

**Scenic Foothills Community Council  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, May 2, 2013**

**Call to Order:** Vice President Roger Shaw 7:00 p.m. April minutes approved. Vice President introduced executive board.

**Kameron Perez-Verdia**, newly appointed member of the Anchorage School Board: he grew up in Point Barrow in a family of teachers, currently works with a non-profit organization, [Avant-Garde Learning Alliance](#), working primarily with rural schools, to help schools become more effective. He has been working with education non-profits for the past 15-18 years, learning how to manage money to foster good teaching and learning to get better results for children in schools. Schools, whether neighborhood or charter schools, need to define themselves, know who they are and communicate that to the public. Charter schools have been pushed in that direction but neighborhood schools need to do that, too. In addition to financial management, the board also needs to work on communication with the community, as well as the parents of the students.

**Jeanne Fischer, Principal of Begich Middle School and Teresa O'Connor, Director, Anchorage School Based Health Centers** returned to update us on plans for a school-based health clinic at Begich Middle School, opening in Spring 2014. They provided a handout and requested a resolution of support. They said they focused on improving attendance, helping students stay in class by receiving health services at school rather than being taken out of class and reducing inappropriate use of emergency rooms. Services include immunizations; treatment of minor illnesses and injuries; physicals, including sports physicals, for students (only). School nurse always does the initial assessment. We only see students if their parents fill out the paperwork and parents can choose which services will be provided to their children. No funding comes from the Anchorage School District. We do receive free use of facilities from state, MOA. There are sliding fees for services and also some grants from Providence Health, Rasmuson Foundation, etc. If it becomes obvious child needs health services we don't provide, we work with parents to refer them elsewhere. ASD partners with [Christian Health Associates](#), a medical mission. Begich is a Title 1 school this year with at least 64% of students qualified for subsidized school lunch but it's underreported and principal thinks about 70% of the students would meet the criteria; 85% of the kids fall under the federal poverty line. SFCC then passed a motion of support for the School Based Health Center at Begich Middle School by unanimous consent.

**Assemblyman Adam Trombley**: Susan Duck from the Mayor's office will head up the Anchorage Centennial in 2015 and I'm wondering if there is anything specific we should include for East Anchorage. I don't know when the East Anchorage District Plan will be completed. If there is anything this community council would like to recommend, I'll make sure to communicate that to her. Jerrienne Lowther said the Muldoon Town Square Park proposal could be an Anchorage Centennial Park in the middle between the Centennial Park (Alaska Purchase) at the Glenn Highway and the Far North Bicentennial Park (U.S.) at Tudor Road and that a Centennial Trail system could connect all three centennial parks. Trombley said he would begin working to dedicate the front parcel at Muldoon Road at DeBarr as park land to prevent it from being developed into anything other than a community park and he hoped that the park land dedication could be accomplished by 2015.

First quarter budget revisions moved municipal property tax rates up by only .01% so if your assessed value (which is determined by a state formula) remains the same, your property taxes have remained essentially flat for the past three years. We also have a fully funded police academy coming up and a fire academy, as well. There is no \$30 million surplus – it's a myth, because everything above \$6.1 million was encumbered funds – already designated but not yet spent.

Harry Crawford requested the Assembly increase property exemption to take advantage of a state law passed this session.

**Representative Lance Pruitt** on Alaska Legislature: Bills on permitting and cruise ships stalled in the Senate over water rights of Alaska Native tribes and villages. A sex crimes bill strengthened courts on sex crimes and trafficking. An election bill focused on inability to get primary ballots back in time to prepare ballots for general election.

Capital improvement projects for our area passed by the Legislature and sent to Governor Parnell for his signature included construction funds for a Pioneer Drive upgrade and another \$1 million for Senate District M for projects to be done this year or next year. Scenic Park got three streets paved last year, will finish up this year. Scenic Park Elementary School is to get funds for an ice rink. Bartlett is to get money to finish up the artificial turf fields project. Nordic skiing now has place between fields for skiing and X-C running. Bartlett will host events that required going to Fairbanks before. The governor has 60 days to sign, or not sign, the funding bills. He expected Pioneer Drive funds would not be vetoed or he would have heard about it.

