

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
148 N. Binkley Street  
Soldotna, AK 99669

June 1, 1998

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, President  
Mr. Joe Arness, Vice President  
Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk  
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Treasurer  
Dr. Nels Anderson, Member  
Mrs. Joyce Fischer, Member  
Ms. Deborah Germano, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. John Dahlgren, Superintendent of Schools

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Paul Fischer Mrs. Alyson Skogsdill  
Mrs. Rosie Reeder Mr. Tim Peterson  
Mrs. Karen Mahurin Mrs. Jean Kimple  
Ms. Tammy White Ms. Marianna Keil  
Mr. Richard Jobe Mrs. Lorraine Crawford  
Mrs. Jeri Best Mr. Jim Skogstad

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Arness called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Arness invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross Absent/Excused  
Mr. Joe Arness Present  
Mrs. Susan Larned Present  
Dr. Nels Anderson Present  
Mrs. Joyce Fischer Present  
Ms. Deborah Germano Present  
Mrs. Debra Mullins Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved as written.

Mr. Arness thanked the applicants for their interest. He explained that the purpose of the special meeting was to hear from individuals who had submitted applications for the vacant position on the Board. He further explained that applicants will draw numbers and be interviewed in the order of their number in ten minute intervals. He stated that after the interviews, each applicant will have two minutes to summarize their comments. He asked each applicant to begin by answering the question, "If you were sitting in the Board's position, how would you select a replacement?"

It was noted that Mr. Doug Mallette and Mr. Dave Beckett were not in attendance. Mr. Beckett submitted a written statement which was distributed to each school board member explaining that his absence was due to a conflict.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE  
PRESENTATIONS:

At 7:45 p.m., Mrs. Lorraine Crawford told the Board she would choose the person best qualified to fill the Board vacancy, based on their answers. She stated that she has lived in Kenai and taught in the District for 30 years. She stated that her years of classroom experience gives her a unique perspective that would be a valuable asset to the Board. She stated that if she were selected, she would concentrate on consensus building, assist in achieving the Board goals, and work towards raising standards for students and teachers via the National Board Certification. She stated that the District has an obligation to hire and keep the best teachers and is appalled by the number of experienced teachers that have retired. She stated that many teachers feel unappreciated and suggested that Board develop a method to recognize them. Mrs. Crawford noted that, at this time, she was not interested in seeking election as a school board member in October.

At 7:55 p.m., Jeri Best told the Board that her experiences as the former District public relations director, Kenai Peninsula College computer instructor, and service on the Governor's Council on the Disabled makes her a good candidate to fill the board vacancy. She stated that all of the candidates have excellent qualifications to fill the Board vacancy but that the person who answers the questions in line with Board goals should be chosen. Mrs. Best stated that she felt strongly that the School Board interim appointment should not be used as a springboard to become elected to the position and stated that she would not file for candidacy. Mrs. Best stated that class size and student standards are her greatest concerns.

At 8:05 p.m., Ms. Tammy White stated that she applied for the vacancy because she wanted a representative from the eastern side of the Peninsula on the Board. She stated that the decision to select a replacement for the Board vacancy should be based on geographic location. Ms. White stated that she would consider filing for election and that the interim position would provide her an idea of the time commitment involved. She stated that one of her strengths is her past experience as a school district finance officer. Ms. White stated that her major focus would be a back-to-basics approach to ensure that students learn how to read, write and use a computer. She stated that disciplinary distractions demand too much teacher attention and take away from the education of other students. She stated that she believes a program should be instituted to separate those students who are disruptive and added that parenting responsibilities should be put back onto the parent. Ms. White stated that equal education should begin with establishing standards for all students and then providing the funds to meet those standards.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE  
PRESENTATIONS (Continued):

At 8:15 p.m., Mr. Richard Jobe stated that the Board should choose the person whom they feel they can work with the best and would be the most valuable asset. He stated that regardless of the Board's decision he will file for election in October. He cited his endless energy and motivation to assist the Board or local government, in combination with his Christian beliefs of responsibility to community as his strengths. He stated that he would like to see religion be allowed in the schools. Mr. Jobe stated that his funding focus would be to reinstate the recent staff reductions.

At 8:25 p.m., Mr. Skogstad stated that his main focus on the Board would be the best interest of students. He stated that he has previously served on the Borough Assembly and has experience in dealing with borough and school district budgets. He expressed concern for declining funding for education. He stated that he would like to see Board members visit remote schools more often to get a first-hand look at their needs. Mr. Skogstad stated that he had considered filing for election the past few years but was concerned with the time commitment involved. He stated that he will work well with the administration and those currently on the Board. Mr. Skogstad stated that he felt teachers were well-paid and that the promise of additional money should not be guiding force towards salary increases.

At 8:35 p.m., Marianna Keil stated that she has lived in Seward for ten years and is employed at the Legislative Information Office. She stated she has served on the Seward City Council and Board of Directors for the Seward Mental Health and Substance Abuse agency. She stated that she would consider filing for election in October depending upon the time commitment involved. She stated that the biggest concern in the Seward area is increased class sizes. She stated that she felt that it was important for the Board of have an advocate from the Seward area. She stated that she supported the middle school philosophy would like to see more concentration on learning. Ms. Keil stated that she supported open negotiations with the unions and could support a salary increase for teachers, if money was available. Ms. Keil stated that districting the Board of Education would be a good idea.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE  
PRESENTATIONS (Continued):

At 8:45 p.m., Mrs. Kimple stated that anyone of the candidates the Board chooses would be a good selection. She stated that it is unlikely that she would file for election whether she is selected or not. She stated that her top priority would be to reinstate full-time librarians in all school libraries. She explained that during her years of teaching her students learned to read by using the library. She expressed concern that today's culture is drifting away from words printed in books. She stated that she would address the issue of smaller classroom sizes. She stated that she would like to see a better system of teacher acknowledgment and appreciation.

At the conclusion of the interviews, Mr. Arness invited the applicants to make a two-minute summary statement.

Ms. Kimple told that Board that with the quality of applicants they couldn't make a bad choice.

Ms. Keil noted that she is an extremely good listener, voracious reader, and fast learner.

Mr. Skogstad suggested that one way to gain community, teacher and student support is through good communication accomplished by school visitations, especially in remote schools.

Mr. Jobe stated that his employment as a free lance writer will allow him the time and availability to serve on the school Board.

Ms. White stated that, although all of the candidates would be a good choice, she would like a person serve from the eastern side of the Peninsula. She noted that one of the determining factors in moving to the Peninsula was the education system.

Mrs. Best stated that her greatest experience while working for the District, was traveling to all of the remote schools. She stated that it is important to give recognition to teachers, support staff and all those that help educate students. She expressed concern that no matter what community you live in, Board members represent the entire district.

Ms. Crawford expressed her thanks to Mrs. Fischer for her years of service on the Board. She stated that she felt qualified to serve on the Board and that her focus would be on what is best for the students.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE  
PRESENTATIONS (Continued):

At the conclusion of the summary statements, Mr. Arness expressed appreciation to the candidates for their presentations. He explained that there will be an executive session prior to the June 8 Board meeting to discuss the candidates. He stated that a selection would be made during the June 8 meeting and requested that whomever is chosen be available to attend the Board planning session on June 9. He noted that the replacement would be sworn in on July 6.

ADJOURN:

At 9:21 p.m., Mrs. Fischer moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Larned seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, President

---

Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk

The Minutes of June 1, 1998,  
were approved on June 8, 1998,  
as written.