
TURNAGAIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Council Meeting | March 2, 2017 | 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Lake Hood Elementary School, 3601 West 40th Avenue

Chaired by Cathy Gleason, TCC Vice President & Acting President

WELCOME & APPROVE AGENDA, MINUTES

- The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. About 30 people (members and guests) attended.
- The agenda was reviewed:
 - **Motion by Joan McKinnon to approve the agenda, amended as follows:**
 - Move Anchorage 4 Ballot Proposition item to follow the HB 93 presentation
 - Strike Federation of Community Councils report, to save some time (Cathy will share a written summary instead)
 - **Second by Dan Gleason.**
 - **Vote on motion: all yes, 0 no. Agenda approved.**
- The February 2, 2017 meeting minutes were available for review and approval.
 - **Motion by Gloria Manni to approve the February minutes. Second by Pat Redmond.**
 - **Vote on motion: all yes, 0 no. Minutes approved.**
- Announcements: *See Attachments flyer available as a handout in the meeting and on the TCC website.*
 - Voter registration for the April 4 Municipal Election ends on Sunday, March 5!
 - The West Anchorage Candidates Forum, co-hosted by Turnagain and other community councils in the area, will be at the Spenard Recreation Center on Wednesday, March 29, 2017, starting at 6:00 p.m.
 - The Alaska Supreme Court recently denied requests for re-hearings in the case regarding Lyn Ary Memorial Garden—this means the issue is officially settled, in favor of the Municipality! Thanks to Bob Owens, Asst. Municipal Attorney, for his hard work on the case for the last decade, and Mr. Owens thanked Turnagain neighbors for supporting the case throughout and taking care of the garden.
 - The team overseeing the Turnagain Boulevard Upgrade project has released the final designs, they are available from the TCC Board if anyone would like to review the documents—they are available on a CD. Contact the Board if anyone is interested!
 - Three officers of the Anchorage Fire Department, Station 5 (located at Spenard Road and McRae). They shared some reminders:
 - Please check your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors regularly to ensure they have batteries—deaths can occur, and alarms save lives!
 - Propositions 2 and 5 on the ballot April 4th would provide funding for new equipment, updated lighting at fire stations, and other important safety investments.
 - **Questions and Comments**
 - *Dan Gleason commented that on his street (Bridle Circle) there is a cul de sac with a large snow pile, he is concerned that emergency vehicles would be unable to service the street.* The officers shared that they have been working with the Muni to address street plowing, it is an issue citywide. They will continue to work on getting streets fully plowed.
 - *Another member asked whether the Fire Department provides bike helmets and proper fitting?* Yes, stations have helmets available and also several AFD personnel are equipped to inspect car seats and ensure they are strapped in safely. They will continue to provide this service, and periodically hold public events promoting inspections. This Saturday, March 4th Station 1 will hold a car inspection check. In 2016, AFD performed 7,000 car seat checks.

- *Another individual shared that the Red Cross provides free smoke detectors on request.*
- *Pat Redmond commented that she has seen fire hydrants covered in snow, she has seen some in her neighborhood that are covered—is AFD or AWWU or another agency uncovering these? She also shared that you can “adopt” a fire hydrant by making sure it is clear. AFD often relies on citizens to clear hydrants, they appreciate the assistance!*

