

# **Birchwood Community Council**

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## **Minutes**

Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 7-9 PM

Via Zoom: link available at website:

### **1. Call to Order 7:03**

### **2. Approval of Minutes (March) approved**

### **3. Announcements**

- a) Zoom meeting procedures.
- b) APD sent info on requesting officers to attend CC meetings; Debbie has only heard about some mail theft. Jeff Hartley noted in an email that it's been very quiet other than weather related car accidents.
- c) Citywide Cleanup – month of May. Info at [citywidecleanup.org](http://citywidecleanup.org)

### **4. Reports**

- a) FCC Report: Matt Cruickshank; follows up on police at CC meetings; police are really pushing to have one attend if we ask. Susan is leaving FCC; they will be replacing her but for a while, Mark will be the only staff.
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report Proposal for Chugiak HS intersection traffic study, about \$40,000, to explore alternatives to mitigate concerns in front of CHS. It will consider if there is ROW adequate to install a roundabout and other alternatives such as moving the end of Hillcrest Ave north from its current location. Enough of their other projects are completed that CBERRRSA can tackle areas that need maintenance. As we drive around, we should look for areas that are not state-owned roads but that need improvement, and let Matt know. Starner Bridge came up again; it has not been condemned, can still be used. The cost of decommissioning would be substantial, so one way or another we will continue to pursue replacement. Chugiak CC again clarified that they were not against the project, but they had other projects more important to them. The snow disposal site in Eklutna will no longer be leased to CBERRRSA. CBERRRSA will look for alternatives, possibly buying a property for a snow dump. Matt notes that his term expires soon and he needs reappointment.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report: The board wrote letters of support for ERNC project, CMBR Mirror Lake Single track improvements. Will Taygan is here, asks for a council letter in support as well. Matt moves to support the singletrack project, Lexi seconds, the motion passes with no objection. There will be a dog park site selection meeting soon.
- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: First, thank you to Patty who has been working with Daryl Hess (Onbudsman) on draft by-laws. Once commented, they can potentially be adopted. There's a request from the Muni real estate folks to have a meeting to be briefed on cemetery options. There is a business that wants to open marijuana establishment behind Boondocks on Horseshoe Road. We will see if it meets our area standards. There are several land use issues that the muni is working on that don't affect us. There's a small area implementation plan process, currently limited to R4, specifically exempts Eagle River. Also a proposal to allow homeless shelters in B3 zones that also excludes Chugiak-Eagle River. There are potential changes to R2, R2A,D,M to allow more flexibility on height,

2020-2021 board: Debbie Ossiander, Chair; Matt Cruickshank, Vice Chair, FCC and Road Board rep; Gretchen Wehmhoff: Secretary for Publicity; Lexi Hill, Secretary & Parks and Rec rep; Patty Friend, Member at large; Val Jokela, Treasurer

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setbacks, etc but we have none out here. There's a proposal to update Anchorage 2020 to make it Anchorage 2040. The Muni is implementing a new color coded sign system – colors of signs indicate the type of hearing. Lexi brings up the park zoning fixing in town, explains that it is to fix irregularities in current zonings. Patty notes that Debbie is willing to be CERAB rep again.

e) Treasurer's report nothing new; Debbie notes that she paid the mailbox; Matt advises that Debbie can send the receipt to FCC.

f) Tim Benningfield – CVFD

There have been 16,746 volunteer hours so far this year; there was a big jump from Feb to March. They are the grateful recipient of lots of vaccinations and have lifted some restrictions. They are expecting the new tender in the fire station next week – it's here, having electronics installed. There are projects going on at fire stations, trying to take advantage of changes in economics. While there hasn't state or muni funding, now there is federal money flowing down, and they want to get their needs well known. One of these projects is FS #33. It is in 22000 block of Settlers Drive, and has been there since the '70s. They are outgrowing it; trucks, equipment is bigger now. They have identified upgrades to that fire station in their 2020-2025 plan. The Hill Station (FS33's other name) is an 'old fashioned' volunteer fire station where people get called in to go out on a call. In addition to being old and small, it doesn't meet seismic standards. It needs a new roof, updated electrical, upgraded septic, etc. A local contractor prepared a rough estimate for the needed upgrades – they would more than double the indoor facility size, add kitchen area, bunk rooms and bathrooms. The estimate including permitting, engineering and building, would cost about \$2.5 million. They are talking with the legislature, muni about where those funds might come from. If it happens, they would be able to use the facility more and provide better service. Lexi moves to support this project; Gretchen seconds. The motion passes without objection. Lexi will draft a letter stating that the council supports the CVFRD in general, that CVFRD benefits us by providing public safety services and saving us money; that the Hill station is old, too small, and in need of upgrades, therefore we support the upgrade project.

