

Rogers Park Community Council Meeting Minutes
Meeting Held Monday, April 11, 2011 in the Rogers Park Elementary School Library
Minutes Prepared by Beate Zinck, Secretary

Community Council Officers in Attendance:

Jim Wright, Past President, Presiding
Bob Churchill, Vice President
Cheryl Forrest, Treasurer
Beate Zinck, Secretary

Handouts available included: April Meeting Agenda; drafts of the March 14th, February 14th, and January 10th Meeting Minutes.

I. Welcome

Shortly after 7pm the meeting came to order, a quick head count was made and it was noted that with 18 members in attendance, a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Members present were given an opportunity to review the minutes from the past three meetings; Bob Churchill made a motion to approve the minutes for the months of January, February, and March, Debra Wright seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion to approve the minutes passed with 18 yeas, zero nays, and zero abstentions.

III. Assembly Report

It was noted that Assembly Member Elvi Gray-Jackson was absent. **

Assembly Member Dick Traini asked if anyone present had seen or heard news that three members of the Municipal Light and Power Board had resigned; he spoke briefly to the matter and indicated that there would be considerable discussion at tomorrow's (April 12) Assembly meeting regarding the current structure of the board as well as the controversy over whether ML&P should support a wind farm project on Fire Island which Mr. Traini said he wants to see happen.

Mr. Traini went on to say that the Assembly "heard" the people of Anchorage in the recent vote regarding required identification to purchase alcohol; he plans to introduce a new ordinance that would require identification whenever alcohol is purchased, including at a bar or restaurant – similar to laws in Washington state that govern the purchase of liquor. All in all he suggested that the Assembly meeting would be interesting and invited RPCC members to participate.

Several people present asked questions for clarification and also offered comments about the water utility, wind power, and regrets that good people had resigned from the ML&P Board.

IV. Legislative Reports

With the Legislative session in full force, there were no State Legislators present to provide updates.

V. Federation of Community Council Reports

Our Council Representative, Bob Churchill, reported that at the March 16th meeting the Library Foundation gave a lengthy presentation which included identifying that a major goal of the organization is to educate community members about the numerous library resources available; also mentioned is that a grant of \$5 million was made for a downtown library branch.

Mr. Churchill reminded members that the National Federation of Community Councils Annual Meeting will be hosted by Anchorage on May 19th and 20th; there is a new fundraiser underway plus the local FCC has asked the state for \$75,000 to help cover the costs of hosting the conference in addition to asking the Municipality to contribute.

VI. Presentations and Discussion, as follows:

A. H2H Update. Jim Wright provided a brief review, reminding those present that our community council has been quite concerned about the potential negative impact to our neighborhood depending on what the final route of the project would be. Mr. Wright indicated that our council stopped receiving public notices about the project progress and that he hadn't heard anything official regarding the project in some time. From a source that wishes to remain anonymous, Mr. Wright learned that while the project is still part of a long-range plan with three related components (Bridge, Dock, H2H), the impression is that the momentum has slowed with a suggestion that the project is a minimum of 5-8 years out. A Transportation plan update is expected in August; there is considerable uncertainty with respect to federal funds. The Ingra/Gambell route seems to be the preferred plan; Assemblyman Dick Traini indicated that the Toyota dealership is moving from downtown to 68th and Old Seward.

B. Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plans. Brooke Blessing, representing Municipal Projects Management and Engineering, provided information on three summer projects set to commence in the Rogers Park area.

1. The Lake Otis Pedestrian Improvement Project will provide a missing sidewalk link on the west side of the road – currently there is just a beaten path that is basically unsafe. The city will

be installing a five foot path from the south side of the creek up to N. Lights. Monies come from a 2010 state grant and the project is expected to be completed by June 2011. 65% of the design work is done and the design work has been done in-house to help keep costs down. Community member Heather Ireland reminded the group that she has worked to solve this safety concern and feels that the city is working on the wrong side of the street; she believes the city is not addressing the more challenging safety issues in the area and believes that the thrust of the project should go to the east side of the street. Brooke Blessing indicated she would take the concerns expressed by Heather to her department and will follow-up with our council at a later date.

2. Late summer 2011 we can expect the LaTouche Street/Annapolis Drive pedestrian improvements to be completed. There is a state grant with bond funds for improvements – where there is currently a mud path just beyond the church a sidewalk will be put in to separate pedestrian traffic from vehicular traffic.

Heather Ireland brought up an earlier concern, speaking to a need for a raised pedestrian crossing and a light at LaTouche and Annapolis. Brooke Blessing indicated that the Traffic Department was working on this aspect of pedestrian safety with a target date sometime in 2012.

3. The third summer project in our council area is the N. Lights Pathway resurfacing between the Seward Highway and Lake Otis Parkway; there is a \$150,000 state grant which is structured to fix the highest priority items. The trail is in bad shape due to drainage problems and tree root issues among other things. This project is expected to commence early summer.

