

RUSSIAN JACK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, May 8, 2019

at Wonder Park Elementary School

Present: Ed Leach, Kendra Kloster, Tammy Hanson, Kathleen Plunkett, Kathy Jo & Bob Skaats, Fred McLeary, Sonia Lipker, Dan & Sherry Wright

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Ed Leach.

1. Legislative report

Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson – no report

Sen. Bill Wielechowski - in the last week of session, hopefully. Passed the operating budget – both house and senate budgets are more similar than usual. Bill went over the cuts made by the Senate and the differences between the House and Senate budget. The capitol budget includes federal funding grants. Justin Schneider loophole bill passed today.

Kathleen asked who was on the conference committee.

Sen. Tom Begich – Community patrol funding was included in budgets. Staff ensured that the minority had a lot of its language included in the bill. Hoping to be done by May 15. Insurance companies can use a robbery as a reason not to approve future insurance coverage. A bill will be heard tomorrow to fix that problem. Hoping the Governor will support education funding as proposed.

Kendra – comment on public safety issues and brought up the indigenous missing women issue that needs to be included in the public safety bills going forward, rather than additional bills.

Amendments may come on the floor, that is a very good observation and comment. Kendra has language for bills and amendments that she will send.

Rep. Geran Tarr - Public safety budget does include money for prosecutors and investigators. Rape kit reform has been included to have more timely processing. Violence against women is also in the crime bill. Facebook live town hall tomorrow night to go over all the provisions in the crime bill. Several provisions regarding sexual assault will be discussed.

Rep. Ivy Spohnholz (Ted Madsen provided the report) – new law on the books related to possession of instruments that allow a person to steal a car to help deal with car theft around the state. So much of crime is driven by substance abuse issues, there will be a hearing related to substance abuse treatment in Alaska and the difficulty of getting help for those who are seeking it. Telehealth in Alaska requires insurance companies to cover that, which will reduce costs.

Rep. Andy Josephson – no report

2. Assembly report

Pete Petersen – out of town

Forrest Dunbar – had a busy few weeks. Several smoking ordinances have been passed.

Increased the distance to 20 feet from smoking near playground equipment. Ordinance to raise

minimum age to 21 to purchase/possess cigarettes. 1st quarter budget revisions passed in April. Funding for camp abatement, lab technicians to get rape kits processed, set the mill rate (about the same as it was last year), didn't factor in the cut for school bonds so they will use short term borrowing, depending on what the legislatures do on their final budget. They will have to adjust next year's mill rate accordingly. Pete & Forrest are co-chairs of the public safety committee. Car thefts have been falling since June 2018. The theft rings were also involved with drugs and other crime. Police headquarters will be moving downtown in mid-June to mid-July. 3.5 million-dollar bond will go toward remodeling the old police station to accommodate the evidence storage facility, which will enable centralizing that.

Kendra spoke about Anchorage being one of the top 10 places in the nation on crime against indigenous women and has ideas of things we can do locally to work on this at the community level also.

Public Safety Commission is working on a resolution on violence on public transportation.

Nicholas Danger is the chair of that.

Ed – has a philosophical difference of opinion about raising the age of smoking. They can drive, vote and be enlisted in the military. The Health Department provided information how cigarette companies are targeting teenagers and that it is helpful to try to prevent. There is 1/3 of the population that are predisposed to addiction. There is no evidence that addiction to nicotine would make a person less likely to be addicted to other substances. Soldiers on base would still be able to purchase cigarettes. It would be a billable offense if they were caught off base with cigarettes.

3. School board report – Elisa Snelling (snelling_elisa@asdk12.org) or Alisha Hilde (hilde_alisha@asdk12.org) – no report

4. School report -Wonder Park – no report

5. FCC report – Ed provided the report on the issue of liability insurance, which we may need for the RJCC picnic. We may also be able to get this through the FCC.

6. East 3rd Avenue Sewer upgrade – Joey Hegna (CRW Engineering) and Mark Queen with AWWU provided an update on this sewer line project that will occur this summer. 12 inch reinforced concrete pipe is failing. Open cut and pipe liner installation is how the work will be done. They also will be installing new PVC to replace line installed in 1969. They will install manholes and some repair from the work on the New Seward Hwy that was done. 3rd Avenue will have open cuts. It is in the bid process so late June, early July for the work to begin and to be done around October. Fats, oils and grease is the primary culprit in the public system.

7. John Rescober - AWWU San Antonio water rehab project at Williwaw School. He came to speak to the council when they were in the design phase. They will have to get assembly approval and anticipate beginning construction sometime in June or after 4th of July. Contract will require they have the Phase 1 by the school be done by August 4th and the section which goes into DeBarr Road by Oct 15th. Phase 2 San Roberto to Pine will also attempt to be done this summer but more likely next summer. They are moving the projects further north as funding/design/bids are obtained. The pipes in this area are also from the 60s and 70s. These are water lines.

Kathleen mentioned when they are working on the traffic calming on 6th and Hoyt and notices that people don't go around the circle, they will cut it. Would like to know if they can add signage (or pass it on to the appropriate entity when they are repaving).

8. Summer picnic – Kendra Kloster reported on work with the Anchorage Park Foundation and they are open to doing the same as last year, which was a park clean up, followed by lunch. The Foundation just needs a date. We chose June 15th and will meet at Polar Bear Park at 9:30 to start clean-up and eat at noon.

9. Neighbor Works – Kathleen reported that two of the houses are in Russian Jack council area.

Kathy Jo asked if Pastor Prevo is no longer the pastor of the Baptist Temple will his home be taxed? Forrest responded that it depends on several factors. Scofflaw is another opportunity to fill the city coffers.

Ed spoke about tree foliage covering signs and asked if shrub trimming by citizens was OK. Anchor Works may be the people that take care of right of way impediments.

Dan asked about the lack of response to problem neighborhood issues and perhaps lowering our property value would be at least one way to get some relief. The City Assessor's office is the place that we can find out about getting a lower tax assessment on our property taxes. Board of Equalization also review those cases. Many people have asked about this because of earthquake damage.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Sherry Wright