

# Minutes

Northeast Community Council (NECC)

October 20, 2022, | 7pm

Centennial Village- Multipurpose Room

9131 Centennial Circle, Anchorage, AK 99504

\*NECC minutes are always taken by a volunteer board member

## **Board Members Present**

**George Martinez**, President | **Judy Jessen**, Vice President | **Lyn Franks**, Treasurer | **Ron Meehan**, Secretary | **Stu Grenier**, Member | **Selina Metoyer**, Member | **Bob Reupke**, FCC Delegate | **Donna Mears**, Member

## **George Martinez Calls Meeting to Order at 7:00PM**

41 people were present

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

## **Board Roll Call**

## **Minutes Approval: [September](#)**

**Donna Mears motions, Bob Reupke seconds.**

## **Treasurers Update**

Lyn Franks reports 1,919.68 in the bank account.

## **FCC Report**

Bob Reupke reports that the FCC met yesterday and was ten minutes late and 30 minutes over. They had their ten year community council bounding reviews. This has nothing to do with the redistricting, this is the actual boundary reviews of the specific community councils. Every ten years they go over these. We had some changes up in Government Hill and also I think two community councils in the hillside area emerged. We also had a presentation by the Alaska Judicial Retention Council. These are the judges that are listed in the book here which the council approved. There is a write up on every judge in this packet, you probably should have gotten one in the mail. There was a lot of discussion on the judges, whether to retain them or not. The council appoints the judges, in some of the states they are elected, in Alaska they are not. There was a lot of controversy on the Anchorage school budget- it's like \$68 million in the hole- this is because of flat funding and because we've lost about 5,000 students. Someone from the school board will explain this better than I can. We had Mr. Anderson give a very detailed analysis of the funding. The funding has been going down since about 2017, so this is a long term crisis and not something that is new. They are probably going to initially close about six schools possibly. There was also a resolution by the Rogers Park Community Council. This is regarding the detached dwellings. These are dwellings that you can put up on an R1 property. They have to be up to code and you can build a house on your property as long as it is up to code. There was a lot of controversy regarding the judges and of course the school district budget. I think November 1 is going to be the meeting and they're going to start to go over what they're going to be cutting and they're going to be cutting probably five or six schools.

## **Community Concerns and Activities (opportunity for community members to share concerns, requests for the council, and upcoming needs/activities, 2 min each)**

**Marsha Overlander:** I'm a long time East Anchorage resident and I have a concern. There's a Halloween block party being advertised on E 16th Avenue that's in my neighborhood, right around the corner from my house. They did this last year and it was advertised as a neighborhood block party but I have never been contacted even though I live six houses away of any activities. My concern is that what ends up happening is the neighborhood is unprepared, houses are dark, they are not lit up and ready for any amount of traffic. Huge amounts of the community show up in cars and pedestrians in the dark in this area and I'm very concerned about it. They're expanding this year to include food trucks blocking off a major street, E 16th.

And so it diverts traffic into unprepared areas so my request is that there be some kind of limitation on how late they can go, some traffic control, some kind of intervention. I have real concerns for the pedestrians, the children that are out in the dark in this situation.

**George Martinez:** Thank you. Please stick around because we do have a presentation from the Halloween block party and maybe there's some room to find common ground and see how folks can work together.

**Stu Grenier:** I went to Alaska USA today on Debarr and Muldoon by Fred Meyers and there was a guy out there with a mattress, bags of stuff. He was talking to himself angrily and he was wet, he was miserable. Anyhow, how do I deal with this? I went into the bank and said hey there's a guy out there cussing at nobody and there's stuff stacked up this high and she said well that's pretty normal for this branch. So I went home and called the cops and said he needs assistance. I don't know how to deal with this- there's, you guys noted, I live over here. We see this a lot lately. The daily news had a big story on Centennial Park and it had a lot of good information. I feel like we're moving towards a third world country.

### **Legislative Reports (limit 3 min. each, including questions)**

**Ivy Spohnholz:** It's pretty quiet in the legislative arena right now and most people are out talking with constituents, knocking on doors and collecting information on community concerns that are taking place. I do want to make sure to introduce my staff in the back, Maya Narang, who is the person to reach out to if you have constituent issues that we can help you with- permanent fund issues, things of that nature. I do serve on the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee which is a joint committee of the senate. We provide oversight, we do the auditing of the state government every year. Recently, since the last Northeast Community Council Meeting, we had a meeting into the investigation of the firing of the Permanent Fund CEO last year by the Permanent Fund Board. We hired a third party investigator to look into that, we wanted to make sure there hadn't been any political interference in the oversight and the management of the Permanent Fund. This is important because the Permanent Fund now provides for about 2/3 of our unrestricted income. We get more money now in most years in the Permanent Fund than we do from oil revenue at this point in time, so it's really important that we have top notch management and that it is not a political appointment. Our third party investigator found that there did not appear to be specific political interference in the firing of Angela Rodell. They did however find that the Board did not adhere to its charter documents. In the evaluation and oversight of Mrs. Rodell and that's very problematic. The charter for the Permanent Fund is kind of like the bylaws for the community council or the constitution for a state government, sort of the rules of the road that they're supposed to follow as an organization. They didn't evaluate her based on the performance of the Permanent Fund, her evaluations by staff and by peers. Instead, it appeared that they didn't like the way that she had been communicating externally. There were some comments about potential personality issues rather than the performance of the Permanent Fund. I think that's a little bit of concern, I think that the Board is interested in moving on and learning from the mistakes of the past in trying to do better moving forward. They had a pretty exhaustive search for a new CEO and in the last few weeks they announced they hired Deven Mitchell, who ran the municipal bond bank for many many decades. He's a lifelong Alaskan so very committed to the organization, understands financial management. I'm hopeful that the management of the Permanent Fund will be professional moving forward and I think that's been the big thing I've been working on.