HB 93: ALASKA RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY BILL | REP. CHUCK KOPP, TIM SULLIVAN

- Rep. Kopp provided a summary of the bill: he shared that he has been discussing the issue with the Alaska Railroad, and finding a compromise that protects property owners as well as the Railroad’s interest. The Alaska Railroad was established in 1914, and established a federal right of way approximately 200’ wide (100’ on either side) for the railroad—it is a surface easement, not full property rights (fee simple). The Homestead Act, meanwhile, applied for land patents along the various rights of way, and own the underlying land rights. In 1982 there was a legal challenge regarding state lands selected in Railroad rights of way. The Railroad was also transferred to the State in the 1980s, which has caused confusion regarding whether the exclusive use easement applied to lands still being contested from various owners, such as village corporations and private landowners.
- Essentially, the issue at stake is reconciling Homestead rights and the Airport’s right of way, especially in areas where people have long used the land as private property. In 2012, the Railroad instituted a fee system for uses within their right of way, which has caused conflict with some homeowners who own the underlying rights but are also technically encroaching into the right of way. The Railroad has asserted that they have an exclusive use easement, while homeowners view it as a taking. Homeowners object to the fees, while the Railroad objects to safety concerns with having structures and other items within the easement. The intent of the bill is not to penalize the Railroad, but to protect private property rights.
- Rep. Kopp shared that he has been working constructively with the Railroad to identify a mutually agreeable solution, and trying to be consistent with how many other states handle similar rights of way. He recognizes that there are multiple points of view and they are working on a solution.
- Tim Sullivan, representing the Railroad, agreed that the dialogue has been constructive and that they are hoping to find a solution outside the actual legislation. There are still outstanding legal issues about ownership, which still need to be settled by the courts. The bill primarily allows the Legislature to determine who has which ownership rights.
- Jack, an Ocean View Community Council member and landowner, shared that he will circulate a copy of the original patent in the meeting if anyone is interested to review.
- Rep. Kopp shared that he is hosting a meeting on Saturday, March 4, at 2 p.m. at the Anchorage Legislative Information Office (Wells Fargo building at 1500 Benson). He encourages anyone interested to attend the meeting, especially landowners with adjacent property.
- **Questions and Comments**
 - *Anna Brawley asked the scope of the property, does this impact land only in Anchorage or all along the Railbelt? Rep. Kopp answered that the bill only addresses adjacent landowners’ properties, other than public property.*
 - *Cathy Gleason asked whether any Turnagain property owners along the Railroad easement are present in the meeting. None were present, but two property owners in Ocean View were present, who have been working with Rep. Kopp on this issue.*

APRIL 4 MUNICIPAL BALLOT PROPOSITIONS (2 – 6) | ANCHORAGE TOMORROW

- Erik Gunderson shared that Anchorage Tomorrow is an organization dedicated to raising awareness of and advocating for the bond propositions in Anchorage. Most members are in the engineering sector and many are longtime Anchorage residents and professionals.

- Five issues are on the board: public safety and transit; parks, trails and road projects; road and drainage projects; fire department projects; and police department projects. These will be Pr
- The total bond package is \$46 million, and will retire \$36 million, which means the actual debt will be approximately \$10 million, or an average increase of \$4 per \$100,00 in value—about \$12 for the average Anchorage household (based on average home value). Turnagain Blvd. is the largest project on the bond, which is of interest to this neighborhood.
- Erik shared that he appreciates local bond projects because they are funded locally, benefit locals, and helps the local economy by creating jobs for the transportation and construction sector, among others. He encourages everyone to vote in favor of these bonds.
- **Questions and Comments**
 - *A member asked about the two Duben Avenue projects, there is an east and west portion of the road, why is only one included on the bond this year?* He is not aware of the full story of why one was chosen over the other.
 - *Jonathan Galin asked how projects are contracted out, is there a competitive bid process? Are the bond amounts based on current bids?* Yes, the Municipality releases all projects for competitive bid, and the lowest bid is selected from among qualified respondents. The cost estimates are based on engineers' design estimates, but are not released for competitive bid until the bond funding is secured, so there is competition for the lowest bid.
 - *Cathy Gleason asked about traffic calming—is the bond item for specific projects, or is it a general package of funding?* The bond includes specific “shovel ready” projects, as well as general funds for projects that arise, such as in response to a flooding problem. The Muni has some discretion for small projects.
 - *Dan Gleason commented that there are significant drainage issues at the railroad overpass of West Northern Lights Blvd. and Forest Park Drive, why is this not on the bond?* This is a state road, but is an important project.

