

Rogers Park Community Council Minutes

7PM Monday, January 12, 2009

Rogers Park Elementary School Library

Board Members Attending

Jim Wright, President
Bob Churchill, Vice President and FCC Representative
Ted Ryberg, Treasurer
Heather Rice, Secretary
Heather Ireland, Immediate Past President

Minutes

I. Welcome

Jim Wright called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Regarding the meeting minutes for December 8, 2008, Rich Gingras noted that we should refer to “Dr. Gollub” not “Mr. Gollub.” Marilyn Houser noted that the “Fly By Night Club” should be replaced by “Players House of Rock” on page 3.

Bob Churchill moved to accept the December 8, 2008, meeting minutes with the above amendments; Rich Gingras seconded the motion. A vote was called of all RPCC members present (only those signing in can vote). All were in favor; there were none opposed or abstaining.

III. Assembly Report

Dan Coffey was not present.

Elvi Gray-Jackson was present and provided the following information:

- The Assembly approved a resolution designating January 19 as Martin Luther King Day of Service.
- The Assembly introduced its legislative program (to be approved January 20), including operating and capital budget and lobbying issues. Neither the \$150,000 request for the Maplewood Trail nor the \$50,000 request to study accessible bike ramps for the Lake Otis Elementary School overpass were amended onto the budget, but Ms. Gray-Jackson stated that they will be added.
- An interlock device for steering wheels now required for DUI offenders.
- Assembly meetings are now on satellite; a FAQ memo has been written.

- On January 20, the Assembly will take up a bid to replace the roof of the Sullivan Arena; a resolution to provide a monthly report on city finances; and a resolution to postpone new hires and some contract awards until after the May budget review in the 3rd quarter.
- Questions and comments from RPCC members present:
 - Dave Evans asked why the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes are not available on-line. Ms. Gray-Jackson will look into this.

IV. Legislative Report

Tom Obermeyer, staff for Senator Bettye Davis, spoke:

- There are a number of new bills the Senator is working on including those related to: Denali Kid Care, foster care, suspension of the motor fuel tax, and blind vendor preference.
- The Legislature also will be dealing with pipeline taxation issues.
- For a listing of all bills and their status and other information, go to “Basis” on the State website at < <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/>>
- We also can call 888-295-4546 to teleconference in on discussions on particular bills.

Questions and comments from RPCC members present:

- Heather Ireland noted her opposition to suspending the motor fuel tax. Tom Obermeyer responded that she has the opportunity to present that view before the committee.
- Rich Gingras noted that Representative Berta Gardner is sponsoring a bill related to cell phone use and teenaged drivers (see Anchorage Daily News article).

V. Federation of Community Councils Report

- Bob Churchill provided the FCC report.
- The Anchorage School District supervised suspension program will begin this year. This is an effort to move away from out of school suspensions.
- Lori Schanche, Muni Public Works, is working on a bike program to create safer bicycle facilities in Anchorage. For more information, contact Ms. Schanche at 343-8368 or SchancheLE@ci.anchorage.ak.us
- People at the Muni are looking into making information services more user-friendly.
- The FCC moved money into a money market account for more stability.
- The FCC is considering an administrative fee structure – a one-time percentage amount – for administration of grants that pass through the FCC.
- In 2011, the National Federation of Community Councils will have its conference in Anchorage.

VI. Treasurer’s Report

- Ted Ryberg, RPCC Treasurer, announced that RPCC has \$145.47 in the account.

VII. Presentations and Discussion

Rich Gingras provided a handout he prepared showing the number of weekly arrests made by category. Heather Ireland stated that maps on-line also show where incidents occur on a 24-hour basis.