\*Representative Snyder's office requests that you have public comment on the closure of Nunaka Valley Elementary or Wonder Park Elementary send them to [arielle.wiggin@akleg.gov](mailto:arielle.wiggin@akleg.gov)\*

### **Assembly Reports (limit 3 min. each, including questions)**

**Pete Peterson:** Forrest is actually attending a couple other community councils, that are now after redistricting in our area and those community councils meet on the third Thursday as well. He may get here after he gives his report at those community councils. I attend this one because I actually live in this area and I have been attending these community council meetings since 2007. The news today and Stu has got the front page passed around out there, they're evicting everyone from Centennial Park. As of yesterday they told us at our Homelessness Committee meeting that there are 98 people still camped there as of yesterday. Some of them were actually living in vehicles, but the majority are still living in tents. The Sullivan arena was at 150 capacity but because they've been at capacity for several days they are going to be allowed to surge up to 200. So they'll be able to take 50 of those 98. There's also rooms at the Alex hotel- there's 50 rooms that are supposed to be available this week so hopefully all the loose ends have been tied up so the remaining campers can go to the Alex hotel. Obviously this is not a situation that should be happening. We had a long work session today at City Hall and they showed us a timeline of since Mayor Bronson came in of what has taken place with our homeless population. Twists and turns, back and forth, and it's unfortunate. He keeps saying that he should have been able to have the navigation center over by

Tudor and Elmore as of November of last year but they also told us today that the design of that facility is only at 90% complete as of October 7<sup>th</sup>. How you could have built that a year ago without even having a design is beyond me. Anyway, we'll switch to a different subject. There are relocatable classrooms that the Anchorage School District has that are now available- the number of students is down from where they once were. So they have 50 of those and 23 of those are now available. They're going to be auctioning those off or selling those. The Mayor and the administration had talked about using those for the homeless but there's no water in them and the majority of them have only one door so it would have taken a lot of work to get them in a remodeled form to house people. Plus trying to find a location to put the relocatables, nobody had any idea where those were going to go. The good news is that some of those could be used for storage and it wouldn't take any remodeling at all to haul stuff in there and lock it up. We have a new Director of our Parks and Rec Department, Michael Braniff, who actually lives here in East Anchorage was appointed to that position and approved by the Assembly. I just had a meeting with him the other day and he's doing a fantastic job. We also have a new head of our Budget Department, Courtney Peterson, who has been working her way through that department for many many years is now the head of that department and is doing an excellent job. The 2023 Muni Budget process has started, we had our first long budget session last Friday and we've got another four or five hour one planned for tomorrow. We're going to be having this open for two meetings in the month of November if you want to come and testify at our meeting about where you stand on the budget and what changes you think we might want to make.

**David Ulmer:** According to the article in the newspaper, towards the end of it, there was a spokesman for the city who wasn't sure if they were going to have room or places to put all the homeless there. He's not sure if they can get everyone out of the camp tonight.

**Pete Peterson:** Right, well some people have moved back further into the woods is what I have been told. Now Stu lives in the area and maybe he knows better.

**David Ulmer:** The ones right in the campground. That's what it's alluding to me in the article, that's the way I read it.

**Pete Peterson:** Well they covered it on the 6 o'clock news tonight and they were showing people moving out and they had stacks and stacks of stuff. So sometimes it's hard to move all of that stuff in one day but if rooms are available in the Alex there should be rooms for all 98 of those people that are camping there but there are campers all over town, it's not just those 98. Those are the ones that are the most visible since they've been in the paper for the last three months.

**Bob Reupke:** I understand the Assembly shut down the navigation center and then the Mayor told them to go back to work. Has that issue been resolved?

**Pete Peterson:** It wasn't exactly like that. You could say that they were actually moving forward with a building, they were starting to build the navigation center before we ever started with a contract. Since we have to pass funding before anything happens, how you can start to build something before you pass the funding- I don't know. So the Mayor has kind of put us in a difficult situation where if we don't vote to continue the navigation center, then the contractors are going to sue us, and they should sue us because if they've done work, then we owe them money but the Mayor should not have been putting us in a situation like that. That's extremely poor management.

**David Ulmer:** One more question, the guy that's running the navigation center, he was the one that gave the okay for the contract, who picked him to run the navigation center?

**Pete Peterson:** Well that would be the Mayor.

**Stu Grenier:** Pete, on the news tonight I saw that some of the people in the park have dogs. There was a desperate scene of a woman holding onto her family member. Are these people going to have a place where they can take their pets?

**Pete Peterson:** Some of the rooms in the Alex hotel are going to be allowed to have pets. Now I don't know how many it was, somebody said 8 or 10 rooms that they were saying they could have pets in.

**Stephen D Ward:** Besides Anchorage taking care of this issue, what other organizations are helping out with this because we can move them around, we can put them in places, but it still doesn't find the root of the problem. There's drugs, mental health issues, there's not enough actual labor and jobs for them. What is the city doing to mitigate those issues? Is crime for drug possession going to increase? Or are we just

going to turn a blind eye to that as well? Are we going to turn people away with mental health issues, are we going to work with DHSS to find help for these people besides just cover it up?

**Pete Peterson:** Well, you know we've got API but unfortunately it's only about 20% utilized. There are I think around 80 rooms available but there's only about 20 that are being used. We've had a mental health problem in Alaska for years and all across the country and this all started when President Reagan made a declaration about mental health not being considered reimbursable or something, I don't remember what it was, it was about 45 years ago now. That was the beginning and so many people were thrown out on the streets and had no help at all. Unfortunately, the state of Alaska has not kept up API so there are not choices for people to make all the time and when they do finally get to a point where they make a decision where they want to change their life oftentimes there is nowhere available for them to go and they get put on a list somewhere and three or six months later when they reach the top of that list nobody can find them. They may have already passed on, so it's a missed opportunity.

**Bob Woofter:** We know that we have Brother Francis Shelter, we have Catholic Social Services, we have a variety of other organizations that are trying to help out but when it comes to the financial load who else is helping? Are the nongovernmental organizations helping? Are the native organizations helping? Who all besides the city of Anchorage is funding the homeless problem?

**Pete Peterson:** There are organizations that are fundraising right now. I heard at the Homeless Committee Meeting yesterday, that \$300,000 was raised through private funding in the last month to help out with getting some of these facilities furnished so that they'll be bedding and things available when they get there.

**Bob Woofter:** Is that a specific organization or several?

**Pete Peterson:** I think that was among several groups that were working to raise that but the Rasmussen Foundation has been working tirelessly for several years trying to help us coordinate improvements in the homeless problem and they actually are in negotiations about buying another hotel right now to make additional rooms available so that there will be somewhere else for the homeless to go when temperatures start to get colder which in the week they're supposed to be 10 or 15 degrees colder again.

**George Martinez:** A final question on this subject if I may, we do want to continue to move along and I do want to encourage people to follow up with our assembly members. I want to shout out that Assembly Member Daniel Volland is on the zoom. Just a question about the level of cooperation happening with respect to some of the things that you identified like the other hotel and some of those other rooms. Are these things being cooperated on both with the administration and the Assembly so that we can expect those things will happen? Or are they still kind of in a debate stage?

**Pete Peterson:** Well the Mayor has named a new Chief of Staff, Adam Trombley, former Assembly Member, represented East Anchorage as a matter of fact. As a matter of fact that's who I beat in my election to be elected to the Assembly going on 9 years ago. Adam has been doing an excellent job of trying to reach out to individual Assembly Members to meet with us and try to find a way to increase communications so that we will at least know what direction the administration is going. Many times over the last year or so, we haven't found out about something until we saw it on the news or we saw a news or press release come out and that was not the way it was handled before in previous administrations. If there was anything important happening I would get a phone call or at least an email. If you want to have good relations, communication is really really important.

