

Minutes: Scenic Foothills Community Council

February 4, 2016

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Mark Hill. January Minutes approved.

Senator Cathy Giessel's office / Akis Gialopsos: DNR, DHSS and DNC. Meeting continuously. Public testimony started at 4pm. State of the State address talked about the gravity of this. State of Corrections is costing us gobs. We need to decrease. They're working on that. LNG project updates: \$45-65 million budget. Does this make sense? Able Act – DHSS disability act / SSI or Medicaid – can set money aside/tax deferred like a college savings account. Helps get people out of cycle of poverty. Many states are working towards this. Cancer / oral cancer bill for injection versus oral medications. Budget: lots of opinions and cutting won't get us out of this issue, at all. Cutting State employees wouldn't even put a dent in the budget woes. Harry asked about which part of the reserves: Akis couldn't give him an answer at this time. How much earnings do we have? Akis listed off a bunch of numbers – investment strategies, liquid assets, etc.

Rep. Lance Pruitt's office / Dirk Craft: Question: capping of the PFD. Some hearings on that, but not much talk on their end. Still early in the process. Does it make sense? Work? Legal? Constitutional? Questions about Ambler Road, Point McKenzie railroad to no-where, Juneau road to no-where, bridge to no-where. Can we cut down the budgets? It will need to be a combination of things – not just taxes, not just cuts. We need to use everything. Alternatives to plug the hole by not using the PFD? Alcohol tax and other broad-based taxes. House will start with the budget, then it goes to the Senate. Should be “wrapped up” the first of March. Working together? Yes, more than ever. Yes, with these oil prices, we all need to work together more than normal.

MOA Assembly: All in meetings. Assemblymen Honeman and Petersen did not attend the SFCC meeting.

School Board update – Pat Higgins: Superintendent search opens up and closes March 14–April 1 – first round of interviews. Mid-April second round of interviews. Ketchikan lawsuit: nothing changes after Supreme Court decision. Lawsuit is over. Out of the picture for good at this point. AMP / Common Core is all the same kind of test. AMP results were really NOT positive. Lots of drops in math and reading. Poorly designed. Doesn't give details on where the weaknesses are. Tests are so flawed at this point – it's a hugely serious issue. Anchorage has a good system in tracking, better than other cities, but we won't have standardized tests to compare now. Apples and Oranges. Bad results. Wasted training for employees. State driven – now moving to a new testing system. New to improve the kids that are failing. Lots more coming up about testing. Bonds: replacing items and roof repairs. \$250 million+ building repairs and improvements / 20 roofs in that category. Bond is based on this. State bond rating dropped because our lack of revenues and no long term plan. We need a plan with revenue. Bond rating dropped = we'll pay more for these via interest rate going up, which means our property taxes go up. \$3.5 million in buses as well. Transportation budget changes. Bus drivers get double of minimum wage, so this increases costs. Changing bus schedules. Lots of proposals out there. Highly gifted program of Roger's Park are a high risk group – accommodate those transportation costs? Safety risks with expanding boundaries and children crossing roads. \$9 million deficit. Cutting assistant principals: huge risk because they deal with discipline. Cuts to the classrooms. Can't really cut much more because they've been cutting administration costs for the last three years. Increasing population. 50-60 teacher cuts. This affects electives in high school. Harry Crawford question: Romig Middle School roof collapse from a few years ago. Deferred maintenance is really not a good way to deal with roofs because collapsed roofs are worse than just leaking. No damage (to the schools) from the 7.1 earthquake. Bonds: locked into the rates, but it will cost us more in the future without a long term plan. Can renegotiate for better rates.

Cell Towers – Gary Solin: Lots of history; rewriting of the code. February 23rd voting. Feb 1st meeting: planning and zoning will go back again 3/14/16. Citizens group: Rogers Park and South Addition – cell phone towers 80 feet tall and only 60 feet from people’s houses. Community and Economic Development – cell towers and marijuana details. Old code and New Code – Title 21. Tower types: stealth towers cost more. New code language: only stealth towers in R1, 2, 3. The industry makes \$ millions and \$ billions (literally) of money. Amounts were presented during the presentation. 911 calls discussed. Let’s protect our neighborhoods and there’s better technology out there now, as well. Pete Petersen was the chair, so he could talk more about this. 40% of the households do not have land lines any longer. People are dropping landlines. Abstained from voting: Bill, Jerriane and Forrest. The rest voted yes.

SFCC Bylaws changes – drafted by Roger Shaw. Bylaw changes read and voted on. All approved; 1 abstained.

Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map update – Mark Hill. Public hearing 6/13/16; Assembly intro September; mid- to late December. Land use permitting / think marijuana! Chugach Square Mall – spoke with South Central Foundation tonight: No Way! LDS Church: No way! Foothills Storage: concerns. Totem Theater: Regal Cinema property executives are looking to put it on the market.

Proposed AM Code, Marijuana Licensing – guidance and recommendation from FCC – Community Councils should meet, discuss and have input. They can have their own community meeting. Input to the Assembly: 21 days. Raises the question about summer meetings and a way to respond in time. Suggestions from the FCC:

- Year round meetings,
- Monthly meetings in the summer only if we need to address these licenses.
- Change bylaws: add in information about this.
- Form a special committee “neighborhood standard.”
- Most information is coming from the industry and the industry board members. Think about both sides of the equation.
- Harry Crawford: we should call the whole body, not just the board.
- Bill Miernyk: what do people think about this? Well, it’s the law now. Although there’s the Federal issue. Taxation. Enforcement/APD. Lots of transition. Some places are taxing from 5% and going up to 12%.
- 85% taxation in the Lower 48 – not certain this is really true.
- It’s industry. It’s part of our future. How will it fit in?
- Harry Crawford: the more we tax tobacco, the less people smoke.
- Forrest: SFCC will call a special meeting if we cannot fit it into our regularly scheduled meeting time via all ways possible: Nextdoor, FCC e-mail, Facebook, etc. Vote: 1 against. All the rest voted for it.

9:00 p.m. Meeting Adjourned.