

## **Rogers Park Community Council Meeting Minutes**

Meeting: Monday, 12 Oct 2020, 7:00pm – 8:25pm

Zoom meeting was called to order by Steve Lindbeck, President at 7:00pm.

President Lindbeck acknowledged that today, October 12<sup>th</sup> was Indigenous People's Day. He acknowledged that RPCC was conducting business on the unceded land of the Dena'ina people.

Mark Foster, Secretary, confirmed by zoom attendance count, 30 RPCC members were in attendance. (Quorum requirement = 15 members).

Linda Chase moved, Marilyn Pillifant seconded, approval of the minutes from 14 September 2020; asking for and hearing no objections, President Steve Lindbeck announced the minutes approved.

Ric Wilson, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$763.74. Steve Lindbeck indicated he had signed signature cards and that the RPCC account has a requirement for a second signatory.

Marilyn Pillifant moved, Ric Wilson seconded a motion to move Old Business – Zarvis Place speed bumps to ahead of the Committee Reports since those who had prior knowledge had to leave the meeting early. The President, without objection from the group, moved Old Business forward in the Agenda.

Discussion ensued. It was agreed that the Marilyn Pillifant (301.4699) would work with Burrell Nickeson, Susan Levy and Dave Amick on questions raised in the discussion and report back to the group.

### Federation of Community Council (FCC) Report – Jim Wright

Jim Wright, RPCC Community Council Representative at the Federation of Community Councils provided a few highlights from the written report of the FCC meeting that was distributed via e-mail. His verbal highlights included:

- The FCC had access to 5000 cotton masks available for distribution
- The FCC has roughly \$90,000 from the Municipality
- At the FCC, there was a discussion that the Municipality was exploring alternative sources of funding, including the Rasmuson Foundation, to support some portion of the operating expenditures associated with drug/alcohol treatment and homeless support
- At the FCC, the Municipality reported that due diligence on the AO66 Homeless/Drug & Alcohol Treatment properties was underway and an RFP process for the services at the properties was being developed
- At the FCC, the Anchorage School District representative, Anchorage School Board Member Margo Bellamy, highlighted:
  - The School District was busy distributing food to families in need under its federally funded school lunch (and breakfast) program
  - A concern that ASD student enrollment was down significantly from prior years which, under the current funding formula, could result in a reduction of millions of dollars in federal, state and local revenue
  - The Anchorage School District was exploring how and when it might re-open schools to in-person instruction based on the level of new cases per 100,000 and whether the  $R_0$  ("R naught") was trending downward [An  $R_0 < 1.0$  would indicate that fewer people were

getting infected than already had the disease = the incidence of the disease was being suppressed across the population].

- The Anchorage School District had established its strategic focus was on reading, math and preparing students for careers and life

### Committee Reports

In the Crime and Safety Committee report, Linda Chase, chair of the Committee, expressed her concern over the deaths of three women over the previous months at the corner of New Seward and Northern Lights. She expressed her concern that the corner was used for overnight camping. She invited Craig Wood to join the committee. She indicated that, at the previous meeting, there was discussion around convening a panel of local experts to share what they could about deaths that were occurring among the homeless / encamped population and allow the RPCC membership to ask questions and formulate a response. She was looking forward to following up with her committee members to help put that together.

In the Midtown Congestion Relief (MCR) committee report, Steve Noble from Dowl Engineers, reported Right of Way and Topographic work on the 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interexchange (part of the Seward Highway rebuild) was nearing completion. The next phase was the environmental phase. A question was asked whether the environmental phase had funding. Steve Noble confirmed that the environmental phase had funding. Mr. Noble described that the next phase of the project was the 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange [essentially a combination of the B & D portions of the project previously described] and would require additional signalization compared to the previously described sequencing of phases. A question was raised about the impact of the 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interexchange Project on the Golden Lion Hotel proposed Treatment site. Mr. Noble indicated that the project might cause the site to lose two parking slots, but that the Municipality had already contacted DOT and they were working together on the planning and design phases of the work.