**Community Leadership Updates as available (3 min each)** [JBER](#), [Mayor's Office](#), [Police Department](#), [Fire Department](#), [Parks & Recreation](#), [Muldoon Public Library](#), [School Board](#), [Community Patrol](#), [others](#).

**Joy Boston, JBER:** I really don't have much of an update that is different from last month, so I'll just give everyone a reminder that the aim high flight academy that the air force recruiting service has an application period that is open now until the end of November. This is a three week program for high school students aged 16-18 to go to Florida for three weeks and learn about aviation. It includes transportation to and from, room and board while you're there, and also 15 hours of flight instruction. It's just a great opportunity for young people. I don't know how many applicants they get or how many folks they accept every year and I don't know what their criteria are in terms of GPA, extracurricular activities, or what that might be. All that information is going to be available on the website that I posted in the chat and I guess that's really it.

**Forrest Dunbar:** Unfortunately, I had two other community council meetings tonight that started at 7 o'clock so I was driving over here from that and I couldn't hear Pete when I was driving so I'm not really sure what

he updated you on. As most of you know, we started our formal budget process about two weeks ago. Myself and Austin Quin-Davidson are the two Budget Co-Chairs. We started with the proposal from the Mayor. The Mayor proposed a \$585 million dollar budget, it's the largest budget in Anchorage's history, about \$20 million more than last year. That's coming to the Assembly now and we will consider it and possibly amend it. It's largely a continuation budget, meaning it doesn't increase services, it continues about the same level as last year but we have cost of living adjustments, other increased costs that drive most of that \$20 million increase that the Mayor's asking for. Good news from the Fire Department- at the Budget Committee meeting today we found out that they received an additional \$19 million from the federal government for prior ambulance services already done. So we have \$20 million of additional funds that we weren't expecting that we have received from the federal government and we have to decide what to do with them. Just preliminarily today the Mayor's office is proposing perhaps purchasing the building that we currently lease from the ACDA where our police headquarters is downtown which would over the long run, save us money. We pay about \$700,000 a year there. So that's one proposal but we haven't seriously taken it up yet. We also got more good revenue news, as I mentioned here at this meeting before, our room tax and our rental car tax came in very strong this year. We also got about \$5 million in additional assistance from the state that we weren't expecting. So we have a budget surplus. We did spend or appropriated last week- Mrs. Quinn-Davidson and I put forward a proposal that passed a portion of that additional money from the state. We used it on repairing the Sullivan Arena- which by the way the damage is not from people experiencing homelessness. We got the report from the Mayor's office and most of the damage is from the earthquake actually, it just hasn't been fixed yet, and general neglect. Frankly, we haven't done a good job of keeping the Sullivan repaired. Those repairs can't start until the emergency shelter at the Sullivan is finished of course. We also gave out \$800,000 to the administration for additional fuel costs. Particularly the Police Department, Transit Department, and the Maintenance operation went over their budget because of high fuel costs in the spring and the summer. We gave \$300,000 in additional money for towing, so some of you might have noticed if you called in a junk car on the side of the road it hasn't been towed in a couple of months. The APD ran out of money for that frankly, they still were towing things for evidence but not if they were junk or nuisance cars. We gave them about \$300,000 more for that so if you have a car in your neighborhood, call that in again and hopefully we can remove it. Last two things, we had a long range transportation plan that we funded. It's the first one we've had since 2005 and that also will be dedicated to right of way and snow removal improvements. I think everyone knows that snow removal did not go well this last year and we would like to do some research to find out why that was. The last thing was giving some grants to the polynesian community who had been left out of the first and second rounds of the ARPA funds. The Polynesian Association of Alaska.

**Stu Grenier:** You mentioned the Sullivan and it needing to get fixed and they're going to have to move the people out again. Does that mean we're going to have to deal with Centennial Park being repurposed into a homeless camp from a paying campground next April or May?

**Forrest Dunbar:** I hope not. I'll say that the Assembly, I think there would be a tremendous amount of resistance from the Assembly and the State Legislature. You have people like Bill Wielechowski who represents this area- if they try to do that. That's being said, they did it this year without consulting us. I mean they did it unilaterally. So I am just thinking in my head how we can make sure it doesn't happen again. I think it was incredibly unpopular and I think that the Mayor's Office heard that pretty clearly and that within a few weeks they were desperate to get out of there. My hope is that it will not happen again. The hope is that those housing programs and treatment programs and additional shelter that Pete mentioned will mean that we won't have to do what we did- the kind of thing that happened this summer won't happen again. But again, it never went to the Assembly for approval, it just happened. So will this Mayor do it again? I doubt it but I can't promise you that he won't.

**Brian Dean, Anchorage Fire Marshal:** I'm the Anchorage Fire Marshal. I was given a list of questions that the Community Council presented for the Fire Department. Let me quickly go through those. One dealt with a number of arson fires in the Northeast Community Council area, the other one was about lights and sirens coming to and from Centennial Campground, and the third thing was about the Boundary Avenue extension to Centennial Circle for secondary access. I'll leave the arson one for last because that interests me the most and I'll probably talk about it the most. The first one and easiest one to address probably is the lights and sirens coming from the Centennial area. Our code red responses are dictated by the acuity of the incident occurring so for instance if we have cardiac arrest, stroke, traumatic injury, we want to get to the patient as soon as we can and that dictates using lights and sirens. State law requires that if we're going to have lights on we're to have sirens on as well. It helps us to move through the intersections a lot more quickly. The short on that is that with discontinuation of Centennial Campground we will probably have less code red calls in that area and actually we have seen a reduction in the number of code red calls already in the area. So hopefully that will continue to taper off. It won't fix everything because there are other areas in the area that we do respond code red to and the sirens come with those, it's kind of one of the things that

comes with living in a populated area. We just have to deal with it as best as we can. The second thing I want to talk about is the extension of the Boundary Avenue proposal- that came about because of life safety access road issues. It came up on a bond proposal and there were three proposals to study- one was in the Hillside area, one was in East Anchorage, and there was another one out in the Chugiak/ Eagle River area. This one focused on the Boundary extension here and that was because of the one way in for Peck Avenue and going into this facility here and the facilities around it. We frequently come up here and the access point to it is not a controlled intersection, whereas Boundary is a controlled intersection, much more palatable for our apparatus to manage and negotiate. Then we have the idea of a single way in and a single way out and that was funded through a \$500,000 bond that was issued for this area of town and about \$140,000 of that was used for design and engineering studies on it. They suggested several alternatives, they recommended one final alternative on that. It's going to be the community input as to whether that actually goes through because there are additional costs of building it that the community will have to bear. That hasn't been decided yet but there's quite a bit of information that the council has probably already heard on things about how that might or might not go. There's still quite a bit of money leftover that the community and the administration gets to decide what will happen with those additional funds. Like I said about \$140,000 of that \$500,000 was used to study this route proposal.

