

Government Hill Community Council

Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2018

6:30 pm

Jody Sola introduced herself as the new president of GHCC. Ms. Sola became the president as provided by the Bylaws when former president Arnie Cohen moved out of state.

1. Review & Approve Agenda

Ms. Sola announced that Travis Jones was unable to attend and so his presentation on Parallel 64 Manufacturing Facility will be postponed until next month. Bob French moved to approve the agenda as amended. Thomas Pease seconded. The agenda as amended was approved unanimously.

2. Approve May Minutes

Ms. Sola asked for clarification on the statement in the May minutes that Mr. Battle could not confirm dates for the fishing season. Thomas Pease explained that the statement was accurate in the context of the discussion about the strong silver run.

Sen Begich offered a correction to the spelling of Jeffery Eide's (sp?) name.

Mr. Sola moved to accept the minutes with the one spelling correction. Mr. French seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Legislative Updates

- Tristan Walsh, a member of Rep. Gara's staff, reported that Rep. Gara's office is open during the interim. Residents are invited to reach out.
- Sen. Tom Begich reported on the successful effort to persuade Governor Walker to veto the money inserted into the budget by the Legislature to revive the Knik Arm Crossing Project. Sen. Begich asked the Governor's chief of staff, Scott Kendall, to visit the neighborhood and talk to residents. Mr. Kendall later told Sen. Begich that he was going to recommend that the Governor veto the funding. Sen. Begich cautioned, however, that the project could still be revived because of the \$27M in federal highway funding sitting in an account to be used for the KAC. If the project were truly cancelled, that funding could be reallocated for use on projects within a 50 mile radius of the proposed KAC project. For example, the funding could go to the Port of Alaska or Mat Su Borough road projects. Killing the project also could help with redevelopment of the old Alaska Native hospital site, which is being held up to some degree by the KAC project. Killing it also might help with property values in that area.

Mr. Gerlek asked whether the votes are there in the Senate to kill the project. Sen. Begich said not now, because a change to Senate leadership is necessary. A governor could kill the project as well. If Walker is still governor, Sen. Begich intends to ask him to go beyond the veto order. In response to a

question, Sen. Begich said that Mr. Dunleavy supports the KAC and the third gubernatorial candidate opposes it.

Sen. Begich said he hopes the Legislature will authorize a general obligation bond this year. Last session Sen. Hoffman supported it but Sen. MacKinnon was opposed. Now MacKinnon has retired and Hoffman is still in office. A general obligation bond could fund needed bridge, road, and other infrastructure improvements across the state, including the POA, plus deferred maintenance on state buildings. An adequate amount could be \$500M - \$1B, remembering that \$200M of the state's bonding authority is tied up with the KAC project.

Sen. Begich reported about a bill he sponsored that would have expunged the criminal records of those convicted of a marijuana offense that is no longer a crime. It got to the last committee of referral but was lost in the adjournment rush. He believes both bodies have the will to pass it.

- Assemblymember Chris Constant reported that he and Sen. Begich had worked together to persuade DOT to fix the lights on the A/C bridge. Most are now operational.

The big issue at the Assembly is approval of labor agreements.

Mr. Constant has moved to reconsider the 30-day closure of a marijuana shop imposed as a penalty for violations of regulations. He will ask for a penalty that doesn't require layoffs and so much loss of revenue.

The budget will be addressed at the end of October. Although formerly there was a budget surplus, recent figures show a \$6M deficit. This situation is a challenge, and has caused some to question the procedures used by the fiscal staff to formulate budget projections. The Assembly will vote on a new CFO on Tuesday.

\$24M was appropriated for the POA from the State. Sharon Walsh of the POA explained how retroactive steel tariffs had caused the POA to cancel an order and locate an alternate supply which increased the price by over around \$200,000. The cancellation also delayed the project until spring.

S. Addition CC is voting tonight to change its meetings to avoid the existing conflict with the GHCC's monthly meeting. This would make it easier for Assemblyman Constant and Sen. Begich to attend both groups' meetings.

#### 4. Officers

Mr. Will Sola volunteered to fill the vacant VP slot until the end of the year.

No one volunteered to be FCC representative. Ms. Sola will post on the web site asking for volunteers.

#### 5. AKRR Report

Tim Sullivan Pretty reported a passenger service was up about 10%; more than 5,000 people rode the trains. Freight is still about half of what it has been historically. Specialty trains are planned for the winter season (Beer train, Halloween train, and Christmas train).

In response to a question from Mr. Gerlek, Mr. Sullivan said that the AKRR is not planning to pave the area near the radio tower. The AKRR will prevent further vehicle ruts by avoiding the area in the spring when it is wet and soggy.

## 6. POA Update

Sharon Walsh reported on wharf pile enhancements. The jacket install is underway. Fender enhancements will not occur due to the previously mentioned problems with steel tariffs. POA installed camera and security lights at the north end.

The fence at the former defense fuels site fence is falling over because the ground is boggy. On examination, POA saw that the fence was 200 yards south of the property boundary and intends to address that as soon as it can secure right of entry.

On Terminal Road, AWWU will be repairing a water line (along the base of the bluff).

