

Minutes

Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 7-9 PM
Beach Lake Chalet, 17611 S Birchwood Loop Rd

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of January 2019 Minutes - Approved

3. Announcements

- a) On the question of changes to R-2 zoning, and how that might affect R-2 areas in Eagle River, Matt and Debbie both talked to planning staff. Those staff were changing the language of the draft ordinance to clarify the language and also exclude Chugiak and Eagle River, as requested by our resolution.
- b) Anyone with Earthquake damage: there are FEMA and SBA representatives in the Community Room at the town center (Room 170, where Parks and Rec and Road Board meet) who can answer questions and assist with applications for assistance.
- c) ASD has a survey of the community on how we think students whose schools are indefinitely closed from earthquake damage should be served. We don't have to have children in the district to make comments.
- d) Anyone interested in working on a cemetery in the Eagle River / Chugiak area should get their contact information to Debbie, who will keep them informed of what she hears.
- e) R-4 zoning changes, which don't affect us, are under consideration
- f) Transit is holding meetings in the community to listen and learn. They will be in Town Center room 170 on Feb 19th from 5:30 – 7 PM
- g) There are many rumors about moving our area into the building service area; for example, Debbie was told the mayor's office is considering abolishing the Building Service Area, which she feels sets a dangerous precedent for our service areas in general. We will keep aware of what's going on and inform the Council of any actual developments.

4. Reports

- a) FCC Report: Matt Cruickshank...FCC is continuing to work on their resolution to improve notice to community councils; they are trying to have notice provided 21 days before action is needed AND 5 days before relevant community council meetings (whichever is earlier).
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report: Street Maintenance tried to summarize road damage from the earthquake. They will be applying for disaster aid. Tony also has a capital projects plan, which will be on the website. Crystal Kennedy adds that the EQ damage will worsen at breakup. FEMA went around with Mark Littlefield to survey damage. Other items for this year – they plan to improve road surfaces, and Starner Bridge replacement plans are continuing. There's a question about whether we are happy with the services we have, or if we want to pay more for more service (e.g., the additional cost that would be incurred by snow plowing in ways that don't leave berms across driveways). Debbie notes that some people would rather pay less, for less service. Lexi asks about the impact of reduced property taxes. For CBERRRSA, it's a slightly higher mill rate.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report: Lexi explains that for Parks and Recreation, a fixed mill rate meant that the reduced property tax collections meant that our budget had to be reduced mid-year, and will continue at a reduced level going forward. To help deal with this, the Assembly has introduced an ordinance that will allow us flexibility in how much of our

2018-2019 board: Debbie Ossiander, Chair & CERAB rep; Gretchen Wehmhoff, Vice Chair; Tony Vita, Road Board; Lexi Hill, Secretary & Parks and Rec rep; Matt Cruickshank, Secretary for Publicity; Patty Friend, Member at large; Val Jokela, Treasurer

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revenue we can allocated to capital and operating budgets respectively, as long as we stay within our voter-approved 1 mill total. Also, we are getting (clean but low-quality) fill material from local projects (delivered for free, as they need somewhere to dispose of it) that we will use to improve / harden Beach Lake ski trails.

- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Gretchen asks us to discuss the topic of updating the Comp plan. We ask Gretchen to pursue this on the Assembly side.
- e) Treasurer's report – Balance: \$163
- f) Tim Benningfield – CVFD held their first annual installation ceremony and awards banquet. Members nominated 9 businesses/ institutions for awards; Birchwood CC got one of them, which he presents to us. Kit McCutcheon, CVFD's firefighter of the year is here. He grew up here, and has been with CVFD for about 11 years. In January there were 105 calls (more than typical) and 6557 volunteer hours. Based on standard estimates of the value of a skilled volunteer hour, the department is on track to save community between \$1.7 and \$2.2 million over the year. Tim visited Juneau, where the department has friends (Tilton, Reinbold, other). He got to meet the governor. Amy Demboski, as deputy chief of staff, oversees the state Fire Marshall. The new Fire Marshall is Richard Boothby who's spent time in the Mat Su. Tim discussed the other awards, as well as officers and Board positions. They've established a sustainable apparatus replacement plan; this year they will replace 2 apparatus with 1, saving money. Debbie notes that there's an open seat on the Fire service board, and they are looking for someone who wants to run.
- g) Birchwood Patrol Report – (no report)
- h) Legislative / Assembly reports: Gretchen. (1) The Assembly just passed an ordinance that lets folks who discover earthquake damage later this spring, to appeal their assessments later than the usual deadline. There is no final cutoff date, but damage must be related to the earthquake or aftershocks. (2) They updated vacant/nuisance property laws to put more onus on the owner (or banks if in foreclosure) to address problems. (3) There was a Joint meeting with Mat Su Borough assembly. She talked about how there are 14 busses that go by ER and don't stop; now there are conversations about how Valley Transit and People Mover might coordinate. (4) Boards and Commissions: There are still many delays in board and commission appointments. Gretchen talked to a staffer who deals with this, and they are in discussions about how to improve this.
- i) Elisa Snelling, school board. They are working on what to do with Eagle River Elementary and Gruening students to make their experience better next year. They are waiting for final engineering reports, which will let them plan better for the long term. How much money we might get to help with damage is not clear yet. We don't know when we'll hear from FEMA. Enrollment is down to about 46,000 children district-wide, with the decline mostly from families moving out of state. There is a bond issue coming up on the April ballot. It is \$55 million: 12 million is for district-wide safety and security measures. There was \$4 million beyond the 55 was added for Chugiak / Eagle River specifically (earthquake damage). The next Board meeting is Tuesday; and will take up the budget for next year. Right now, they are looking at a \$150 million deficit, if the governor's budget passes unchanged. We discuss several options for moving Eagle River Elementary and Gruening kids for next year, and she reminds us of the survey. Starr Marsett is here. She speaks to the governor's budget. As presented, ASD would have a deficit of 110 million, plus 44 million in bond debt reimbursement which has also been cut. If education is important to you, you

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should contact legislators and governor. Discussion of various aspects of the problem, and that we have already cut a lot.

5. Appearances:

- a) Becca Carroll, Municipality of Anchorage Onsite Water and Wastewater
There are code changes and policy changes around septic tanks. Code will require better coatings on tanks, and a 20-24" manway riser on the first compartment. It takes effect May 1. There is a policy (not code) around a standard of care for inspection. If a steel tank with conventional coating (not the new and improved coatings) is 30 years old or more, then inspections must include excavation to expose 1 one side and the end of the tank (it's unlikely any will be sound at that age). Debbie has heard this may raise costs \$10-12,000. Tank replacement was \$6 to 9,000; but now may be \$9 to 12,000. Tanks themselves will be more expensive as well, how much more expensive is not clear. Matt asks if people could coat bare steel tanks themselves rather than paying someone else. There will be quality control standards. Debbie asks them to consider costs as well as benefits when setting quality standards. Debbie asks if there is still an advisory board. There is, and there is a seat for someone who has a septic, which is vacant. Also, we request that community councils be added to their notice list.
- b) Crystal Kennedy, candidate for assembly, is here, introduces self.

6. Old Business

- a) AWWU water line update; from Gretchen's report. She replaced the Infrastructure Coordination Agreement (ICA) that was before the assembly (and that we had objected to) with a revised version. It wasn't technically needed but some people really wanted it. She re-wrote it to remove the 'housing strategies' language and focus on the infrastructure. Since this has passed, AWWU can now move forward with specifics of where the water line would go, and what it would cost. There had been 4 alternatives; one was through the park; that was problematic, as it affected the park, and also had no capacity to serve the area 50 years down the road. The second alternative along the edge of the neighborhood had those issues as well as not providing redundancy the main Eklutna transmission line. There are two remaining alternatives that we'll discuss next month. Mark clarifies that the methane agreement did not require the muni to pay for water and sewer improvements.
- b) AMATS ICM project list priorities; we discuss the relevant projects. It was moved that ***Birchwood Community Council considers Artillery Road interchange improvements as the most important of the projects on the current AMATS list. Seconded; passed unanimously.***
- c) Kennel License Code enforcement problems – update: the affected folks can't be here; they will be here in March.
- d) R-2 zoning update (see announcements, above)

7. New Business (none)

- a)

8. Open Forum-floor opened to public, any issue

9. Adjournment-8.58pm