**Stu Grenier:** We talked with Cook Inlet Housing Authority which manages and owns all this and they are against it as you probably heard. Forrest can probably chime in if he's still here about how this whole thing happened. The other question that I had was that you are aware that Cook Inlet Housing Authority was forced to put in a second road that has a gate on it so you already have a second entrance. None of this came through this council at all. Out of \$500,000, you already spent \$140,000? That means there's \$300,000 sitting somewhere. Is that correct?

**Brian Dean:** That's correct.

**Stu Grenier:** Okay, well, there is a problem here and next time you guys do the budget include the community council because our neighbors are not excited about Boundary Avenue being forced through. It took years to get the speed humps in there, and we all know ambulances do not like speed humps. Alpine Village is the condo association just over the hill, they'll speak to it. Hopefully in April we'll get more information because the planners told us they had three different plans and they're going to present them eventually and I would imagine they would present them here but that way we'll be able to comment knowledgeably. Guys, the whole process didn't come up for us at all. Who is going to vote against a fire bond or put up the energy to fight a fire bond. I hope the council has more influence on what gets on the bonds because this came out of the blue and now it looks like we may have wasted \$140,000.

**Brian Dean:** Let me answer that, I want to at least respond to that. On behalf of the Fire Department we really do appreciate the effort that people put towards passing the fire bonds because we work for you guys. Our apparatus is actually your guys' apparatus and without that money we couldn't provide the emergency services that we do. As far as the road extension and the bonds for that, that's a little bit outside the Fire Department's arena. Most of it is handled by project management and engineering. I will say that the bulk of the studies, actually all of the studies with their consultants and in house staff. As well as the proposals that go forward for bond and the public notice that goes out for that. I was informed by the municipal engineer that they regularly do bond proposals without public input on there, whether that's good, bad or otherwise- probably some of that is okay and some of that is not okay. I think a big portion of it comes down when they actually put money forward to construct it and identify the alternatives. Probably not exactly the answer you want to hear, I know it does happen but it is kind of outside of our area so I can't really speak more to that.

**Donna Mears:** Mine is just a comment. The Community Council did pass a resolution last spring not in support of that extension. I can make sure to get a copy of that to you.

**Brian Dean:** We got two requests one was not date specific and the second one said I think 20 years. That's a huge data request and we aren't able to jump back 20 years and map out arsons like that. The amount of labor involved that we frankly don't have, we've got a lot of firefighters to respond but people to crunch the numbers, not quite as many. We took information back to this year and there is a fair number of suspected arson fires that have happened in what I will say the Northeast area- Muldoon to Turpin, Debarr to Glenn Highway area. There's been probably about 40 suspected arson fires within this area and they're mostly small fires, incidental things like the large burning house that you would think of. I hesitate to throw out the number 40 suspected arsons because it's not like there's an arson spree that's going on. These are just individual fires that are determined to be incendiary in nature and they're suspected to be arson. Arson is a criminal charge, incendiary fire is one that is intentionally set. That's usually the standard that we go by and then with more circumstance, more evidence is needed to actually call it an arson fire so we say these are suspected. Like I said, most of them are minor in nature. For instance there is like 11 dumpster fires, 3 small trash fires, 8 grass or brush fires, 3 outside fires- not like a campfire or anything just an outside fire somewhere, there were 5 porta potties that were burned- those don't usually catch on fire by themselves, 6



vehicle fires, 2 accessory building fires- one connex and one shed, and then there was one occupied family dwelling. Now that was actually an undetermined cause but it was suspected to be an incendiary fire just based on some information around there. Too many ignition sources to actually call it an incendiary fire as opposed to undetermined. Suspect determination has been developed on 19 of those fires and that was a specific question that was presented to us. Arrests have been made on 5 of those fires. Now it's really important to note about suspect information being developed, that doesn't mean there's a suspect, that just means that somebody saw somebody that fits the description of a known person but further information is needed, further interviews are needed to determine whether or not that person was tied to the fire. That's why we say suspect information has been developed. With all criminal investigations, there are priorities. We have one investigator and that investigator works closely with APD but the resources are limited and those resources typically go to the higher profile, more dollar lost type of crimes. Putting together information on these porta potty fires is a little difficult, finding who that is. That is something that's being tracked though because if you get a whole lot of porta potties going up that's very unique and that's something you can put together. We'll continue to look at these as they go on but there's not a ton of resources going to the more minor fires- those are saved for the more expensive types of fires. There still could be some fires that AFD did not respond to, that APD responded to, and maybe arrested or charged somebody with those fires but we weren't involved and we don't have that information to look through the APD community information.

**Jim Curran, Public Library:** This has been an exciting week. I'm going to talk about three exciting things that are coming to the library. Monday, Virginia McClure, our new director has started. As you may have read, Virginia is not a stranger to APL, I worked with her as a colleague when she was the branch manager over at Mountain View, the second best branch library. When she was my supervisor as Assistant Director for the Library in charge of patron services. She is extremely intelligent, she is funny as a stitch, and she listens. Her superpower is that she will stop, think, and then state something. Always been impressed by Virginia and the staff that knew her, which is about half of us, are really excited she is here. Meanwhile, back to branch for about a year and a half I've been working on trying to get some more artwork within the library and the Art Coordinator at ASD had brought to us student art through last year. We're talking about some possibilities for artists in the schools actually putting up a mural in Muldoon Library. This week we met with two artists, we're actually very excited because they may be working together. There will be more information on that down the road but it's going to happen, it will be in the main lobby of the library. As you walked down the stairs you may have noticed me sitting by some books- big surprise there. What's really there is not just a bunch of books but a mobile library, so imagine that wrapped in a van. The van is some place on a barge or actually being made, it got caught in the issues with anyone getting a new car these days. Based on a grant that we got two years ago, we are actually going to have a mobile branch library that will be split between adult, children, and senior services. The biggest question is whether or not they will let me drive that. If you have any questions on that or you want to check out a book, I'll be here another 20 minutes because APL still doesn't like overtime.

