

RUSSIAN JACK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, March 9, 2022

At Zion Lutheran Church – 2100 Boniface Parkway

Present: Ed Leach, Kathleen Plunkett, Fred McLeary, Forrest Dunbar, Dan & Sherry Wright

Present via ZOOM: Kendra Kloster, Lori Pickett, Lindsey Hadjuk, Michelle Schmidt (UA Land Management), Keelin Baughman, Junior Aumavae, Athena Logan, Dora Wilson, Ted Eischeid,

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm by President Kendra Kloster.

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Mayor's Office – Junior Aumavae provided information on several events coming up, hosted by the Mayor's Office: Woman's Business round table with the Mayor 3/15/22 at 12pm in the Mayors Conference room; Women in Government round table 3/17/22 at 12pm in the Mayors Conference room; Fireside chat: Celebration of Women's History Month 3/23/22 at 12pm, Cowork by RSD, 911 west 8th Avenue; Sledding with APD 3/11/22 at 2-4pm at Mt View Elementary; Coffee with a Cop 3/10/22 from 10:30am-12pm at Fresh Cup Playhouse; AARP Tax Aid, free service, Tuesday and Thursday from 12-6pm at Loussac Library by appointment (800)478-2211.

2. Anchorage Police and/or Fire Station Report - Doug Schrage (AFD) – New as Fire Chief and not a regular attendee of Community Councils. Current questions he has had were regarding OT management and about two bonds of interest. 1 pm Saturday at Fire Training Center the graduating cadets (new fire fighters) and taking oath of office.

Kathleen thankful for his attendance and welcome to attend anytime. He used to be captain at Airport Heights station and was a former regular attendee at Russian Jack Community Council meetings.

Ed – asked if there's anything we can do to support the fire engine when outside the station? Clear information with dispatchers helps response time. Cell phone information is helpful if they have more questions. Staying out of harm's way is important. 911 system is very outdated.

Sherry – was told Fire Department does not use GPS coordinates – they use them daily and he will look into why it wasn't available for her call regarding a RJSP incident. Cell phones are trackable (in Anchorage at least) – Kendra found this out working with someone. Doug will follow up on this issue and report back to Kendra. Timely response can save lives.

Lori – appreciative of Doug's mentoring with her son. Anything we should know about the two bonds? Prop 3 – Transportation / Emergency Services upgrades. 13 ambulances running daily. They are sent out for maintenance/modernization. Cost is \$.47 per \$100,000. Prop 6 - Fire bond – effects Anchorage, replacing 2 fire engines, repurpose Station 3 to renovate for mechanics repair work. \$.45 per \$100,000.

Kendra has a meeting coming up with Public Safety commission to meet with AFD and will report back all she learns.

3. Legislative report (3 minutes each)

Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson (Keith Baugess) – submitted her report electronically (attached).

Sen. Bill Wielechowski - 365 – 385 million in federal funds for COVID relief helped bring us closer to a balanced budget. Spike in the oil prices keep assisting in budget woes, due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Condemnation is universal of Russia's invasion. Desire to divest of any Russian investments by PFD – several sanctioned people are on the list of investments. Split of DHSS by Executive Order. There are dozens of areas that may be in violation of the law or the constitution. Filing a bill and allowing the process would be a better method for changes. Online checkbook hearing has taken place. Chair of the committee was in an accident. Windfall elimination – any public employee may be affected.

Sherry – Asked if the windfall would be retroactive? They will ask for that.

Ted – thanks for the windfall elimination work – he is also impacted by that.

Ed – State started SBS in the 70s. Will they go back to paying into Social Security? Alaska doesn't have a defined benefit. We still get deductions, but it's a two-edged sword. There is some talk about going back into Social Security. It would take a vote of the employees.