Several council area members brought to Brooke Blessing's attention safety concerns with regards to snow berms creating visual challenges for drivers exiting Glenwood onto N. Lights as well as sight-distance issues due to a slight hill on the same street corner. Jim Wright brought up the concern about the vandalized lights along the sound barrier. Brooke indicated there were special shields that help prevent lights from being broken by anything other than bullets that could be installed. She offered to share the concerns mentioned with the appropriate parties and will email Jim updates.

C. Annual Election of Officers. Jim Wright offered an apology to the group for not having emailed a slate of officer candidates for the membership to consider prior to tonight's meeting. He explained that the nominating volunteers had been having difficulty gathering commitments from folks willing to serve.

It was noted that Cheryl Forrest, the current Treasurer, is willing to stand for another term. Both Dave Morgan and Dave Methany are willing to assume leadership roles. At least one other candidate is needed to fill the role of Secretary.

The meeting briefly adjourned so that Jim Wright could confer with the current Board Members and those willing to serve for the next term as to how to proceed. When the meeting reconvened, Mr. Wright presented the membership with two options: hold a vote tonight as scheduled or

postpone the vote until next month's meeting. After some discussion, Bob Churchill moved to defer the vote to the May meeting, Arliss Sturgulewski seconded. Following brief discussion, the vote was held: 16 ayes, no nays, and no abstentions. Jim asked each candidate to provide him with a brief bio that he could share with the membership prior to the meeting.

D. CIP Survey Announcement. Heather Ireland spoke briefly to the history of the CIP Survey, indicating that the City gives each Community Council a list of possible Municipal and State projects. Our council solicits feedback from all area members; with some community councils, only the Boards provide feedback. Heather stated her belief that it is more democratic to solicit input from all members of a council. Our council has received survey feedback from approximately 75% of our members in the past.

Heather is in the process of developing the survey to be sent to the RPCC membership; she asked if members present felt it was easier to have a smaller list of questions versus the extended list she has used in past surveys. Discussion centered on whether to leave all the questions/projects on the survey as done in the past or to simplify the questionnaire. It was decided that members prefer to respond to all the questions/projects being considered. She asked everyone to complete the survey when received and to rank according to individual top five priorities.

Russian Jack Springs Park Upgrades. Jim Wright did not have a handout as planned. He had been receiving numerous email updates detailing ongoing discussions. Suzanne Little (Senior Parks Planner with the Municipality) was planning to send Jim an email that would bullet the current status but as of tonight's meeting, the information update is yet to be received. Mr. Wright indicated there was a blog site where interested parties could review information and provide input.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 8:35p.m.

****Assembly Member Elvi Gray-Jackson, while absent from our monthly meeting, provided the Rogers Park Community Council with the following Assembly update via email on April 13, 2011:**

- *Chair Traini established an ad hoc committee (Birch, Gray-Jackson, Gutierrez and Chaired by Ernie Hall) to review the Tax Cap Ordinance, and an opinion submitted by the Municipal Attorney relating to Municipal Assistance and other funds that might affect the calculation. A Committee meeting was held and a new ordinance supported by the Committee was introduced at the March 8th meeting. Public hearing was held March 29th and it passed unanimously.*
- *Anchorage School District budget was passed 10-1 at the meeting of March 29th. - \$811,910,568 and taxes to be collected \$237,587,445.*

- *Assemblymember Gutierrez introduced an ordinance on Tuesday to require background checks and restrictions related to roving ice cream vendors. Public Hearing was held 3/29 and passed unanimously.*
- *Title 23 – Building Codes Public Hearing postponed until 4/26. Substitute version will be introduced.*
- *Assemblymember Traini introduced an ordinance to provide for conditions for Assemblymember participation by telephone. Limited to sickness, accident, emergencies, or municipal travel/business. It was postponed indefinitely at the April 12th meeting. Chair Traini plans to bring back another ordinance addressing the issue.*
- *Brought forward a resolution supporting SB53 reestablishing the Alaska Women’s Commission. Passed unanimously.*
- *Mayor held press conference today on status of \$11.5M surplus. Plans to provide a tax rebate to the citizens of nearly \$7M. This equates to about \$75 on a \$300,000 home or \$25 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation.*
- *1st Quarter Budget Revision and Mill Levy ordinances introduced at April 12th meeting. Public hearing scheduled for April 26th.*
 - *28 person - Police Academy with a starting/hire date of 10/10/11.*
 - *6 Fire EMS positions – Medic 7 (Sand Lake)*
 - *29 Fire Positions funded by a Federal Grant*
 - *Domestic Violence Prosecutor*
 - *Gasoline costs increases in several departments.*
 - *Other changes – see document on line at <http://publicdocs.muni.org/sirepub/pubmtgframe.aspx?meetid=472&doc type=agenda>*

Next Assembly meeting – April 19th

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