

Scenic Foothills Community Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 6, 2011

President Mark Hill called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Twenty-five people attended the meeting; 23 signed in. December meeting minutes were reviewed and approved by the council.

Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU) customer service representative Chris Kosinski shared a presentation with the council. Kosinski explained that utility rates increase over time to maintain the facility and system. Ten to 15 years ago, AWWU customers did not experience rate increases, due to customer growth. In 2010, AWWU customers experienced a 2.5% rate increase. The Alaska Regulatory Commission (RCA) has recommended a 7.0% rate increase for water and 9.5% for wastewater for 2011, although AWWU plans to increase water usage rates by only 4.5% and wastewater by 7.0%. Kosinski said reduced rates impact users by decreasing services to the consumer, deferring maintenance operations, and causing a minimum of three years to recover from unsustainable rates.

In 2011, AWWU has **planned projects in East Anchorage** including Wonder Park and the Muldoon. Some projects during this construction season will use trenchless technology to increase the longevity of water and sewer lines from 50 years to 70 years.

Kosinski said that AWWU's rates are very comparable across the nation. An attendee asked why AWWU does not meter water and sewage usage. Kosinski explained that the cost would be about the same after the system was upgraded to support the meter system. Another attendee asked why costs were much lower in Los Angeles, and Kosinski explained that AWWU faces challenges due to Alaska's cold weather, requiring lines to be buried 10 feet deep and increasing repair costs.

AWWU consumers will see rate increases on their January bill (\$40.59 to \$41.39 for water and \$29.66 to \$33.15 for wastewater = total \$70.25 to \$74.54). An attendee asked if commercial property was metered; Kosinski responded affirmatively. Providence Hospital, the Captain Cook Hotel, Alaska Regional Hospital, and the Hilton Hotel are among the biggest consumers of AWWU. Jerrienne Lowther asked Kosinski where the community could find his presentation and more information. Kosinski directed the council to AWWU's website, www.awwu.biz or to contact him at 786-5636. Paul Honeman asked whether the utility was privately or publicly owned. Kosinski explained that this public utility is run by a board of directors and works in conjunction with the mayor, assembly, and RCA.

Monterrosa thanked Kosinski for AWWU's work in Anchorage and quick response to breaks this past year and asked about the smell he noticed while skiing near Point Woronzof and what the community can do to help. Kosinski stated that the nature available to us in Alaska allows AWWU to perform primary treatment of wastewater only and explained that the odor is part of the business. An attendee asked if a secondary water treatment is expected in the future. Kosinski explained that AWWU has procedures they follow with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to acquire permits to allow for primary treatment only; if permits are not attained, secondary treatment would be the next option. One attendee questioned why the condos she lived in were not metered, and Kosinski explained that many condos' usage is similar to single family residency. Cathy Carte stated that she once lived in Ohio, where her water and wastewater was metered, and she appreciated the cheaper cost in Anchorage.

President Mark Hill stated that **positions are open for recruitment**: Utilities Committee Chair, Public Safety Committee Co-Chair, Community Patrol Captain. All Committees are open to membership. Hill stated that Harry Crawford has been appointed as treasurer for SFCC.

FCC Advisor Linda Billmyer shared with the council that FCC's budget has been decreased from \$96,000 to \$80,000 for 2011. Neighborhoods USA 2011 (NUSA) has 40 workshops awaiting confirmation and the NUSA tours are set for the 2011 conference. Next month, community members can register for the conference.

Parks Chair Michele Pamer recommended a [letter](#) be sent to the city manager, city mayor, and parks and beautification head for support of camera and lighting projects at **Chugach Foothills Park**. Pamer explained that Hot Wire will be doing the labor for Chugach Foothills Park. Pamer has sought an estimate from Brown's Electric for lighting cost and Action Security for camera cost associated with potential projects at Scenic Park and Little Dipper Park. Pamer said that the 2012 Capital Improvement Project forms have been requested. Pamer requested donations for four more SFCC signs and requested help placing signs in February while she is absent. Roger Shaw suggested that the executive board approve purchase of signs and that Chugach Foothills letter be sent out from SFCC's president.

Vice President Cathy Carte reported to the council regarding the meetings held in December for **Little Dipper Park** upgrade plans. To stretch the park construction budget, members are seeking assistance from the forestry department to remove trees near the park (saving \$6,000). Plans for Little Dipper Park include a double slide, repairing current playground equipment, moving park entrance, moving current pathway, increasing pathway size, hopscotch and four square, picnic table, trash cans, and bringing in gravel fill to level park. Carte also mentioned requested lights and cameras to increase safety at the park. Pamer said construction is planned to begin July 9, 2011. A local boy scout has received a \$5K grant to help with construction of the park. Hill asked about the waterway near the park, and Carte responded that no viable options have been found. Pamer also requested volunteers who can operate a front loader to help with park construction (saving \$8,000). Little Dipper Park construction budget is \$48,000. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Michele Pamer.