Work is being done on the North/South backlands. POA will be rip-rapping the shore for the new petroleum cement terminal. POA will make a presentation to GHCC later about the remaining phases of the project.

At the small boat launch, the Eklutna interpretive site is almost complete.

The last cruise ship (of 10) called Monday. The QE will call next year. The cruise ship schedule is listed on the POA web site.

Ms. Walsh encouraged neighbors to sign up for POA Nixle alerts. Those who signed up earlier may need to sign up again due to a web site change.

No bear or moose were sighted this month.

In response to a question about the Rancho Mesa project, Ms. Walsh reported that the main investors, who are Chinese, are reconsidering. The developers are continuing to work with original investors and others. Project is still alive. Michelle McNulty, who presented here on this project, is now director of planning for MOA.

Bob French asked about moving Defense Fuels fence to give access to the top of the bluff. Ms. Walsh said POA has long-term monitoring plan for contamination and reports to DEC on the site. Contamination might be released if the soil were disturbed. A piece on the top is actually leased to AT&T.

## 7. Crowley Update

Greg Miller reported that there had not been much construction this year. The truck rack was finished in January; it will serve trucks headed to JBER. One of the new tanks was found to have some "dents"; the contractor was called back to put three structural rings on it. In response to a question, Mr. Miller said Crowley looked at whether it could use a wetlands area, but there are no current plans to use it.

## 8. NorthPointe Bluff Greenbelt Vegetation Plan.

Steve Leider said the NorthPointe Bluff Homeowners' Association seeks GHCC support for the plan. They have been working with Parks and Recreation, which has asked them to get community support. About five acres are involved in the NorthPointe Bluff Drive area. In 2002, the area was a gravel pit with very little vegetation. Currently, the vegetation varies. In some places the cottonwood are very dense (regrowth from earlier clearing). In other places there are no trees, due to clearing by homeowners and lack of conducive soils. There is an informal trail along the north side of the fence. Goals: to maintain

views of downtown and Chugach for homeowners, trail users, and general public; provide plant diversity; create screening from industrial noise and views. The plan is to selectively cut some trees, plant a diverse selection of plants acceptable to MOA, and maintain it. The idea is to augment nature. NorthPointe Bluff HOA will execute the plan; it has established a small yearly assessment to pay for it (roughly \$2000 was raised this year). Volunteer labor will be used to keep costs down. The concept is consistent with the GHCC Neighborhood Plan's goal to maintain views. Mr. French said he is in favor of the approach, but would ask that the east side also be included of greenbelt. Mr. Leider agreed that the east side should be included.

Mr. French moved for a resolution in support of the Greenbelt Plan as proposed with the addition of the east portion of the lease contract No. 6332.

Mr. Gerlek proposed a friendly amendment: Would Mr. Leider agree to come back to inform GHCC if any major changes occur? Mr. French accepted the friendly amendment. Mr. Sola seconded the motion.

Ms. Sola called for the vote: 10 Yes, 0 No, 0 abstain. Resolution passed.

#### 9. Sara McBryde from Alyse Galvin Campaign

Ms. McBryde said that Ms. Galvin is running as an independent who would caucus with the Democrats. She was previously a leader in the Great Alaska Schools organization. Her priorities if elected would be to improve health care affordability and access including mental health care to address the opioid crisis; to address climate change while supporting responsible development; to support the Second Amendment but consider ways to decrease mass shootings. She supports POA and other Alaska infrastructure projects. She understands that steel tariffs delay construction, and would work to change that. She is available Wednesday mornings to meet with the public at her campaign office. Ms. McBride did not know Ms. Galvin's position on the KAC.

#### 10. AMATS Report

Mr. French reported that the next meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Board will meet in early November. The Transportation Improvement Program will be out for public comment in November or December. The TIP lists each road project planned for Anchorage. Mr. French reported that the A/C bridge is classified by ADOT as "functionally obsolete," but the TIP does not yet contain any projects to address that.

#### 11. Parks Report

Mr. French reported successful "Clean and Green" events this summer. We received a \$32,000 grant from the federal government to connect the trail from Suzan Nightingale Park. The alignment has been designed. Next year, the plan is to cut the trail. It will be about 2 feet wide. Some of the larger trees have been cut. Some brushing needs to be done. The Parks Committee will meet soon to update the parks plan. Ms. Rymut questioned the alignment of the trail and asked to be included in the implementation of the trail project. Mr. French clarified that Ms. Rymut had been copied on all emails to the GHCC Parks Committee. Mr. French will call a meeting of the Parks Committee to discuss this and other issues.

## 12. Community Concerns

Anchorage Curling Club reported it is having an open house on Saturday at 6 pm. ACC has completed interior work on the building and will start exterior work soon. Club members would like to have a more central location to promote club growth, but they have no specific plans to move at the moment.

Deena Mitchell introduced herself as the school board representative for this area. It was agreed to give a standing slot to the school board member at the beginning of the agenda. She believes family and community engagement is important to student achievement. A half-time person has been hired to assess which schools need help with community engagement and volunteers. Ms. Mitchell invited residents to contact her with comments or concerns.

The Commons Mural will be dedicated on Monday at 5 p.m.

Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.