**Kelly Lessens:** I will share a couple of nuts and bolts before diving into the meat of the matter. On Monday next week, our students will rotate back into the first cohort of bus coverage. It is good that we can announce that there are 53 routes that have been permanently reinstated. We are going to be bussing 193 out of 228 routes, with another 21 drivers in training. So it's not perfect but we are bussing almost 16,000 students as of next Monday. We are getting back to where we need to be but not there yet. Parent teacher conferences are next week on Wednesday and Thursday, those are early release days. Then we have this Friday, and Friday October 28 are professional development days for our teachers and staff. Election Day November 8th is an asynchronous learning day so students will have assignments but will not be in school. November 11 is Veterans Day. Hopefully those of you with kids, those are dates that are on your calendar. The big news this week is that the school district administration recommended closing six elementary schools as part of the closure of our fiscal cliff. Closing those schools will save the district somewhere between \$3.5-4 million next year, which is about 5% of the \$68 million fiscal cliff we anticipate. It is a start but the closures, as they have been recommended, are not really about saving money. In fact, the district loses money after five years on those school closures because of the way the state funding formula is written. In the state of Alaska students at small schools end up with more funding per student than students at large schools. Over five years, we lose money in the operational revenue, we probably will have savings from maintenance and what the administration has been sharing is that the benefit of school closures for students has a lot to do with access to specialists and services that they can't necessarily get. We've had about a decade of declining enrollments due to an aging population, lower birth rates, COVID pivoted many families away from our public school models towards our growing homeschool model. So a lot of different reasons at stake here. We've had lower enrollment and then we've had flat funding since August of 2016. So those have meant a net decline in our purchasing power of \$80 million. Every year that we've had flat funding has essentially been a cut. We've relied on federal funding to backfill our budget for the last three years but those funds are expiring so that's why we're here. So as most of you know, the schools that were

recommended to be closer are Abbott Loop, Birchwood, Klatt Elementary, Northwood Elementary, Nunaka Valley and Wonder Park. Each of those schools has students that will be divided according to geography. With Nunaka Valley, students living east of Boniface will go to Chester Valley, students living west of Boniface would go to Russian Jack. For Wonder Park students, most of them would go to Willawaw, although the students that are in special education may be distributed to other buildings in the area and we didn't have specifics on that yet. With five of the six schools that have been recommended for closure, the administration will be recommending repurposing those buildings for their programs, for example the Alaska Native Cultural Heritage Charter School, which had to be relocated during COVID because the building they had was not adequate for ventilation and they were placed in a wing of Bettye Davis East Anchorage High School. They are packed more tightly than any school I have ever visited and the students there have a small wing, a small area of playground. That is one school where I can imagine they are a school that would probably benefit from a repurposed location. There are a lot of details that have not been shared yet and most importantly nothing has been approved. Over the past 7 or 8 weeks, the administration has been creating various recommendations for how we can chip away at that fiscal cliff. We save about \$16 million of one-time operating funds to bring that cliff down to \$68 million and we heard about changing our middle school model, moving all 6th graders in ASD to middle school and the current 6th grade be in an orchestra program changing the immersion programs, ending ASD funding for the highest per student athletics: hockey, swimming, gymnastics, and maybe asking local organizations to help partners to support those moving forward. Even though we have heard all these proposals, by my calculations we still have about \$45 million more to go to meet the \$68 million cliff. The school closures are not the end all for how we are going to reach a balanced budget. The timeline is that we have more proposals to hear, the administration is asking board members to give them good faith in December for the direction the Board will support as we prepare the budget. As the administration prepares the budget during the month of January and then the Board will adopt that budget in February. The idea is that we won't have 11th hour horse trading. We don't want to be solving these problems at 11:59PM on the day the budget is due. We are trying to be very transparent. The best landing page for information is [asdk12.org/FY24](http://asdk12.org/FY24). That stands for fiscal year 24. You may be wondering why these schools were chosen, a big part of it is that most of these schools are significantly under enrollment capacity. We've had a decline in enrollment overall. The schools that were chosen are also next to adjacent schools that could absorb the students and staff. The district also took into account school conditions and age. Prior investments, prior capital budgets looked at school boundaries and where they were in proximity to pedestrian friendly streets, access to transportation, and the additional cost of transportation. That earlier number I threw out of \$4.5-4 million of what we saved factors in additional bussing costs. You actually save about \$1 million per school but then you have \$400,000 or \$500,000 as you are running new routes to bus those students. So that's how we ended up at that \$3.5 to 4 million in savings in that first year. From what I understand, both Nunaka Valley and Wonder Park would have their pre-k programs affected. Nunaka Valley also has a special education programs and developmental pre-k for 3 and 4 year olds. I don't know exactly where they would go. It was talked about maybe pre-k hubs but this is a very dynamic conversation so I'm going to pause there because there are probably questions.

**George Martinez:** Will there be town halls or opportunities for public engagement?

**Kelly Lessens:** Yes, my understanding is that the principals of the affected schools are choosing among six different dates and those dates are November 2, 3, 14, 16, 21, and 22. I don't know which schools will have which dates yet but I expect that to be very public. It's my understanding that there will be a staff meeting at the end of the day at each school so staff members will understand plans and have the chance to have that debrief and that there will be parent and maybe community meetings on the evenings of those days. There's going to be some form of online component as well. More details are forthcoming but those are the dates in the community that we can expect to have community or parent town halls.

**Selina Metoyer:** I have two questions, when they're moving the students from the closed schools to the open schools, how is it going to affect class sizes and what happens to the teachers from the closed schools? Are they getting fired?

**Kelly Lessens:** I don't anticipate anyone getting fired. At our last Finance Committee meeting I asked for a report on vacancies- we have more than 400 vacancies district wide exclusive of bus drivers and custodians, when you bring those in it's over 500. So any staff member displaced will have a place somewhere in ASD. We need teachers, we need educators, care professionals, custodians, cafeteria managers, front office staff, we need specialists of all kinds. Every person is needed and I hope that educators consider staying with the district. The class size question- we don't anticipate class sizes going up because of the school closures. There are schools that currently have one kindergarten class in that grade level or maybe a first grade class and then a first/second grade split because there aren't enough students to fill out a second first grade classroom. When you bring additional first graders into that school, you then have an opportunity to have- guess a better evidence based practice would be to have



three or four classrooms of each grade level and that way the teachers can have peers, they can have teams. It enhances coverage, you can allocate- if there are students in school A that need access to speech language pathologist, and students at school B also need that access, they can combine and both have access rather than being spread across multiple schools. I think substitute teachers are also a challenge. By having higher efficiency buildings, more students in the building you are not necessarily packing more students in a classroom. In fact there are a lot of classrooms that are being used as flexible spaces which is nice but you're heating more classrooms, you're repairing more classrooms than maybe is optimal for a district. The hope is that students will be able to have better access to their services. They will have fewer classroom splits.- first grade/ second grade splits and the teacher is teaching two different curriculums simultaneously. Temporarily there will be cost savings but ultimately we will lose money from the state in the long run because of those consolidations. Our next meetings are November 1 and November 15 at 6PM. You can always sign up to give testimony ahead of time, that puts you on the list. Students testify first but the afternoons are where we have our work sessions which lately is where we have been provided with these really terrible options. This last one started at 3PM, most of them start at 4PM, I'm not sure if on November 1st it will be a 3PM or 4PM start time.

#### **Committee Updates (limit 2 min. each)**

- [Tree House](#)
- [Catalyst](#)
- [Uncle Herbs](#)
- [Red Robin](#)

**George Martinez, Placemaking:** I have nothing to report for placemaking except that this is the thing we hang, the doon dangler with Stu. This is going to happen when it's colder outside, there's a sign up sheet here if you're down to come out with us and hang them up- on a warmer day than last year Stu. It was exceptionally cold with Stu out there last year. That's the next placemaking activity that will come up but I have nothing else to report.