Education Chair Alex Monterrosa has a meeting planned with Begich Middle School principal Jeanne Fischer this month. He also plans on meeting with the Totem Theater manager.

Public Safety Chair Paul Honeman told the council the "Plug in at 20" campaign has received a grant to provide free plug-in timers from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on January 8th at the University Center. He also informed SFCC of the Citizen Police Academy held January 29th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Honeman reported one volunteer for the Community Patrol. He encouraged the council to be aware of a dark Jeep or Ford Explorer with a tire rack that has been hitting kids and asking if they wanted a ride at schools in east Anchorage. Community Patrol has meetings the first Friday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Denny's Restaurant on DeBarr Road for coalition training. CP volunteers go out two to three hours for one to two nights a week. Honeman said he would like to do a walking campaign to inform that community of the patrol and need for participation. Honeman said \$13,500 is available for the patrol to cover costs for patrol logo, cameras, video, radios, and batteries. Gas cards will be given to cover CP volunteers' expense. Jerrienne Lowther suggested a universal Anchorage community patrol logo. An Emergency Watch leader orientation will be held January 20 and 22. Pamer suggested that the LDS Church extend their lighting hours to assist with safety along 36th Avenue.

Streets Chair Art Johnson described four projects that are on the CIP for 2011: 32nd Avenue, Pioneer Drive, Northern Lights Boulevard resurfacing (Bragaw Street to Muldoon Road), and 36th Avenue repaving (Patterson Road to Muldoon Road). Johnson said that when 36th Avenue is upgraded to a collector road it will only include the portion from Patterson to Muldoon Road. Crawford asked council to continue to ask the Legislature for funds for 32nd Avenue street project and Totem ball fields.

Todd Jacobson, Municipality of Anchorage 32nd Avenue Project Point of Contact, shared with council that the 32nd Avenue design is 65% finalized. MOA is working to reclassify 32nd Avenue and Pioneer Drive as collector roads. The project for 32nd Avenue would include parallel parking, pedestrian facilities, curbs and gutters, lamination, snow storage, and minimal landscape improvements. Jacobson said that funding (\$4-5 Million) is the largest obstacle for this project. The project will be before the Legislature in April and decided by the governor in late May to early June. If

funds come available, the project could start in late July. Jacobson said Pioneer Drive improvements are scheduled for 2014 and require \$2.3-2.5 million for construction. Questions were raised about a right hand turn lane from Muldoon onto 36th Avenue and Jacobson suggested going to the state with concerns and requests.

Utilities Chair Alex Monterrosa said Alaska Waste will make a presentation at the next meeting in February.

Senator Bettye Davis's legislative aide, Rich Benavides, confirmed that the senator will continue to work on the 32nd Avenue and ball field projects. Benavides will take requests from the council for Capital Improvement Projects.

Representative Lance Pruitt shared with the council that he will begin the legislative session in less than two weeks. He is serving on six committees, is co-chair on the energy committee, and also serving on some sub-committees. Oil taxes, hydro-electric projects (e.g. Susitna River), gas pipeline, and 32nd Avenue will all be addressed during the legislative session. Pruitt said he would like to call in to the next meeting in February. When asked about an expected decrease in federal money to Alaska, Pruitt said he expects a slight but significant decrease to federal funds to Alaska but more sizeable decreases with the years ahead.

Patricia Anderson informed SFCC about a **U.S. Army and Air force Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson** notice in the *Anchorage Daily News* on December 30. A scoping meeting will be held at the Millennium Hotel on January 13.

Assemblyman Paul Honeman asked for council's feedback on **fireworks** in the Anchorage Bowl for New Year's Eve. Cathy Carte commented that fireworks went beyond the 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. allotted hours. Michele Pamer and another attendee commented that they enjoyed the fireworks display. One attendee was concerned about fireworks near assisted living homes. Honeman suggested a better public awareness campaign in the future. One attendee was concerned about fireworks businesses setting up shop in Anchorage. Honeman predicted that amendments will be made to the law for next year. Lance Pruitt voiced concerns about where fireworks could be let off. Richard Benavides commented that no major fires occurred on New Year's Eve. Expressed concerns focused on fire hazards, excessive noise and litter.

Paul Honeman suggested that SFCC produce a list of Capital Improvement Project priorities. Honeman also suggested 32nd Avenue be at the top of the list. Richard Benavides reminded council that Alexander Avenue took 18 years to fix.

Honeman reminded council that six assembly seats will be up for election in April 2011. Mike Gutierrez will be running for re-election and Adam Trombley will also be running.

A meeting regarding to **Foothills Storage** will be held Wednesday, January 19th, at 1 p.m.

President Mark Hill reported that Anchorage East Side Plan meetings will be held from 7-9 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of every month. Hill encouraged the council to be thinking about citizen participation and public accountability.

SFCC meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.