

Mid-Town Community Council (MTCC) General Meeting Minutes
Meeting will be located at 3000 C Street –First Floor Conference Room
Wednesday; April 10, 2024
12:00 Noon to 1:30 PM

Sign in and Call to Order – Kris Stoechner President – All MTCC businesses, residents, land owners and guests are welcome to participate and bring ideas forward to this meeting.

Kris Stoechner called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

Board members present:

Kris Stoechner, President
Ric Davidge, Vice President
Jason Bergerson, Treasurer
Megan Debenham, Secretary
Mike Mason, Board Member
Rosemary Borchardt, Board Member
Bill Borchardt, Board Member
Brian Swartzentruber, Board Member

Approval of Minutes: 1 Minute

Ric moved and Al seconded that the minutes from March 13, 2024, be approved. Approval was unanimous.

Approval of Agenda: 1 Minute

Ric moved and Al seconded that the agenda be approved. Approval was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report – Jason Bergerson - Treasurer – 1 Minute

Nothing new to report. Still need to establish bank account. Kris meeting with bank in two weeks.

Assembly – Felix Rivera, Meg Zaletel, Chris Constant, Daniel Volland – Update on relevant subjects – 5 Minutes Total

Felix-

Short Term Rentals (STR): Assembly ordinance about STRs was vetoed by the mayor, and it appears the veto will stand. Meg and Randy are looking at a different path (probably not regulatory) and collecting data from STR agencies.

Archive site: postponed action on rezone. Work session Friday, April 12, 10:40-11:40 in City hall, room 155. Hear from administration about plan for this rezone and disposal of site.

Housing: Next Step pilot program has housed and provided services for 88 individuals, looking at 62 more before May 31. Phase 2 will house another 150 in the summer. Modeled after Houston abatement-to-housing.

Homelessness: extended Emergency Cold Weather Shelter funding through May 31. Alex hotel will close May 6. CWS will stay open through the summer if State funded \$4 million remains in the budget.

Abatement: start of discussion yesterday. Need further discussion on four items:

1. Abatement ordinance itself
2. Safe parking areas – alternative version, implementable
3. Separate ordinance making it a class B misdemeanor to camp unlawfully.
4. Appropriation – Mayor proposed using opioid task force dollars to bring sprung structure up and use for shelter

Special meeting scheduled Thursday, April 18, 5 pm, Assembly chambers.

Questions/Comments-

Kris, representing the MTCC as voted upon at the March 13 meeting, wrote a letter in favor of abatement. Meg Zaletel told Kris that they are posting abatement at Cuddy. The camp is in bad shape. No outhouses all winter.

Brian moved and Ric seconded that the MTCC grant Kris the authority to keep working on the abatement issue in the MTCC's name. Motion passed unanimously.

Jason - Is there still a possibility of the city purchasing the Arctic Rec Center?

Felix- no movement to purchase Arctic Rec Center.

Jason – Nothing ever changes with abatement.

Felix – We will have clear rules on abatement next week.

Jason - What's the real story on the Archive site?

Felix - Daniel Volland moved to postpone to get a better picture of the full plan. Because it is public land, Assembly is charged with using it appropriately. Meg put forth a special limitation that would ensure that the land could possibly accommodate a government building (health department). Current zoning designation can't take government buildings. Disposal of lot is what Assembly is really interested in.

Ric - the health building is no longer safe.

Kris – 900 people on street in a few weeks. 100 now at Cuddy. Where is everyone going to go?

Felix - 900 = ECWS + current unsheltered + other. Take away 150 Next Step housed, 150 phase 2 Next Step, 200 at CWS then we are talking about 400 individuals. Abatement ordinance doesn't address where people can camp, but rather where they cannot camp. Individuals will self-select where to camp.

Mike – is the city doing anything to prevent Cuddy from being used next winter as it was last winter?

Felix - There will be two abatements this spring/summer (concerts in May and June). Doesn't know if Administration is planning any more abatements. Condition of Archive site will be determined at disposal.

Civic Presenters:

Mayor's Office – Michelle Hodel - 4 Minutes

Not present

School Board – Kelly Lessens – 4 Minutes

2024-25 budget approved, preserving ignite and immersion PTR

Academies of Anchorage materials online

Graduation rates, figuring out levers to increase rates.

Anchorage Assembly looking for youth representatives, ages 16-19

Looking into MOA paying for sports and activities that ASD currently funds (\$5 million)

Bond prop 1 appears to be passing

Fall 2024- all 9th graders will take biology

Health education policy passed unanimously

Ric – movement of graduates not going to college.