**Donna Mears, CIP:** No changes from last time.

**Stu, Parks and Trails:** Well remember Russian Jack Springs Park is not in our council area but is a regional park so our council has a say in it. It has been brought to our attention that we're going to- there is a grant to get single track bike trails mostly in the northern part of the park. This is something that our council, some members of our council who are not here today are very keen to make comments about. I believe firmly that the community needs to make comments about things but I think it's a plan that we'll support. Some people know things about these trails that I don't really know and they have great backgrounds and they want their access on this project through Parks and Rec and Northeast Community Council. I did talk to Steve with Parks and Rec about the mud situation in the dog parks and it is really muddy in the Chanshtnu Muldoon dog park and people are complaining about it to me, and they're complaining about it on the Facebook NECC page and the Muldoon Parks Foundation page. I asked Steve if we could take some gravel, we have piles of gravel leftover from putting it on top of our condo association. I could get volunteers, bucket it, dig out the dirt and put some gravel in and he said please wait until next year.

**George Martinez:** In 2015, just to that last point, the Northeast Community Council voted to support the Russian Jack mountain bike trails. More information is going to come and we'll be able to share on that later on as well so we may take action on it for new business at the next meeting.

**Ivy Spohnholz:** Can I make a suggestion that the gentleman who is organizing the single track project in Russian Jack Springs Park, he came to our Russian Jack Community Council and presented on a well thought out plan. It's cost effective, it's designed to minimize a negative interaction between cyclists and dog walkers and all those things and we learned a lot of lessons. I think it would be awesome if we could invite him to the council and sort of present what he's doing. I would be happy to share his contact information because I know he would love to come.

**George Martinez:** That would be wonderful and we hope to hear that presentation here next month. Our chair of the marijuana and alcohol committee couldn't be here today. On the agenda there were the marijuana applications that are in for renewal so you all can see them. They're hyperlinked online and today we received about five of the impending alcohol licenses as well. We will make sure all of them are hyperlinked in the minutes.

## **Presentations (limit 3 min. each, unless otherwise note)**

### **Billy Stapleton (3-4 minutes) - Halloween Block Party**

**Billy Stapleton:** I'm the creator and operator of camp crystal halloween. The block party is Halloween night, it's going to be operating from 6PM-10PM. I have a city block party permit that was signed off from the captain of APD. Part of the probing is to show access. They wouldn't award that to me if I didn't go through that paid program. I also go down every year to fire station 6, the weekend before I give a letter to the fire department telling them not to drive down E 16th Avenue, you will not get a Fire Truck down there. I have been doing that since 2014, since I've been doing this. I also wanted to say that the block party is open to anybody free of charge who wants to set up any type of nonprofit awareness. I have food trucks, djs, dance parties. Alaska Dance Theater does a presentation there for their kids all the time so I encourage people who do Saturday markets who sell items to set up a tent. I don't charge anybody, it's all about bringing unity to the community. I'm trying to make the East side the best side, that's my goal. So just show up, set up a tent. I have a street sectioned off about half a football length that isn't filled up. If you know anybody, just pass that along. With that, if anyone wants to come in and donate candy or even just be part of it just show up and help out. There is a lot of traffic in there, a lot of people and I think it's a lot of exposure.

**George Martinez:** I love the spirit of making the East side the best side, I just think that's awesome. Billy also encouraged me to challenge other parts of Anchorage- look at how good we do it, can you do it better? Just that spirit of competition but in the good spirit of community unity, I think that's awesome. I thank you for the spirit of contributing. Working together we can all find the best way forward. I hope the West Side and South side are watching and hopefully they feel a little jealous.

### **Rep. Ivy Spohnholz (3 minutes) - Community Recognition**

**Ivy Spohnholz:** I want to ask my friend Rachel Boudreau to join me at the front of the room. Every year in the legislature we have the opportunity, each of us, to celebrate people in our community, community organizations that are just doing great things and just making our community a little bit better. We are confined to picking people that are within our legislative boundaries and frankly because I feel too that East side is the best side I think that's a challenge that I'm happy to undertake, to be celebrating- all the greatness that's taking place over in East Anchorage and doing so when we tried to figure out who we wanted to recognize. This year we decided that one of the people that we wanted to recognize was Rachel Boudreau and so what this means is that the entire legislature voted to support the recognition of Rachel. In this legislative citation, it sounds like a ticket, but it's really more like an accommodation or an award. It's really a great thing, you want one of these things. It's been not only voted on by the entire House and the Senate, so all 60 members of the legislature agreed that Rachel was deserving of a recommendation and accomodation, but it is also signed by Speaker Louise Stutes, Senate President Peter Micciche, Senator Bill Wielechowski, myself, and Representative Liz Snyder who Rachel worked on the Community Council Board. Like a lot of Alaskans, a lot of you choose to come to this state because you think it's a great place and Rachel came here in 2012 and since that time she's just been digging in and serving our community in so many different ways. I'm proud to say that she's a UAA Seawolf, she went and got a Master's degree in social work from UAA. Which is just another example of why it's so important that every great community needs to have a great university. Our social work program is a great place for those looking to make the world a little bit better everyday in their professional lives. She graduated with a 4.0 which is pretty awesome. She works both with Help Me Grow where she works on a grant with people who work with young children who experience mental health or developmental delays, learning how to better support them with her expertise. She's a mentor, she's got a grant through the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to do that work with Help Me Grow and she's also a counselor at Trinity Family Counseling where she provides direct services to families that need it. I will tell you that I adopted a foster child about 15 years ago and the support that I got from the mental health providers for her kept my family together and helped my daughter become the person that she is today so I very deeply appreciate the work that you're doing right now because you're getting a gift to families that are trying to do the best by their children. She was also on the Board of the Northeast Community Council which is why we came here to celebrate this because leaders come through this community council both through membership showing up and participating but also serving on the board. She also is on the Kids Corp Board of Directors and she volunteers on the UAA Masters of Social Work program to help share the lessons that she's learned through her professional experience with students that are going on to pursue their education. She and her husband Curtis are joining us today in the room and celebrating this moment. They go out every year to the village of Holy Cross doing mission work, she's very active in her church, Radiant Church which is just down the street. She is everything east side and also everything that we would like to see in our community members, making other people's lives in our community better and for those reasons I just wanted to give you a shout out.