Other capital projects included \$400 million for a small gas pipeline from the North Slope with more funding to come from bonds, etc. He said the money wouldn't be wasted if the large gas pipeline goes forward as it would give us a seat at the table. There is also \$95 million for Susitna Dam with more financing to come. Fairbanks needs heat, he said.

**Senator Anna Fairclough** said it was good to be home. She started public service as a PTA Mom, spent six years in House of Representatives and is serving her first year in the Alaska Senate. They were expecting a \$500 million surplus this year at the end of the previous legislative session but instead were faced with a \$400 million shortfall. She said they are focused on energy for all Alaskans. We have been waiting for a gas pipeline for three decades and we feel we are closer than ever with two competing projects. There is more activity than ever on the North Slope and we believe the producers are worried that we will produce the gas ourselves but the Lower 48 is flush with gas. A larger diameter pipeline would lower shipping cost. Permitting got through both House and Senate for the first time.

She expects a bond package next year on a new Glenn Highway-Muldoon Road interchange with the State of Alaska guaranteeing the bonds.

School Board member Kameron Perez-Verdia wanted to know the basis for a statement that new money wasn't going to the classroom and she said it was going to benefits, health care costs, etc. and not to the base student allocation or classes.

Harry Crawford said he felt we needed to re-shuffle our priorities, that it was more important to fund the classrooms than artificial turf fields. He said he liked turf fields, too, but he felt the priorities needed to change.

Senator Fairclough said she agreed but the issue was that the base student allocation (BSA) was broken and we've got to find a way to fix it. Increased funding is going to energy, technology and other places but not into the classrooms.

**Anchorage Citywide Cleanup:** Jerrienne Lowther said they had pushed it back a week to May 4 and she didn't think that was far enough. Scenic Park Elementary and Begich Middle School planned to participate; she hadn't heard from Baxter Elementary. No official cleanup for Chugach Foothills Park was planned but individual initiative was possible. Filled bags needed to be brought to participating schools by 2 p.m. May 4 for Alaska Waste to pick them up. Northeast Community Council was planning cleanup for the proposed Muldoon Town Square Park at Muldoon Road and DeBarr the following Saturday at noon. She said the Central Transfer Facility would be closed both Saturdays so bags would need to go to the Eagle River landfill. Last year they picked up 1-1/2 tons of trash from the old Alaska Greenhouse site and hauled it to the landfill in Paul Honeman's big truck. If we pull out that kind of trash this year, we will need a truck to haul it away.

**Pioneer Drive upgrade project:** Jerrienne Lowther said she had been attending Pioneer Drive open house meetings since 2008 and she had seen some major changes at the open house meeting last night. Originally, we were going to try to keep the garden in the median and it has become too dangerous so the gardens will move into the park. They are going to have 25 parking spaces, instead of eight. This came about after she brought them pictures of big picnics in Chugach Foothills Park that caused parked cars to line both sides of Pioneer Drive from Muldoon Road to Resurrection Drive. The original idea was that Chugach Foothills Park was a neighborhood park that wouldn't need much parking because residents would walk to it. They realized that Chugach Foothills Park was functioning as a community park and people were coming from all over the place, sometimes hundreds of people on a weekend. Plans are changing so there is no designated parking on the street; the street will be shifted a bit to the south so they are not taking property from the owners along the north side of the street. She asked for a water source for the plantings, as was previously planned, done in such a way that it could not be accessed for drinking water (liability issues) or car washing, etc. Hauling water in 5-gallon buckets has become a really strenuous deal.

They are concerned about the plants that are in the median and she suggested it was a perfect setup for a rain garden while everything was disrupted. They thought that was an interesting idea and that they could probably do that. We have class C wetlands at the corner of Muldoon and Pioneer. The current drainage ditch will be piped. The rain garden would then filter runoff from the road, the parking lot and the hill into the wetlands and into the water table. The rain garden is where we could put the irises and plants in the median. We could have a beautiful garden as we drive into Chugach Foothills, still maintained by volunteers, but reduce the danger and the liability, as in 10 years traffic has increased and speeded up on Pioneer Drive.

**A slate of officers** was proposed and elected for the year ahead: President, Alexander Monterrosa, Vice President, Roger Shaw; Treasurer, Harry Crawford; Public Observer, Bill Miernyk; Publicity Chairman, Jerrienne Lowther; Secretary, vacant.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.