APRIL 4 ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT PROPOSITION (1) | ELISA SNELLING

- The Anchorage School District has submitted some projects for the bond, totaling \$58.5 million (Proposition 1). The bond will actually retire more debt than is being added, so it will nominally reduce the tax cost compared with last year: the bond would add \$11.67 per \$100,000 assessed value, but the debt paid off is \$11.79 per \$100k.
- The projects include 8 roof replacements, 3 buildings receiving HVAC upgrades, and improvements to West High and Romig Middle Schools.
- There are many other needs for facility improvements, at least \$200 million in deferred maintenance, but ASD prioritized the highest needs projects for this year.
- She also reminded the group that there are two seats open this year, not including hers: Seats C and D. Please vote for your school board members, they serve an important role!
- Mike Nero also presented, he manages ASD's capital project budgets including facility upgrades and maintenance. He shared an overview of a booklet detailing how school projects are funded, the life cycle of a typical school facility, and the importance of investing in school facilities. A national organization recommends investing at least 7% of the total assets annually in maintenance and operations: for Anchorage, this would mean \$140 million invested annually if we funded at full cost. He emphasized that these are necessary projects, not cosmetic upgrades.
- **Questions and Comments**
 - *Jonathan Galin asked whether changes to the state's reimbursement program will impact future school funding?* That change impacted 2016 projects, but it is not likely that the previous level of funding will be available in the near future.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT | REP. MATT CLAMAN

- **Sen. Mia Costello**
 - Thank you to everyone who attended the public safety town hall last month!

- The Senate Judiciary committee has been working on and will soon pass some adjustments to SB 91, the criminal justice reform bill passed in 2016. One of the primary changes to the law will be requiring prison time for a first-time Class C Felony. The Criminal Justice Commission had originally recommended no prison time, but these are perceived as serious crimes so prison time seems appropriate.
- There are three bills concurrently restructuring the Permanent Fund as an endowment, and she is anticipating agreement with the House version in the process.
- She is optimistic about the work that the Legislature is doing, and has been working with members of the House on legislation.
- She is available to speak to constituents on any issues you are concerned about, please feel free to contact her office at (907) 269-0117, including during Session.
- **Rep. Matt Claman**
 - Rep. Claman reiterated that the Legislature is focused on developing a viable solution to the fiscal issue: the solution will likely include the Permanent Fund as a means to support a sustainable budget, as well as potentially a broad-based (sales or income) tax.
 - The Legislature recently passed a bill clarifying that “ballot selfies” (taking photos of yourself while voting) are legal, there have been issues with election law in the past but there are First Amendment issues with restricting these activities. He noted that the scope of the bill is small, but it is a good exercise for both houses to work together.
- **Questions and Comments**
 - *A member asked whether SB 91 has saved money, as was intended? Would adding prison time back to these charges reduce some of those savings, and does Department of Law have adequate funding to handle the changes?* Sen. Costello shared that she has worked with Sen. Coghill and the Judiciary Committee during this process and they anticipate a fiscal note, but senators are committed to moving the bill forward, even if there is a fiscal note, because it is an important investment. There are discussions about how to adequately fund prosecutors and other resources to make the changes successful.
 - *Gloria Manni shared that she is concerned about the budget, and is anxious for the Legislature to resolve this problem. Do not defer the issue another year!* Sen. Costello agrees, and the Legislature is working hard to make decisions and move the budget forward in the best way possible.
 - *Dan Gleason commented that he supports HB 93. Has the House Judiciary Committee held hearings on HB 93?* No, and this bill is not assigned to this committee—it will be in the Transportation Committee first, which Rep. Claman also sits on. Additionally, their committee has heard a bill on allowing services such as Uber and Lyft.
 - *Anna Brawley asked whether there are any other taxes being considered this session?* There is currently a proposed income tax, and Rep. Claman introduced a school tax bill as well. The Legislature is focusing on taxes that would raise significant revenue, at least \$100 million annually, before looking at smaller taxes such as the alcohol or tobacco taxes. The Governor did introduce a bill to increase the motor fuel tax.
 - *Pat Redmond commented that she opposes the studded tire tax, currently being heard in the Senate (SB 50).* Rep. Claman shared that there is no House version of this bill, and he has heard it has not gotten much movement so far.
 - *Jonathan Galin asked about whether Rep. Claman has considered a soda (sugar sweetened beverage) tax? He would like to see the Legislature consider this, for both revenue and health reasons.* Rep. Claman commented that this type of tax, similar to alcohol or tobacco taxes, will raise revenue but not nearly as much the Legislature needs to take immediate action on the budget issue. If the tax would not raise more than \$100 million in revenue, it would be a lower priority than broad-based taxes. He is open to further discussion about specific taxes, but they will likely not get as much support as will the larger broad-based taxes.