Russian Jack Springs Park Improvements

- Jim Wright referenced two resolutions related to this issue:
 - A resolution put forth by Rich Gingras during the December 8, 2008, RPCC meeting and tabled at that meeting; and
 - A revised version of Mr. Gingras' resolution submitted by Heather Ireland.
 - (Note: both resolutions were included with the agenda for tonight's meeting.)
- Heather Ireland provided updated acres of trees cut for each of the four alternatives being considered:
 - Alternative 1 – zero acres cut
 - Alternative 2 – zero acres cut
 - Alternative 3 – 1.6 acres cut for the snowboard and sledding hill; in addition there is other clearing, but Heather doesn't have the numbers for this
 - Alternative 4 – 4.5 to 7.5 acres cut depending on whether the driving range is included and the size.
- Heather Ireland moved to bring her revised resolution forward; Bob Churchill seconded this motion. (Rich Gingras' tabled resolution from the December 8, 2008, meeting, therefore, remains tabled.)
- To ensure the golf course does not prevent winter use of the area (i.e., skiing on the greens), Marilyn Houser offered two friendly amendments:
 - Add "and uses not be proprietary and exclusive" at the end of the statement, "Whereas, the park improvements need to reflect a balance for all users."
 - Add "It is resolved that RPCC supports the continued winter use of summer improvement areas."
 - Heather Ireland accepted the friendly amendment, as did Bob Churchill.
- Heather Ireland noted that the Muni Parks and Recreation Department was concerned about groomers grooming over the greens, creating packed snow and ice – a problem for the grass in the spring. The Muni hasn't made a decision on this issue yet, however.
- Marilyn Houser stated that the Tour of Anchorage may be impacted if skiing is excluded from this area.
- Ann Lorber stated that when this was discussed in 2007 and 2008, a number of people were concerned about tree removal and she would like to see stronger wording against more clearing in the resolution. Jim Wright responded that the

- RPCC spoke to this in former resolutions and that this new resolution doesn't replace or negate those earlier resolutions.
- Annette Cartier moved that Alternative 2 be accepted, with the pitch and put area and sledding hill all moved to an already cleared area and with no snowboarding area. This would create an alternative with no new tree clearing.
 - Diana Evans made a friendly amendment to reflect Ms. Cartier's suggestion:
 - Delete references in Heather Ireland's resolution to snowboarding.
 - Heather Ireland rejected the friendly amendment, because in her view sledding and snowboarding cannot be mixed (safety issue) and a small snowboarding area isn't incompatible with other uses of the park.
 - Rich Gingras called the question. RPCC members were asked whether they were prepared to vote on the resolution:
 - Yes – 8
 - No – 8
 - Abstain – 1
 - Discussion continued.
 - Marilyn Houser stated that at the December 2008 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, Dwayne Adams (Land Design North) indicated that snowboarding would require 1 acre of tree clearing and sledding would require 0.6 acres of clearing.
 - Helen Nienhueser asked whether we know in fact that some of the current alternatives violate the Park Master Plan. Heather Ireland responded that the Parks and Recreation Department staff had said that Alternative 4 does violate the Master Plan and it's debatable whether Alternative 3 does, as well.
 - Helen Nienhuser made a friendly amendment:
 - Add "a maximum of 1.6 acres to be cleared" after "...Russian Jack Springs Park Summer and Winter Improvements Project."
 - Heather Ireland accepted the friendly amendment, as did Bob Churchill.
 - Annette Cartier noted that Alternative 2 reflects what the public approved with the ballot proposition in 2007. Now we're talking about clear-cutting and redesigning Russian Jack Springs Park. Heather Ireland responded that she believes park improvements happen all the time and even though the ballot proposition didn't call for clearing some improvement projects would go forward anyway and don't need to be on a ballot.
 - Rich Gingras again called the question. RPCC members were asked whether they were prepared to vote on the resolution:
 - Yes – 14
 - No – 2
 - Abstain – 2
 - Jim Wright read the revised resolution (with friendly amendments) aloud as follows:
 - WHEREAS, safety on sledding and snowboarding hills are a priority; and
 - WHEREAS, the quiet nature of the park and natural setting have value to our community; and

WHEREAS, some of the current alternatives violate the Russian Jack Springs Park Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the existing golf facilities are inadequate; and

WHEREAS, park improvements need to reflect a balance for all users and uses not be proprietary and exclusive;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the RPCC supports upgrading the existing golf facilities as depicted in Alternative 2 AND the sledding and snow board hill safety improvements as depicted in Alternative 3 to Russian Jack Springs Park Summer and Winter Improvements Project (with a maximum clearing of 1.6 acres), because this combination of alternatives best represents the values of our community; and

IT IS FURTHER resolved that RPCC supports the continued winter use of summer improvement areas; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved that the RPCC supports the continued use of the current access road for Russian Jack Springs Park.

