in regular session.

ACTION

Mr. Arness moved the Board approve requesting the Borough Assembly to contract with Bill Kluge for architectural services for the replacement of the elementary wing at Ninilchik Elementary/High School. The scope of this contract shall include replacement of destroyed classrooms, as well as schematic design and differential cost estimates for addition of a second floor. These cost estimates will be returned to the Board and Assembly as soon as possible for further consideration. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Mrs. Fischer questioned whether the timeline would be affected when the cost estimates are returned to the Board and Assembly. Mr. Dahlgren responded the greatest affect would be if the cost estimates with the second story exceed \$1 million. He noted the shortest a bond election could be held would be 75 days after an ordinance was approved by the Assembly for that purpose. This could be held in a special election or included at the regular October election if over the \$1 million. He noted the construction could be completed in two different ways: 1) through schematic design, completion, and students in school by mid-August or 2) if funds are available the second floor could be bid as part of the construction documents as an added alternate. Mr. Arness explained the intent of his motion was to seek all of the information available to the Board to see what the project would cost and what could be built. The intent was not to delay the construction timeline. Mr. Dahlgren explained the process for designing the project, seeking cost estimates, and keeping within the timelines established to have the school ready in the fall.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN:

At 9:16 p.m., Mrs. Germano moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, President

Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk

The Minutes of December 9, 1996,
were approved on January 6, 1997,
as written.