AIRPORT REPORT | JOHN JOHANSEN

- See airport updates on the handout provided at the meeting or online at: www.anchorageairport.com
- **Lake Hood Seaplane Base Master Plan:** The public review draft of the Lake Hood Seaplane Base master plan is available at the website: www.lhdmasterplan.com, and the team is preparing a comment-response document for the comments submitted. They are anticipating the plan to be finalized by March 31.
- **Capital Projects:** There will be multiple projects this summer of airfield reconstruction and repair; this will involve shutdowns of runways.
 - Runway 1533 (North-South) will be shut down in May for approximately two weeks. There will be more east-bound departures over Midtown, and will have additional noise impacts during that time.
 - Additionally, there will be projects to improve the Airport emergency radio system, used to communicate with other emergency response agencies. It will improve radio coverage at the Bluff and Point Woronzof. There will be a tower installed north of the AWWU wastewater treatment plan and substation, south of the overlook, height to be determined.
 - There will also be work on Postmark Drive to repave a portion of the road.
 - The Alpha Bravo airway, which primarily impacts private pilots, will also be repaired.
- **Airport Job Fair:** There will be a hiring fair on April 8, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Airport, with a variety of employers participating, including the Airport itself.
- **Hiring Opportunity:** The Airport is actively seeking heavy equipment operators, as well as facility maintenance personnel, as well as Airport police and fire officers. Visit www.workplacealaska.com for more information.
- **Funding:** John Johansen reminded the group that the Airport is not funded from the General Fund, but are supported by federal grants for capital projects, and fund operations through rent and fees gathered from other companies that operate at the property. They have worked to reduce or streamline their budget in recent years, but are not subject to or cannot help address the General Fund budget issues.
- **Questions and Comments**
 - *Cathy Gleason requested that the Airport provide a presentation about the proposed radio tower at Point Woronzof, when the design is completed.*
 - *Jonathan Galin asked about current activity at Kulis Air Base, has there been more or less activity?* There is some rental activity, there has been interest in short-term leasing of hangars, and leases for other buildings.
 - *A member asked if there is any recovery program for de-icing fluid? Is this typical of other airports around the country?* The Anchorage Airport does not collect this fluid currently, John is not sure how many more airports around the country do so, but some do. The EPA had released rules several years ago requiring collection of these types of products, but industry pressure delayed these rules. The Airport has been using less glycol to accomplish the task, and have requested that others stop using ethylene glycol, which is more toxic than propylene glycol, which is commonly found in foods and household products. EPA restricted the discharge of urea, which cannot be used for airfield de-icing, and different products are used for airfields and planes.
 - *Gloria Manni asked about the AMATS Freight Mobility Study proposals regarding traffic on West Northern Lights Blvd. originating at the Airport.* John Johansen clarified that the Airport had not made that recommendation directly, and he was not previously aware of it prior to the February 2 TCC meeting. He speculated that the project is being advocated for by common carriers and other tenants of the Airport. Gloria clarified that AMATS indicated that the projects are being supported by DOT&PF and the Ted Stevens Airport.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT

- Check Turnagain CC's presence on Facebook and NextDoor! Join the Facebook group "Turnagain Community Forum" or watch for posts to Turnagain North and South neighborhoods on NextDoor.