- A vote was called of all RPCC members present (only those signing in can vote) regarding the above resolution.
 - 11 in favor
 - 5 opposed
 - 2 abstained
- Diana Evans noted that written public comments are due January 15, with the final public meeting to be held February 12, 2009.

Representative Les Gara

- Representative Gara joined the meeting at this point and made himself available for questions. The following comments and questions were discussed:
 - Rich Gingras asked Representative Gara about his stance on the death penalty. Representative Gara responded that he has problems with the death penalty because of the reliance on juries.
 - Heather Ireland noted Representative Gara's "clothes for foster kids" program. REI is offering discounts to foster parents who buy kids' clothes; other businesses may also join this effort.
 - Ann Lorber asked whether there would be a re-examination of controversial road projects. Representative Gara was unaware of anything like that but noted that the RPCC could present him with a resolution if they opposed specific projects. Ann Lorber said there's a lot of opposition to the 36th Avenue road reconstruction project. Assemblywoman Elvi Gray-Jackson suggested calling Jim Lamson about this at 343-8120 or checking status of the project on-line at the Muni PM&E Department

Rogers Park Elementary School Safety Concerns

- Karen Ruud presented a handout regarding this issue. The School principal contacted Steve Thomas at the ASD and the School has received an Alaska Safe Routes To Schools Program grant for planning which will specifically focus on the issues outlined by Ms. Ruud in her handout. Support letters will help the effort, however, so she asked whether RPCC would be willing to draft a letter of support.
- Assemblywoman Elvi Gray-Jackson noted she would follow-up on these issues as well with Phil Saunders (Streetlight Supt) and Bob Knieffel.
- Ms. Ruud moved that RPCC write the letter of support; Rich Gingras seconded the motion. Dave Evans suggested a resolution instead.
- Dave Evans moved that RPCC support the following resolution:
 - WHEREAS, the attached letter describes two significant safety concerns;
 - NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the RPCC recommends that a pedestrian crossing push button be installed at the LaTouche-Annapolis crossing to Stephen's Park Apartments so red lights will signal pedestrian presence at any time; and
 - BE IT FURTHER resolved that a streetlight be installed at the Cottonwood-Zarvis intersection.
- Pete Mjos seconded the motion.
- A vote was called of all RPCC members present (only those signing in can vote) regarding the above resolution.
 - 17 in favor
 - 0 opposed
 - 0 abstained

State Funding for Public Transportation Operations

- Jim Wright presented the Fairview Community Council resolution on this issue (included with tonight's meeting agenda) and noted that this resolution is circulating around all the community councils.
- Heather Rice moved that RPCC accept the following resolution:
 - WHEREAS The Municipality of Anchorage is the government entity responsible for public transportation services within the Anchorage Metropolitan Area; and
 - WHEREAS the People Mover bus system is the locally operated public transportation provider within the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS Anchorage residents require public transportation services to access healthcare, community events, housing, education, social services, employment, and much more; and

WHEREAS Public Transportation services are funded through local property taxes (60%), farebox revenues (20%), federal government support (15%), and municipal revenue sharing (5%); and

WHEREAS The State of Alaska General Fund does not provide funding for public transportation systems within the state; and

WHEREAS Alaska is one of a small number of state that do not provide funds to support public and community transportation systems within the state; and

WHEREAS the State of Alaska is one of the richest states in the nation; and

WHEREAS there are unmet operating and capital needs in Southcentral Alaska's public transportation network;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Rogers Park Community Council resolves:

1. That the RPCC supports the goals for public transportation growth and expansion.
2. That the RPCC appeals to all community councils, local organizations and groups to come together as one voice to communicate Anchorage's capital (\$21.2 million) and operating (\$13.5 million) public transportation needs to the State Legislature.
3. That the RPCC recommends and encourages the Legislature to appropriate \$200 million to establish a transit trust fund, and proceeds of which would provide ongoing operating dollars to public transit operations throughout Alaska.
4. That copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor and the Legislature immediately upon passage and approval.

- Bob Churchill seconded the motion.
- A vote was called of all RPCC members present (only those signing in can vote) regarding the above resolution.
 - 16 in favor
 - 0 opposed
 - 0 abstained

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Meeting Adjourned at 8:45pm.

Minutes submitted by Heather Rice, RPCC Secretary