

Call to Order

The Spenard Community Council began its October meeting with approval of the minutes from the September meeting and an amendment to the original agenda, changing the order of business to accommodate invited speakers.

Assembly Reports

Dan Sullivan presented the Assembly report for this month. Assembly member Sullivan reminded us that both the tobacco tax increase and property tax relief passed during their mid-September meeting.

The next Assembly meeting will include hearing the proposed municipal budget for the first time. The Mayor's budget request of \$330 million is up from last year's amount of \$309 million. The draft budget includes 20 additional police positions and 6 new firefighters. An expansion of the Parks & Rec. department is also proposed. In other business, a revamping of the self-storage business regulation is also on the agenda. Mr. Sullivan is also a member of the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority board and mentioned ANGDA's recent report to the people, published across the state in early September.

A number of questions were asked by the audience members related to code enforcement understaffing, the lack of coordination among the various code enforcement agencies and what can be done to improve the process. It was suggested that the SCC pass a resolution in support of the municipality or Assembly pursuing solutions to these problems.

Prosecution of Prostitution Cases

Senator Hollis French provided a brief background report to follow up on discussion from our last Council Meeting. This item had been carried over. Senator French had drafted a letter to the municipality several months ago requesting that all of the like cases involving prostitution and related activities be handled by a single DA, as opposed to being spread across all of the prosecutors. The municipality agreed with the request and has begun to assign all of the cases to DA Nick Spiropolous. Nick was able to give us an update on the progress of the new assignment.

The new John Law is having a big positive effect. Impounds of vehicles involved in solicitation cases are now occurring. The direct effect is that awareness of the criminal/civil penalties involved with these cases is much higher. No option exists for offenders; either plead or go to trial. A first offense is a \$500 fine, 10 days (80 hours) of community service and 1 year probation. The maximum penalty is 1 year in jail and a \$10,000 fine. The SAU (Special Assignment Unit) has 4 officers now and is planning to eventually have 10 officers working on such cases. The goal is to reduce prostitution by reducing demand.

During the questions that followed, Nick pointed out that in the past six months no cases have yet gone to trial. All cases have therefore lead to impound orders for the vehicles involved. Additionally, we found out that at least one local judge does not believe area-restrictions are constitutional as part of the sentencing of prostitutes. Area-restrictions are often requested for repeat offenders and mostly involve restricting convicted prostitutes from the midtown area during certain times of the day. Roughly 90% of the cases and stings involving prostitution come from the Spenard area.

Nick Spiropoulos can be contacted at 343-6443.

Tudor & Wilson/Cambridge Intersection

Communication from Scott Thomas, DOT, was circulated to the members. Scott sent an email to the SCC with additional information related to the Tudor/Wilson intersection. He provided a list of options for neighbors to consider and a diagram of the "puzzle-piece" intersection option.

Neighbors in the immediate area have been mailed comment cards related to the options for the intersection. Attempts will be made to inform more of the residents in the surrounding neighborhoods before a final recommendation is made. The Council consensus was to defer to the neighborhood's preference for a solution.

Scott provided his phone number, 269-0639, and Jerry Reed's (the Anchorage Superintendent at DOT Maintenance) 338-1432 for those that have other questions. Scott can also be contacted by email at Scott_Thomas@dot.state.ak.us.

Committee Reports

Westside Patrol Report: Sam O'Connor

Channel 11 has offered to put a web camera on their tower to monitor the Spenard area. Earlier this year, fundraising activities raised \$5,000 for this specific purpose. Sam requested the SCC's approval to spend up to \$5,000 to acquire the web camera, mounting hardware and a recording device. The estimated cost of these items is approximately \$3300. The Westside Patrol will maintain the camera and a website. A motion was made an approved to have Sam proceed with the project with authority to spend money as described.

Sam reported that the Youth Violence Seminar has been delayed at this point. More information is needed and the sponsoring group wants to be better prepared.

Planning & Zoning Report:

Peggy Auth reported that on the status of the Bart Green again; he has finally been indicted on 49 different violations. The City is also pursuing its own separate case against Bart Green seeking Injunctive Relief to keep him from continuing to operate as he has. Mr. Green's properties have been known for noise complaints and other potentially illegal operations occurring in and around them. The Snowshoe Inn has re-opened under Don Joiner's name. This was just one of the former Green properties.

A side note to the Green news is that there has been a big surge in IM testing on rental vehicles after the story about Mr. Green ran in the Anchorage Daily News.

Aurora Transportation has been awarded a contract from the municipality to remove junk vehicles. The Hotline number that has been set up is 786-8854. It is available 24/7. Reports of junk or abandoned vehicles lead to them being "white tagged". The tags are notice that the owner has 32 hours to remove the vehicle or it will be towed and impounded. The fine for abandoned vehicles is \$374.42.

The SCC needs help re-hanging banners that have come down along Spenard Road. Anyone with the proper equipment for such work should contact Bob or one of the other Board members.

Finally, Northwood Park renovations are almost complete. Skate boarding is already a problems, but, the snow will soon solve that issue.

Old/New Business

Bob Hughes sent out an email about the Fall Penny Carnival. It is planned for October 28th. He has requested a donation of \$250 for supplies from the SCC special fund. A motion was made and approved.

The Bear Tooth is preparing for repaving. We finally have progress on this five or six year old issue.

A request was made to appoint a committee to address policies and procedures for the web camera and its use. A motion was made and approved that Policies and Procedures are to be approved by the SCC prior to the camera and website going on line.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next scheduled meeting will be November 3rd at 7pm.