g) Birchwood Patrol Report none

h) Legislative / Assembly reports

Ken McCarty – has a bill to strengthen education. The big question is the budget, and the PFD. Please send your thoughts on that to Tiffany. Ken had a discussion with DoT about a potential Chugiak HS Roundabout. The school said there was no need for traffic control. Debbie notes that the residents think there is a problem, and Matt notes that we've commissioned a study on it. They are looking at capital request money – there hasn't been much lately but will be more hopefully soon..

### 5. Appearances: -

a) Dennis Hostetter, JBER There was an exercise completed last week, and Northern Edge coming up in May. The Air Force, Army Navy, Marines conduct this large exercise every other year; this year it will be May 3-14<sup>th</sup>. There is an Honorary Commanders program – JBER connects with local community by having on the base partner with an influential member of the local community. They are looking for community members with a passion for the military who will enjoy telling others about what's happening on base. Apply to [jber.pa@ua.af.mil](mailto:jber.pa@ua.af.mil). Dennis introduces Luke Wack who works in public affairs, has lived here about 10 yrs. Luke lets us know that JBER is hiring about 150 jobs in Non-

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Appropriated Funds positions. (NAF) employees work in military exchanges and morale, quality of life, and recreation programs. They are paid from funds generated by those activities. Jobseekers who would like more information about Non Appropriated Funds jobs at JBER can visit [jberlife.com/jobs](http://jberlife.com/jobs). Also, this summer's gate closures:

- Post Rd gate will be closed May 1 to June 30
- Boniface gate will be closed July 1 to mid-August

- b) Julie Estey, MEA Update: Julie is here to talk about voting as a coop member. MEA is a cooperative, and all the members elect the board. The person in Chugiak-Eagle River's board seat is term limiting out, so there will be a new person. It is a one-year term as they shift to a different term structure. The Annual meeting (virtual) will be on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM. There is a mailer out to members with info on the meeting and on how to vote. There's also info and a video from each candidate. Please preregister. Julie wants to remind us that MEA has a charitable foundation with a round-up feature on the bill; the foundation can give money for charitable purposes (which they love to do). At Chugiak CC tomorrow MEA will give an update on the Eklutna River hydro project. They have an obligation as owners (with other organizations) of the project to do a study to assess the impact and mitigate as needed. They have worked with local stakeholders, and are presenting to Chugiak and could present to us if interested. Debbie asks about the liability aspect of downed trees on power lines. Is MEA involved? Yes. Right now there is a bill that would limit utility liability if a utility follows its vegetation clearing plan. They have a plan and follow it, but sometimes vegetation from outside their easement can fall on the line and start a fire. This legislation would limit liability in those cases. Even where they have asked landowners for permission to mitigate identified hazards, many will not allow them to do so.

## 6. Old Business

- a) Proposal for new park zoning district in the Bowl – update (see CERAB, above)

## 7. New Business

- a) CIP Input requested: There is a streamlined process online that Matt will review. He suggests we could consider Glenn Hwy improvements; Artillery Road, and Eklutna Park Drive traffic mitigation planning. There was \$6 million budgeted a couple years ago that is unspent; one possibility is linking Brooks and Centerfield. The state is interested in doing that linkage now. We could ask for Starner Bridge. There is discussion of the various aspects of the bridge costs. Debbie reminds us that for her neighborhood, it's the alternative access to their area. Matt will give us more information next month.
- b) Road Board terms expiring  
Road Board – Matt is nominated; no one else is nominated; appointed by acclamation.  
Alternate – Matt nominates Val – no one else is nominated; appointed by acclamation  
Advisory Board – Lexi nominated Debbie – no one else is nominated; appointed by acclamation  
alternate – Matt nominates Patty for alternate. No one else is nominated; approved by acclamation.
- c) Summer meeting schedule Gretchen moves that we not have meetings in July, Aug. Lexi seconds. No opposition.

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

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Birchwood Camp notes that their conservation easement assessment went from ~\$100,000 to over \$1 million on a re-appraisal, and that Parks and Rec may wish to consider a re-appraisal as well.

Sean Murphy noted the proposal for a marijuana business; discussion of how our standards different. Eagle Exit is still active, preparing their application to the local Boundary Commission and fund raising; funds will go largely for legal help in this process.

**9. Adjournment-8:47pm**