Sen. Tom Begich (Brix Hahn) – no report

Rep. Geran Tarr (Magdalena Oliveros, Simeon Bearden) – no report

Rep. Ivy Spohnholz - Reestablish defined benefit - HB220 in House finance, would create a Tier V benefit package. Updated Spring revenue forecast in March, looking at about 1 billion surplus for 2022 and 1.5 billion surplus for 2023. We are looking at an energy rebate of \$1300 for all Alaskans. Plan is for the energy rebate to go out at the same time as PFD. Working on education bills that would be taken from the PFD payout to better stabilize funds for Dept of Education. Telehealth bill moving through the house.

Athena – would defined benefit be just for first responders? There is a bill for that, but HB220 would be for all public employees. Alaska is the only state in the US that doesn't have a defined benefit in place for public employees.

Rep. Andy Josephson (Tristan Walsh) – no report

4. Assembly report (3 minutes each)

Pete Petersen – New feature for voters – ballots will be in the mail next week. To track your ballot, there is a link to sign up and get an updates regarding where your ballot is in the process via text or email. This may help alleviate vote by mail concerns. Tracking includes when it is mailed, when received, when it's tabulated. Reapportionment process March 15 public hearing. 10 maps have been reviewed – down to one map. May be amendments and lots of concern of how those are impacted if changes are being made on the fly. Port lawsuit was found in MOA favor, but the money still has not been seen. \$367 million to rebuild the port, which is about 20% of what will be needed. Ballot tracker: <https://anchorage.ballottrax.net/voter/>

Forrest Dunbar – APD body camera discussion – policy update included concerns with Alaska’s unique privacy protections in state law. Conforming release of footage with those privacy laws is where there is an issue, should footage be released of for example, of entering a home. Another round of comments will happen with Union input gathered. JBER added to downtown is one issue Forrest spoke about that several Community Councils opposed. More of East Anchorage will be added to downtown Anchorage as a result of the reapportionment changes. Park bond will have \$500,000 for Russian Jack Springs Park. Working on making construction /building a bit easier in Anchorage. Assembly passed a resolution supporting a return to defined benefit for public employees.

Kathleen – calling Russian Jack – downtown area rather than Northeast. That is all we are hearing.

Kendra – reminded this upcoming municipal election is NOT rank choiced voting and there has been some confusion in the public about that.

Mayor Report – several events the Mayor is hosting this month. Fliers will be posted on the Facebook page.

5. School board report (3 minutes each) – Dora Wilson – thanks to legislators for support of education for our kids. Anchorage School board approved budget and choice of wearing masks at school and on buses. Finalizing candidates for school superintendent. Career Technical for HS Juniors – deadline to apply March 13 – dual credit courses taught by UAF. School bond on upcoming ballot – Prop 1 is a 2-year proposal including Russian Jack elementary school new roof and other facilities. ASD Fine Arts student art show will be displayed around the city. ASD Spring lottery closes March 15 covers students K – 12. ASD Connect has all this information. ASD Board meeting March 15. There has been good community involvement and via survey regarding the superintendent process.

ASD Connect / <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/ASD-Connect-March-2022.html?soid=1102486613387&aid=nvcWgpfpG6E>

2022 School Bond / <https://www.asdk12.org/bonds>

Lori – wonders if there will be any opportunity for community input once the candidates for superintendent is narrowed down. Once the final 2-3 ASD Superintendent candidates have been identified there will be an opportunity for internal and external public forums.

Kathleen – when are interviews for final candidates scheduled? A date has not yet been selected.

6. FCC report – Kathleen Plunkett reported that ballot tracking and reapportionment were the two issues that were already covered by other speakers tonight.

