

# NECC

Northeast Community Council

General Meeting Minutes October 17, 2019

**Call to order:** 7:05

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Introduction of the Board**

- **Board members present:** T'Shalla Baker, Rachel Boudreau, Charles England, Stu Grenier, Donna Mears, Selina Metoyer, Bob Reupke (FCC delegate), Liz Snyder
- **Board members absent:** Carla McConnell, Radhika Krishna

**Approval of the October meeting agenda:**

Approved, following the addition of a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) update to the agenda.

**Treasurer's report (T'Shalla Baker):**

Healthy bank account; considering moving to Northrim Bank; working on getting our EIN; need before we move over.

**Executive Board report:**

Brainstorming how to expand awareness of the council; live-streaming; potlucks; door prizes for bringing new people

**Community concerns:**

- Rick: Describing the Fair Share for oil initiative; approved to put it on the ballot; will have someone at the council meeting next month to talk about the Fair Share Act; Rick has testified on this issue, as he feels that not getting a fair share for Alaska's oil is a bad thing for our state.
  - Question: When is the signature deadline? Which ballot are you working to get on? Answer: Needs signatures by 21<sup>st</sup> of Jan. – if before that date, it will be on the 2020 ballot; need ~20,000 signatures. If after, it will be on the 2022 ballot.
- Will Johnson: Last month he raised a concern that he has regarding problems in our neighborhoods; we need to figure out a way to get rid of unlicensed drug dealers; he is actively reaching out to leadership across the city about his concerns; he understands that before the city can move forward and do something about a site, there has to be 8 calls to the authorities; he has created a bright orange flier with some possible strategies to address the problem (possible resolution strategies: establish a link on the Muni website for "how to get unlicensed drug dealers out of our neighborhoods"; Develop a variety of PSAs that are culturally responsive and age appropriate; Establish proactive news media coverage; APD should provide regular updates with community councils, civic and faith groups, businesses, schools, etc.)

- o Comment (Stu): He has experience in contacting APD about marijuana growth, and has found that the Federal DEA is more responsive
- o Rachel: APD wasn't able to come tonight due to shift changes, but we anticipate they will be able to attend next month
- Stu: Speaking about the Muldoon rock wall (put up several years ago); it is collapsed in several places; he is working to recruit businesses to sponsor fixing the wall and putting some additional protective barriers to prevent the wall from being knocked over. Muldoon road is often neglected. He will also be putting up the Doon Dangers sometime after Halloween, and would love some help.

#### **Legislative reports:**

- **Representative Spohnholz** (staffer):
  - o UAA Town Hall Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>
  - o East Anchorage Town Hall on Nov. 5th at Begich Middle School (with LeDoux, Spohnholz, Wielechowski)
  - o Constituent Coffee on Nov. 9th at Immanuel Presbyterian Church
- **Representative LeDoux:**
  - o Does not think the special session will happen; she supports a full dividend, but the votes aren't there
  - o Things she's been working on in the interim:
    - Valley Street – looks severely damaged; working with the community to send around a petition to get it repaired; want to get it on the Muni's bond
    - Big news: the Lt. Gov. gave the okay to pursue signatures to put the fair share initiative on the ballot; we could see an additional \$1 billion in our treasury, which would get us out of our current fiscal crunch; initiative leaders are confident that they will get the signatures in time (before Jan. 21)
    - Nov. 16 having her monthly coffee, 10:30-11:30 at Lowe's
- **Representative Pruitt** (staffer):
  - o Last week Senate had a hearing on rehabilitation and re-entry (expect this to be a big thing in the upcoming session)
  - o Agrees that the special session is likely not going to happen
    - Question: Does Pruitt support the fair share bill? Answer: Staffer present doesn't know
    - Question: Did Lance vote for a \$3000 pfd? Answer: Yes
- **Senator Wielechowski:**
  - o Noted that the Attorney General (AG) is saying that Alaska Hire is unconstitutional. In the current legislation, it says that if Alaska employment is below a certain level, then we can require Alaska Hire. No one in the past has found this to be unconstitutional. Four commissioners of labor recently wrote a

piece in the ADN opposing the recent AG finding. Senator Wielechowski has urged the Governor to support Alaska Hire. Will keep us posted.

- o Noted the Dept. of Corrections decision to request permission to start “shipping” Alaska inmates out of the state. Concerns about this include: going to prisons out of state is like “criminal college” where they learn new tricks and join new gangs. It also takes people away from their families – and being able to see family and friends is an important part of rehabilitation. In the past, the Legislature worked to pass some language to ban this from happening, and the Administration doesn’t have funds to do this – and will need Legislative approval.
  - Bob R.: The Palmer prison is also sitting there empty. Would also employ 70 Alaskans to run the prison.
  - Stu: How long does it take to get legal residency in Alaska? Answer: depends on who’s counting; but as short as 10 days, or for other reasons it’s 6 months. Question: So why does Alaska Hire matter? Answer: People come in for two weeks on two weeks off; whole crews who leave as soon as the project is over; with no income tax
  - Stu: We already heard it’s \$145/day to imprison someone in Alaska. Answer: It’s not just the money. We would be releasing people even more dangerous than when they went in. But, yes, let’s look at the numbers – it may or may not be cost effective to send criminals Outside.
  - Community member: What is our AG’s background? Answer: He’s been an Alaska attorney for many years; was appointed by the Governor
  - Rick: Tammy Wilson from Fairbanks put in a bill looking into the way the Governor hires people. Answer: There is a loophole in the current law that allows the Governor to hire whoever he/she wants and pay whatever they want and there are no merit or experience requirements. And that has happened many times in the past. They passed legislation to limit this, but the Governor vetoed it.