In the Garden and Beautification report, Zack Zaletel, chair, reported that he was working with his volunteers on a plan of action for the spring, including work on Fireweed and in College Village. Steve Lindbeck thanked Zack and his team for their great work.

There was nothing new to report from the ADU Committee.

### Representative Reports

Representative Andy Josephson (House District 17) highlighted

- That the traffic planner's thresholds of traffic levels and excessive motor vehicle speed were high.
- He was actively advocating for and monitoring the distribution of the State's Small Business Loan/Grant COVID relief fund
- He had recently reviewed the preliminary legislative audits in executive session
- He had attended meetings, including Homeless Housing, Alaska Municipal League Cares Act concerns, Therapeutic Courts.
- As a member of the House Finance Committee, he was actively following the discussions about whether the Governor could reduce/eliminate funding for the so-called "optional" portions of the Medicaid program.

- He was working on a bill that he expected to introduce in January that would clarify the “Reverse Sweep”, i.e., where funds not explicitly appropriated at the end of the legislative session were swept into the Constitutional Budget Reserve which requires a 3/4 vote for subsequent appropriation

Representative Harriet Drummond (House District 18) was not in attendance.

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson (Senate District I) highlighted:

- A Federal Judge had overruled an administrative action and required the U.S. 2020 Census to continue through the end of October.
- Senator Gray-Jackson, in collaboration with her colleagues, had asked that the State report COVID-19 data by race and ethnicity and that the first report of the data indicated that COVID-19 had a disproportionate impact on people of color in Alaska.
- The State of Alaska minimum wage was scheduled to increase from \$10.19 to \$10.34/hour in the new year.
- The \$300 per week supplement unemployment insurance payments, for those eligible for the period from August 8 to September 5<sup>th</sup> would be paid out in weekly payments.
- Senator Gray-Jackson, had strongly encouraged the Lt. Governor to add additional ballot drop boxes for the imminent election to help serve many under-served communities, including rural student attending UAA, and the Mountain View and Muldoon communities.
  - RPCC Member Peter Mjos commended Senator Gray-Jackson for her advocacy and reiterated the importance of ensuring that ballot drop boxes were well distributed across our community.
- The Municipality of Anchorage has property tax exemptions available for seniors and others who may qualify. The information on property tax exemptions can be found at:
  - [http://www.muni.org/Departments/finance/property\\_appraisal/Exemption/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.muni.org/Departments/finance/property_appraisal/Exemption/Pages/default.aspx)
- Additional information is available via Elvi’s Updates, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/SenatorElviGrayJackson/>

School Board Member Margo Bellamy was not in attendance.

Assembly Chair Felix Rivera highlighted

- At Tuesday’s Assembly Meeting (Tuesday, 13 October, 2020) the Assembly will consider:
  - Whether to extend the Mayor’s Public Health Emergency from October 16 to December 31
    - The Assembly has sought information from the Administration on the interplay between Federal, State and Local public health emergency declarations
- The Municipalities Budget Review/Approval process for the next fiscal year has commenced.
  - The Administration presented a budget proposal on October 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Assembly work sessions on the Municipal Budget will be held on October 16<sup>th</sup>, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, and November 13<sup>th</sup> on proposed Assembly Amendments, with opportunities for public input to the Assembly at its Regular Meetings of October 27<sup>th</sup>, November 4<sup>th</sup>, and on November 17<sup>th</sup>
  - The Assembly anticipates voting on the Municipal Budget on November 17<sup>th</sup>

- The Assembly will be exploring issues around Police Use of Body Cameras and expects to hold public hearing on December 8<sup>th</sup> on a proposal to put body cameras to a public vote
- The Assembly will introduce an ordinance to levelized the tax on tobacco products to include e-cig's and vaping products at its October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting

Assembly Member Meg Zaletel highlighted

- The Municipality is very close to closing the sale of the ML&P assets and the parties have agreed to measures to streamline the transaction, including having Chugach provide the Municipality with one net payment for the transaction rather than payments back and forth between parties
- The Assembly will be reviewing a proposal to incentivize the addition of higher density multi-family housing in transit corridors; looking for information on how best to add affordable housing in Anchorage
- The Assembly is interested in hearing from constituents about any gaps they perceive in the access to and administration of COVID-19 related relief funding
- On Tuesday (October 13) the Assembly was going to consider amending the \$10 million small business COVID-19 relief program to include franchises. Franchise businesses were previously excluded due to some concern that they might also be able to receive support payments through their franchise sponsors. Apparently, some local franchises may not be eligible or able to receive franchise support, so the Assembly is exploring how to help support those local franchise operators.
- RPCC Member Peter Mjos encouraged the Assembly to “please follow the science and data” in their deliberations over public health issues
- RPCC Member Marshall Severs inquired as to whether there was a proposal under consideration that would increase local property taxes
- Assembly Person Zaletel responded that she was aware of a proposal to increase the personal property tax exemption on business inventory from \$20,000 to \$50,000 which would be offset by an increase on local property taxes on the order of \$10 to \$15 per residential home.

#### RPCC Member Questions for the Assembly:

Q to Assembly Member Felix Rivera: Are you prepared to become acting mayor?

Rivera: I've made a statement on social media. I expect the Mayor to continue to serve. If the Mayor resigns, I am prepared to be “interim” if required. If I'm serving as interim Mayor under the period when Public Health Emergency Powers are in effect, I would expect to review the data and make a logical decision about public health interventions. I've been supportive of the Mayor's decisions on public health initiatives thus far. We need to be nimble in our response in light of the data and trends.

Senator Elvi Gray Jackson encourage the Assembly and public to review the Municipal Code for its provisions concerning the succession in the case of a potential resignation of the Mayor.

Rivera: I have and will continue to consult with Municipal Assembly Legal Council on the Mayoral succession in the case of a resignation of the Mayor.

Q to Assembly Member Meg Zaletel: I have a business across the street from the shelter downtown where I learned well after the fact that 111 individuals were infected and I was NOT notified. I, nor the local neighbors, were not notified when the infected population was moved to a more populous area. Can you please hold the Administration accountable to providing the public with information about local outbreaks?

Zaletel: We understand that the local Administration is not providing public notification if they believe their contact tracing of cases is “adequate” and they are providing public notice if they believe that the contact tracing of cases is “inadequate.” Thus, there have been public notices of localized outbreaks and events, e.g. the recent outbreaks traced back to a local hockey tournament.

Reply from Q’ner: PLEASE advocate for the disclosure of outbreaks.

#### Announcements and Public Comments

Teri Carns, Alaska Judicial Council, shared that the Alaska Judicial Council has a website with information on their vetting of judges to provide useful information for voters in the upcoming judicial retention elections. The information and recommendations from the Alaska Judicial Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District (including Anchorage) can be found at:

[http://www.ajc.state.ak.us/retention/ret\\_third\\_jd.html](http://www.ajc.state.ak.us/retention/ret_third_jd.html)

Bob Butera asked whether the RPCC had been informed and provided input to the Municipalities Capital Improvement List in this budget cycle. Steve Lindbeck observed that he had asked the prior President, Janet Bidwell, and she indicated that she had not received any surveys.

Assembly Member Felix Rivera observed that it was his understanding that a survey had been distributed to Community Councils and that the deadline had been extended to June this year due to COVID. The responses to that survey were the basis for the current plan. It appeared that RPCC had missed this year’s deadline. Steve Lindbeck offered that he would be diligent in following up next year to ensure that RPCC provided feedback to the Survey of Community Council capital needs.

Jim Wright encouraged everyone to get out and vote in the upcoming election.

Without objection Steve Lindbeck adjourned the meeting at 8:25pm.