Kelly – Academies of Anchorage could address that, opportunities to experience career fields, will require community involvement

Legislators – Senator Gray-Jackson, House Representatives Alyse Galvin & Andy Josephson – 3 Minutes Each

Senator Gray-Jackson (on Zoom) – details about the following bills are attached

SB 24 - amends curriculum to add mental health

SB 131 - require teaching students K-12 about Asian American and Pacific Islander contributions

SB 206 - return to work

SB 221 - CPR curriculum

Claire Fordyce (on Zoom, on behalf of Alyse Galvin)-

Working on 3 Amendments: parents/teachers, renewable energy fund, child care grant

Social security reduction appeal act

No one from Andy Josephson's office was present, but notes were submitted

Committees:

AMATS -Meg Zaletel and Jason Bergerson – 5 Minutes

No update

Marijuana and Alcohol – Brian Swartzentruber & Rosemary Borchardt – 5 Minutes

- **WNDJ, LLC** (dba No Limit) - onsite consumption and growing;
Explanation and discussion of the proposed site occurred.

Rosemary moved and Jason seconded that the MTCC write a resolution opposing marijuana cultivation, consumption, and retail at the former Cattle Company site.

- **AK Inc.** (Speedway) Transfer of package store license from Muldoon to 101 E. Northern Lights Blvd
Rosemary noted that it will be important to have a signed MOU.
- Brian - Remain neutral on alcohol tastings

Transit Center Study Update – Jason Bergerson – 2 Minutes

New center will not be in Midtown. Options: current center, Conoco Phillips, Chinook lot

CIP – Greg McDonald – 1 minutes
We haven't received information.

MT District Plan – Shaun Debenham – 3 minutes

Shaun not present. Kris - What we do with the plan is critical for Midtown. Trying to replace Kris on the committee.

Melinda – ACDA is funding the project. 6 people on steering committee, 2 from each CC. Public kick-off is May 14 at Natural Pantry, late afternoon to evening. Public notification this week.

Special Presenters:

Remote Area Medical Free Clinic – Kris – 1 Minute

Flyer distributed

Our Backyard - Julie Graham – Nonprofit founded by members of Central Lutheran Church; their mission is to provide safe interim supportive housing and connection to services for houseless seniors. This project is not in our boundaries, but is an example of how citizens can become involved. – 3 Minutes

Handout attached. 5-6 transitional houses with case managers. Begin in September. Stumbling block is zoning. Focusing on elderly population without substance abuse issues.

Fireweed Lane – Fireweed Design Team – 8 to 15 Minutes

Joe Taylor – project just starting. AMATS sponsored (federally funded), overseen by DOT (state), but will ultimately be MOA-owned and maintained. Must abide by NEPA, Uniform relocation and ROW act, and context sensitive solutions act.

80 private parcels, 125 driveways. 2029-30 likely construction, June public meeting, Project website: www.fireweedlane.com

Looking at 3 families of alternatives:

- 4-lane, including no build, rehabilitation options
- 3-lane: road diet (center left turn) Spenard is an example
- 2-lane: lots of space for non-motorized, challenges for business access

Ultimately could be a combination of types

Brian – traffic count Spenard vs. Fireweed?

Joe - Spenard has more traffic, 9000-10,000 vs. 6000-8000

Mark Butler – break project into 2?

Joe – design won't be split, construction might be phased

Ric – one area that needs attention is schools, as well as Arctic

Joe - Counting traffic during school times.

Rosemary – ROW impacts? Land taken?

Joe - Negotiation between state and private property owners. Constrained ROW. Probably be some impacts.

Rain Garden in Cuddy Park – Taylor Keegan (superintendent parks and rec) – 3 Minutes

Melanie Hess – recent funding from ACWA. Cuddy and Fish Creek are impaired water bodies. Rain garden will treat storm water. Revegetation will deter water fowl. Starting in June. Monitoring water quality.

AO No 2024-26 – An ordinance amending Code section 15.20.020 talking about homeless camps on public property; also discussing abatement of camps – Kris Stoehner - 5 minutes

New Business

By-Laws – 15 Minutes

According to Mr. Hess, Anchorage Ombudsman, “The requirements of Article VII, Section J are problematic, as they state that ‘A motion the subject of which was not printed in the published agenda prior to the meeting shall not be voted on until the next regular meeting.’ This really limits the council’s ability to deal with important last-minute matters in a timely manner, and means, given all the issues that crop in Midtown, the council might end up having to call a lot of emergency meetings. Article VII, Section B states that ‘Special meetings of the membership may be called by the President, or Executive Board, or by written petition of 5 council members delivered to any office, to address council business, including the accommodation of community council responsibilities under municipal code 21.03.020.C’”

Mr. Hess suggested adding VII K “Notwithstanding Article VII, Section J of these bylaws, the membership, by three-quarters (3/4) vote at a council meeting may allow an item to be introduced, discussed, and voted on, the subject of which was not included in the published agenda.”

Mike moved and Rosemary seconded that the language suggested by Mr. Hess be added to the MTCC by-laws. Motion passed unanimously with seven votes.

Mike moved and Rosemary seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.