Turnagain Community Council

- If you have not already done so, sign up for e-mail updates from TCC and other community councils. There was a flyer available at the meeting providing instructions on how to sign up.
- **TCC still needs a President for 2017!** The election was held in November and a new slate of officers elected for 2017 (with the current Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and a new Member at Large). However, there were no nominations or candidates for President—we need someone to serve for next year! Please contact the board if you are interested (tccpresident@yahoo.com). **We will hold a special election as soon as we receive one or more candidate nominations.**
- **Annual Capital Improvement Project Ranking Committee:** Each year, the Municipality seeks input from community councils about capital improvement projects—Turnagain forms a committee annually to discuss priorities, and in recent years has been consistent in promoting project . Contact the TCC Board (tccpresident@yahoo.com) if you would like to participate! The list will be due by May 31, 2017.
- **Parks & Recreation Commission Action on Coastal Trail:** Cathy Gleason shared that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approved the Audubon Wayside project and the Mile 2.2 Coastal Trail Bench project, both supported by Turnagain Community Council after having presentations earlier this winter.
- **Federation of Community Councils:** This item was tabled; no urgent updates.
- **President's Report | We are seeking a new President for the 2017 term!**
- **Vice President's Report**
- **Treasurer's Report**
- **Secretary's Report**
- **Member at Large's Report**

ASSEMBLY REPORT | MEMBERS TIM STEELE, ERIC CROFT

- No representative was present.

MAYOR'S REPORT | SHARON LANE

- No representative was present.

AMATS FREIGHT MOBILITY STUDY: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT TCC RESOLUTION

- **Motion by Pat Redmond to approve the draft resolution as presented. Second by x.**
- **Discussion:**
 - Jean Bielawski shared that she is a FedEx driver, and she agrees that Lake Hood Drive is a relatively fast and direct route, she prefers it over Point Worozof Drive / West Northern Lights Blvd. However, she pointed out that UPS is located at a different site, much closer to the Postmark Drive and West Northern Lights intersection. She also noted that heavy freight trucks are not allowed on Northern Lights, and all use International.
 - *Jonathan Galin asked Jean whether FedEx drivers primarily use West Northern Lights, versus International?* She answered that approximately both routes are used equally, depending on the destinations of the deliveries—routes serving Midtown, Downtown and anywhere on the northern end of the city follow Northern Lights. Personally, she is not in favor of this upgrade project to Northern Lights, she feels that it is not necessary.
 - Jonathan also thanked the board for their work on this issue.
 - Anna clarified that the alternative route in the resolution is not formally in the study, but is offered as an example of another route that may accomplish the same goals. The resolution itself opposes including the upgrades to West Northern Lights in the draft study.
- **Vote on motion: 13 yes, 0 no. Motion passes. The TCC Board will submit the resolution to the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee in advance of their meeting on Tuesday, March 7. The resolution will also be provided to the AMATS Policy Committee, who ultimately makes final determinations and adopts the study.**