7. Report from JBER Public Affairs – no report

8. Anchorage Muni Parks & Rec, Tanya Hickok – update on trail & bridge improvements at RJSP, expansion of Dave Rose Park parking lot, and discussion on community garden project RJSP trail and bridge improvements are being planned for this summer. The section off E 20th to the bridge, approximately 2000 feet is slated for construction summer 2022. The new bridge will

be much longer. Dave Rose is also slated for construction summer 2022. April 18 is the date for the planning and zoning meeting – will send a link. Discussion moved to the community garden project. Williwaw park doesn't have water service, but perhaps the grant can be used to purchase the water. San Antonio Park has water service and the SE corner is already free of vegetation, but that area was seen as too small and already a needed venue for local neighborhood children to play. Sherry suggested putting something on the Facebook page to assess community interest – including proposed sites. Ted suggested putting a survey monkey on our Facebook page. Finding out who is awaiting a garden plot would be another way to garner interest. The MOA community gardens do have wait lists, as well as the St. Anthony's Church.

Kathleen – participated in getting water to San Antonio Park. Russian Jack Master Plan did not include community garden. Kendra is looking at possibly two community challenge grants of which one is an AARP challenge grant with a deadline of March 18 and the other is an Anchorage Parks Foundation challenge grant that is also due very soon. Lindsay said NeighborWorks also has some funding available. The trees we already purchased will get planted at RJSP in June near Polar Bear Park.

Lori – she is supportive of moving forward on the community garden. Kendra asked if folks at Anchor Gardens would be interested in helping. Perhaps some of the other community gardens with waiting lists would be another place to find interested people.

9. Neighborhood/Community Announcements – Sherry mentioned that our RJSP cleanup will be April 30 from 10 am to 12 pm. Diana with Park Foundation will provide bags and grabbers.

Keelin Braughan – Events at Mountain View Library. Mar 11th at 3pm, Leap into Science: Balance. Mar 16th @ 2pm, Self Guided Storytime Journey. Mar 24th @ 3pm, Spring Craft Time. March Tournament of Books, come vote for the winner and you may win a prize! Feel free to call or email with any question or the full calendar. keelin.baughman@anchorageak.gov or 343-2904

Lindsay – Anchor Gardens Seed Exchange (partner with NeighborWorks) – 1 pm on Sunday at Botanical Gardens. Paint the Town in June – looking at Russian Jack residences.

Lori – record breaking numbers of students at AK Literacy Project. Looking at promoting trail walks for new arrivals.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 13th at 6:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Sherry Wright, Secretary



Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
Russian Jack Community Council
March 9, 2022

Happy Women's History Month!

I want to take a moment and reflect on this month-long celebration of Women's History Month. This month celebrates the contributions women have made to the United States and recognize the specific achievements women have made over the course of American history in a variety of fields.

Capitol Happenings

I was honored to have my bill SB 7 "An Act requiring the Department of Public Safety to publish certain policies and procedures on the department's Internet website," pass from the Judicial Committee. Next step is to the Senate floor for a vote then over to the House for consideration.

I have recently signed on as a co-sponsor for the following bills:

- HB 198-Establishing September 10 as Alaska Community Health Aide Appreciation Day
- SCR 9-Proclaiming February as American Heart Month
- HJR 16-Hmong Veterans Military Rights
- SB 32-College Credit for High School Students
- SB 81-Requiring background investigations of village public safety officer applicants by the Department of Public Safety.
- SB 132-Exempting veterinarians from the requirements of the controlled substance prescription database.

- SB 174-Relating to dress codes and allow natural hairstyles
- SB 216- Relating to dementia awareness
- **One-Time Energy Relief Check for Alaska**
- I was honored to have SB 222 “An Act extending the termination date of the State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board; and providing for an effective date,” heard in the Labor & Commerce committee on March 7th.
 - ❖ The Alaska House Coalition unveiled its plan to pay Alaskans a one-time Energy Relief Check in addition to the annual Permanent Fund Dividend. The check will help supplement Alaskans who are hurting from rising fuel costs, record inflation, and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. \$1300.00 would be the amount.
 - ❖ The first meeting of the Health and Social Services Finance Sub-Committees that I sit on is scheduled for its first tomorrow morning.
 - ❖ Budget hearings are currently in process in the House.

Always representing your interests!



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