### **Revive Alaska Community Services (7 minutes)**

**Chibuzo Naraja:** I just want to thank all of you. This is my first time being here. I have with me, co-volunteer and a laborer with me. Her name is Cheryl Lynn Stone, she is one of our executives. I work in the social justice department of Revive Alaska. This is just an awareness of what we do- we are going around the community and we are trying to share what we do in case you have certain services that you need to reach out to us, you know those services are available. Revive Alaska was built to serve the community, humanitarian services, we deal with the spiritual nature but also make sure that the mental part is also in place. Some of the things that we do in our community are pantry and food. We are really serving the midtown area and south Anchorage and looking to expand into the Mountain View. We have really found a niche where struggling families, middle class, they may not want to be in the soup kitchen but they need groceries to meet their needs and we found that most middle class struggling families use our facilities and come every single week. What we are so excited about is the Ukrainian refugees have been coming. I think the Representative was there the last time when we had our open house, but Ukrainians come every week, every Wednesday and they're able to take bags of groceries and we are really making sure that every family in Alaska does not go hungry- give us a round of applause. That's something I'm passionate about. One of my pet projects that is coming up is our hot meal kitchen. That's exciting for me because I took my wife out to get a meal and it was \$15 a piece and it was \$30 and I was wondering as I was going home how average Alaskans with four kids are able to go out once a week and get a meal because if you average that out it's about \$300 a month just once a week. So we came up with the idea of a hot kitchen and what we're going to do with your help and volunteers is to create an atmosphere where struggling families can bring their families and have a hot meal once a week. We are volunteering to be able to do that. Some of the things that we can do to handle homelessness, it's not really about going on the street and building them shelter. We believe that homeless case by case for people that are homeless is giving them a bridge to go back to being normal. We have programs like the HE program and all of these seek to deal with the issue why are you homeless. Let's tackle those root causes and the reason you are homeless. One of the recent ones, which is comfort homes, we are spending that project to comfort home villa. That means that we are going not just to build a community not just for veterans who are struggling but we are looking to build a community for seniors and veterans to have permanent housing. We want to make sure that our seniors have a permanent place to live, veterans that are disabled have a permanent place to live and have a community where they're able to have all the facilities that they need in one place. At this time we are actually having a gala November 12th at the museum. If you go to [revivealaska.org](http://revivealaska.org) you would be able to buy a ticket to support that gala and that is for struggling veterans. In that same gala we are going to be honoring veterans in Alaska that made a difference. What are we doing? We are saying that seniors and veterans are our most priority. We are looking for everybody to get involved, give us ideas about how we can build this community. Whatever Revive Alaska has to offer is available to everybody. So if you're not in midtown, if you're not in south Anchorage, you can register for TEFAP, you can register for food stamps, we do delivery for veterans that are disabled, for homebound seniors, we deliver food to them. If in the week groceries get short, go to our website and you can register, you can come in, pull in your car and register, and they will bring the food to their vehicle. We like to treat people, just because you need food does not mean you are hopeless. If you are looking for a nonprofit to support, we encourage you to support Revive.

### **Cook Inlet Tribal Council- Creekside Fab Lab (10 minutes)**

**LeAnn Cooper Garrick:** I serve as the Chief Operating Officer at Cook Inlet Tribal Council. I'm here with my colleagues

**Tabitha Toloff:** Hello, I serve as CITC's Chief Administrative Officer, I've lived here all my life. South and Rabbit Creek Community Council but I really want to go to your party.

**LeAnn Cooper Garrick:** We also brought along our Director of Strategic initiatives, Marcy Herman. We actually do most of our business over at the Airport Heights neighborhood but we serve individuals across the entire Cook Inlet region so we serve approximately 15,000 Alaska Native and American Indians individuals every year. We have services all the way from youth education, to recovery, to employment training, child and family services. We have a very wide range of services. The one thing we really focused on this last year is looking at our youth empowerment services and one of the programs we've had since 2013 is a fabrication lab. We have it over in our building at 2600 San Jeronimo on our campus and we serve there about 2000 students throughout the whole Cook Inlet region this last year. There's about 5,000 Native American and Alaska Native students throughout the whole school district and we are kind of cramped for space but these kids do amazing things. Everything from second graders all the way to high school students. In fab lab they get the opportunity to use 3D printers, laser cutters, they make amazing amazing pieces. A big part of that is giving them a lot of self confidence, giving them skills to be able to take with them as they move forward. Either they decide they want to go to college or maybe they want to go to vocational school or do something else. We have a really thick ribbon of indigenous culture that goes

through all of the projects we do. It's a really important piece but we were so out of space that we didn't know how we were going to be able to continue to expand. Our goal is to be able to expand throughout the whole district. So we found a wonderful piece of property in our neighboring neighborhood and we're so happy to do this. We have actually purchased a piece of property over at 7715 Grass Creek. Krispy Kreme is still there so you'll be happy to hear that. We are in the process of renovating it right now, Tabitha actually oversees our facilities department so her whole team is managing the renovation over there. We're in about 11000 sq feet right now for the whole building and now in terms of that building to turn that into a fab lab we'll have about 18,000 sq ft. So we're going to continue our youth programs but we are also going to be adding a community membership piece so that community members can come and use the equipment as well. We kind of leveled up in terms of the kinds of equipment that we have available to us, we've had 3D printers and all those things for years but with Marcy's wonderful brilliance and working with many of our fab lab instructors and our partners at MIT we have purchased additional equipment to be able to serve across the board. So we'll be your neighbors. We also have an entrepreneurship program that really focuses on indigenous entrepreneurs and other community members so we'll be bringing that to light as well. We'll be having a schedule and all of those sorts of things. We just want to come in and introduce ourselves. We are in a completely different council but right next door so we wanted to make sure we had the opportunity to come and tell you that we are excited to be here. My husband and I purchased our first house here off of 12th about 20 years ago. My parents live in this neighborhood and have for about 30 years so we love this neighborhood. We actually chose that property because of its access to all of these wonderful schools, to the public transportation here, to the work that our partners at Cook Inlet Housing Authority have done. This is an amazing community. We just wanted an opportunity to show you what we will be doing. We brought a couple of renderings to show you. We have a media lab, our youth actually do a ton of work around storytelling and digital media. We'll be opening that up to the community to do podcasts or other sorts of media. This is our reception area and on the top floor we'll have an open space for our youth education folks who want to be able to open it up for community members to do projects themselves. It could be the boy scouts, it could be your community council, it could be a whole variety of different things. The big goal for us was to be able to have more access to this kind of technology for skill building, for designing and problem solving, and to be able to give our youth skills to move on in the future.

**Tabitha Toloff:** We'll be open in March. You can drive by it right now and see stuff going on in there. They're knocking things down and putting new things up. You can tell we were really creative with the colors, we want it to be super bright, super inviting for our youth and all of our staff who will be working there. We are hoping that by March, construction hasn't been delayed yet. Fingers crossed. We hope you can come see us then. If you want to learn more about all the services we offer you can find it at [citci.org](http://citci.org). And we are always hiring.

**LeAnn Cooper Garrick:** My email address is [lgarrick@citci.org](mailto:lgarrick@citci.org). I'll make sure that all three of us play a big piece in putting this together.