MUNICIPAL PARK RANGER PROGRAM PROPOSAL | AL MILSPAUGH, JOSH DURAND

- Al Milspaugh is Vice President of the University Area Community Council, and is involved with public safety issues in that area. He shared that Assembly member Pete Peterson originally proposed the idea, addressing public safety and other concerns in Anchorage parks. Al drafted a resolution in support of this idea, and brought it to his community council, where it passed unanimously.
- The proposal would create a Park Ranger in the Anchorage Parks Department, who would act as “ambassadors” providing education, oversight and monitoring of activities in parks, and their presence may reduce crime in parks. They would not have enforcement powers, but could notify police of issues they observe, as well as providing education and outreach.
- There are many public safety issues that have occurred on trails, as well as problems with off-leash dogs and people not cleaning up dog waste.
- Josh Durand, Parks Director, clarified that the best term is probably “Park Ambassador” because they would not be enforcing laws, but could add value by being a resource in Anchorage parks. His department is supportive of this idea, and has been working with the Mayor’s Office and APD to dedicate two officers year-round patrolling parks on bikes and on foot, as well as dedicating the Student Resource Officers (SROs) who are not on duty in schools during the summer, to parks in the summer. Adding Park Ambassadors would provide people on the ground to provide education, wayfinding, and more direct supervision of Anchorage parks.
- Al added that he recently spoke with APD Chief Christopher Tolley, who supports the idea.
- *Gloria Manni supports the idea, but commented that she is concerned about how it would be paid for.* Josh commented that the Assembly did not support the estimated \$250,000 cost for the program, but in the meantime APD has dedicated the two officers to the parks.
- *Jonathan Galin asked whether the proposed ambassadors would have communications tools?* Yes, they would be equipped with cell phones. They would also receive training in CPR and emergency response.
- *Another member asked how these individuals would be spread around the city’s parks?* Staffing would be determined by need, such as the number of recent incidents that would indicate more presence in the parks is important. Parks that have the most visitors could also be prioritized.
- **Motion by Gloria Manni to approve the draft resolution as presented to support this program. Second by Pat Redmond.**
- **Discussion:**
 - Dan Gleason proposed an amendment to change the language from “Park Ranger” to “Park Ambassador.” Pat proposed using both, to indicate that TCC supports the general concept.
- **Vote on motion: 15 yes, 0 no. Motion passes. The TCC Board will execute the resolution and share it with University Area Community Council and with the West Anchorage Assembly representatives.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

West Anchorage Candidates Forum

- The West Anchorage Candidates Forum, co-hosted by Turnagain and other community councils in the area, will be at the Spenard Recreation Center on Wednesday, March 29, 2017, starting at 6:00 p.m.
- Candidates for West Anchorage Assembly and School Board Seats C and D will be participating, as well as individuals representing information about the ballot measures on the April 4 election.
- Please contact Cathy Gleason if you would like to help organize the event, or assist with setup or cleanup on the evening of the event, or bring refreshments to share!

Land Use Committee: Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Map

- Cathy Gleason shared that the Parks and Recreation Commission voted at their most recent meeting to oppose the overlay on Point Woronzof Park (dedicated park) indicating that it may be part of

discussions for future Airport expansion, as an amendment to their overall support of the Land Use Plan draft. This is consistent with TCC's recommendation, and TCC commented opposing the overlay.

- The plan draft is still before the Planning & Zoning Commission for the next month, and after their review and approval is completed, will go to the Anchorage Assembly for final approval.

Fish Creek Trail Rehabilitation

- The project is listed as #1444 under the AMATS Trail Rehabilitation Project.
- Cathy Gleason shared that the 65% design for the Fish Creek Trail Rehabilitation project along the southern portion of the Fish Creek Trail was shared with TCC. The comment period has closed, but the project manager indicated that comments are welcome.
- The project has been postponed to summer 2018, because it involves wetlands and is therefore subject to federal review. The design will be completed but construction would not be funded until 2018.
- The bridges will be the same design as those at Westchester Lagoon, and the plan is to replace other bridges in the Municipality with this same design.
- A CD with all of the project design is available from the TCC Board on request.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Dan Gleason shared that Cathy Gleason was selected for the Athena Award 2017! She is one of 10 recipients of the award this year. There will be a celebratory luncheon on Monday, March 20. Council members shared congratulations, and Cathy thanked the council for their ongoing support.
- Al Milspaugh commented that he appreciates Cathy's participation in the Federation of Community Council meetings as a delegate.

CLOSING

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.
- The next regular meeting will be **Thursday, April 6, 2017** at this same location: Lake Hood Elementary Library.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Anna Brawley on 3/4/2017

*If you have corrections or edits to this document, please submit them to tccpresident@yahoo.com by the Monday before the next Council meeting: **Monday, April 3, 2017.***