- **Senator Kathy Geissel:** Not present

#### **Assembly report:**

- **Assemblymen Dunbar and Peterson:**
  - o The Assembly approved putting on the ballot the option of adding a second member to the downtown representation – previously has not allowed a second person to represent the area and be there when someone is sick, and improve access to representation. Dunbar and Peterson are in support.
  - o They are looking to raise some of the Muni fees to meet rising costs. For example, the fire department is dealing with a great deal of overtime due to a busy season – the Assembly would like to put more money in their budget, but need to develop a source of funding.
  - o The Mayor put his preliminary budget proposal to the Assembly, and they are soon meeting to review the budget – will require several meetings. The budget makes additional investment in the fire department and the police department.

- o We have a problem with “campers” – when told to move, they simply pack up and move to a new location. They have four park rangers with the authority to stop “campers” from setting up in the parks. We can’t have people afraid of using parks and trails.
- o Note about the ongoing issue of SAP. We appear to be through the worst of it with pay corrections. Will now begin an audit to review paychecks and pay periods. This problem goes back several years.
- o Also reviewing the possible need for a stormwater utility. The study will take place over the next year and a half. By the second half of next year, they will begin holding public meetings to share the findings and collect public feedback. Our current infrastructure is near its life’s end. If anyone wants to testify, come Oct. 22 and Nov. 5.
  - Question: Will onsite marijuana consumption be on the upcoming ballot? Answer: Yes
  - Question: Is the bag charge mandatory? Answer: Yes. The stores get to keep the charge. Restaurants are no longer required to discontinue use of plastic bags.
  - Question: In order to purchase tobacco products you have to be 21 and show your ID, correct? Answer: Yes. Comment: Noticed in a local shop that a cashier got coffee thrown at her when they didn’t have their ID. Concerned that maybe the rule implementation should have been rolled out a little slower to allow for those with addictions to adjust.
  - Question: When can we sign in support of the fair share initiative? Rick: Hopefully within the week.
- o Peterson noted the importance of police monitoring of a place that has been reported, so they can be sure they have the evidence they need to press charges.

**Mayor’s Office:** Not present

**School Board (Boardmember Margo Bellamy):**

- Thank you to the President regarding her inquiry on how to better connect the schools and community councils.
- They are in the middle of an 11 month process of strategic planning – first phase includes developing a community survey (should be ready about mid-Dec.) and public forums for input (6-7:30) – meeting days and locations can be found under the “Hot Topics” link on the ASD website – can also find info regarding bonding and the budget; Phase 2
- The first quarter ended today, and today was the Great Alaska Shakeout
- Parent-teacher conferences are Oct. 23 and 24 – please don’t forget to sign up if you have kids
- Next week is National School Bus Safety Week
  - o Question: When I was in school we had bus drivers practice emergency exits. Do we still do this? Answer: Yes
- Next school board meeting is Nov. 5 – everyone is invited to come share ideas, hopes, and dreams for the ASD

- o Dates: Service/south region: Thurs. Nov. 7 6-7
- o Bartlett/East region Nov. 12
- o Chugiak Eagle River Nov 13
- o Dimond/West Region Nov. 21

**JBER Public Affairs:** Not present

**Muldoon Public Library:** Not present

**FCC Report (Bob Reupke):**

- Visit the FCC website for updates on resolutions
- Noted that two marijuana stores are going up across the street from each other on Boniface
- Property crimes and stolen vehicles are down
- The FCC is providing insurance to all of the community councils
  - o Question: Will our events be covered? Answer: We will have to submit our event dates ahead of time to be covered.
- Rick Davage – VP of the Midtown Community Council – has authored a report on homelessness – contact Bob for a copy
- There will be a grand opening of Fish Creek Trail on Halloween – at 4:30, and at 5pm there will be a bicycle parade, and kids will be able to trick or treat along the trail

**Business:**

**New Business:**

- NECC Board Member Rhadika Krishna has been appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission, so she had to step down from the Board (conflict of interest)
- Capital Improvement Update (CIP) (Donna Mears):
  - o There are two opps/year for stating our priorities – one for state (prior to session) and one for the Muni. Donna and the committee will review the list to assess the priorities prior to submitting in Nov. All are invited to attend a special committee meeting to review. See email and FB for announcements.
- Please come to the NECC Executive meeting if you have ideas for increasing participation. We meet the first Thursday of each month; here at the general meeting location; from 6-8pm

**Business between NECC and Muni:**

- o Rachel talked with the APD about them coming
- o Stu talked with Steve Rafuse

## Committee reports:

- **Marijuana and alcohol:**
  - Meeting coming up
- **Bylaws:**
  - No update
- **Parks:** Meetings at 6pm on third Thursday – not sure if they have one this month
  - From Boston to Valley tree trimming is occurring
- **Community Safety:**
  - Patrols are still occurring and ongoing.
  - Community comment: There are people squatting in an abandoned house, and it was recently visited by the police – people are still there, but removed a van; Please take walks through Centennial to deter bad activity. Response: Yes, will do. Keep calling to report.
  - Stu: Did we ever find out who was murdered near Walmart recently? Answer: No.
  - We are seeing an increase of panhandlers on Muldoon.
    - Question: I thought it was illegal to panhandle. Answer: Only if you're on the median or in the street.
    - Comment: You can print the mobile food pantry schedule. Tells you where to go for free food.
- **Dog Park:**
  - The baseball field at Centennial Park is a joint use park – it seems to be working fine. Grass is in good shape. People have been picking up after their dogs.