**George Martinez:** You're welcome to come back in present when this reaches other stages. We would love to be invited to the ribbon cutting and to the cake that you're going to be having at that party.

### **Old Business (Limit 10 min/item including discussion)**

**George Martinez:** The Executive Committee talked about one item in our meeting, we posted it under old business as it relates to things connected to Centennial Park. As you all know, we have already been on the record for our position on Centennial Park and we have a resolution about the notification of community councils related to the early phases of the early phases of what happened to Centennial Park this year. Our conversation was around cooperation and a potential letter or writing something to encourage the Assembly and the Mayor's office to cooperate. We intended to have a draft. I would just share that the action item for a community council in my mind should really be toward the encouragement of something or not. If there's a plan we would like to encourage that. It is very difficult to just leave it in the space of a letter that is just calling for a cooperation without specificity that we could just do a one line letter that just says the Northeast Community Council encourages you all to work together. It just seems like substantively, I wanted to open this up for what folks on this topic related to is there a response from the community council that folks want to see on a specific idea or agreement. That's one of the reasons I asked Assembly Member Peterson about cooperation around agenda items that he brought up in his report and there was cooperation. This is really a discussion to give us some feedback. We will get some comments from you all, we will capture it, and give us the sense of the appropriate response. I think it's important to be centered around something tangible.

**Stu Grenier:** I started this ball rolling and guys this is my observation. We voted down the Elmore Road Mayor's plan for a navigation center. A lot of stuff has happened to this community since that vote. They didn't move 280 people in a park next to our houses and we didn't have all these people in great need

wandering up and down Muldoon Road. When I brought this idea up of the Assembly and the Mayor working together, I was thinking if there is a plan on the table that is going to help our situation and our homeless situation, move on it quicker. Why have we found ourselves in this position? I don't want to talk about politics. If you can put a mega homeless shelter next to the police station and next to a hospital where you don't have to listen to the ambulances running up and down Muldoon Road or any road, we might want to reassess our council position on that.

**George Martinez:** Honestly, I hear but it still lingers with me the type of response that the community council can articulate. Still the idea that you have a plan still requires us to have something that we can respond to. This is open, please send us any continued thoughts. I think it's important if the Assembly members can support us on this, is there a particular plan on the books that we could advance or potentially support with respect to a statement or a message or an action from the council.

**Forrest Dunbar:** I would say I would avoid setting up this dichotomy where it is either Centennial Park or it's the Mayor's mega shelter in Campbell park because if you think about it, there are neighborhoods in that area too and they aren't thrilled about the idea of having a very large shelter built there. There's some other specific challenges with that project. It's extremely expensive and it really hasn't been well managed to this point so it's not clear that the Mayor has enough votes to get it through at this point. There is an emergency cold shelter plan that I think is worth perhaps supporting and a key component of that- actually it's been changed now it's not sheltering but the housing in the Golden Lion is something that I think folks should support and we have been driving towards that. We own a hotel right now with 85 rooms, many of which could be doubles. We're talking a 100, maybe even 120 people could be in that facility and it's been sitting empty for a year. So I think that would be something worth supporting. With Chairman Rivera's leadership we have gotten emergency shelter beds at the Alex hotel, or they're going to be soon. I don't know if Pete already talked about this but we gave \$12 million in ARPA funds to the Rasmusson Foundation. They set up a trust that is now closing on another hotel in Spenard with 83 or 87 rooms, that's closing in November. Then another, smaller hotel with 45 hotels closing in January. So if you start doing that math and think about the potential for double rooms, you quickly get to between 200 and 300 that could be housed there. That gets us a long way towards closing Sullivan and not having people return to Centennial. Now there is also the looming problem of the people in the Aviator Hotel but the point is that housing is really the solution not emergency shelter. If this community council wanted to pass a resolution, and this isn't me speaking this is the Coalition to End Homelessness, the subject matter experts saying and we have many charts that show it is much more expensive to do emergency shelter than it is to find permanent housing. Housing you can also get support from the federal government for and it becomes almost self-sustaining or much more so. I think a resolution that says long-term planning, support for housing and treatment, rather than this constant crisis mode of emergency shelter and putting people in the woods. I think that kind of resolution would be well received and it's also what the Mayor's office claims they want to do. It is not what they have done in the last year but it is what they say they want to do. It's the position of the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness as well.

**George Martinez:** That's really great, I think we captured that in terms of advice. This is the press release for that plan that Chairman Rivera released. We have copies of this on the sign in table and I would encourage that we look at this and take an action on this that Assembly member Dunbar just highlighted in terms of some of that language.

**Forrest Dunbar:** Last thing I will say, I think it is totally reasonable for this council to say don't ever do this again, don't ever put people in Centennial Park again and you don't have to talk about building a mega shelter or anything like that. Just say don't do that, because there are plenty of other solutions besides the mega shelter and that was completely unacceptable.

**George Martinez:** I'm appreciative of the community for having us talk about that a little bit and having us work through a response. I thought it was more important that we got feedback, I think we got some great feedback. This will give us an opportunity to put together and pass something next month if not sooner.

## **New Business**

[NACTO Review](#)

**George Martinez:** We need to figure out if we want to, or encourage the Assembly to adopt any or all of this NACTO report.

## **Community Announcements**

**George Martinez:** A recent member of the community council has left. Rick Phillips I want to just thank Rick for his service to our community council. As you all know community councils are voluntary and everybody

that steps up to serve even as a non board member of the community council, your time and participation matter. The President has the privilege of appointing with approval of the executive board a replacement until the next election happens. If there are people who are interested in serving on the community council please let it be known to us, please identify yourselves before we leave today. We do have a person who has identified themselves earlier and I wanted to just have them wave and introduce themselves. Murray Crookes everyone, has been a member and is joining us and is the person I am going to be appointing to take that remaining time on Rick's seat. There will be additional vacancies coming so I encourage you to let us know if you want to serve on the board or on a committee.

**Selina Metoyer:** My son, Jude who graduated from Bartlett and was born at Elmendorf. He is a retired 20 year army Major having served in Bosnia, Afghanistan twice, and twice in Iraq. He's living in Missouri and he was on our zoom tonight, I don't know if he is still on. He does have a Masters too. He finished from West Point in 99. Got the appointment from Bartlett, attended Bartlett. He's looking to return home but he's looking for information on what the community needs here in Anchorage so that- he says he knows how to get money. I gave him contacts. I am going to talk to Forrest and Ivy and whoever else. He really wants to come home.

**George Martinez:** Saturday morning, Cafecito Bonito, 9AM, community members coming together to talk about Nunaka Valley Elementary Saturday morning. Community members and parents are going to get together. Christie Wood, a former member of the community council and one of the champions of Chanshtnu Muldoon Park and the food forest is going to be there as well and Donna is going to be helping to host that space.

**Murray Crookes:** Check the chat. There was one to recognize AFN this weekend.

**George Martinez:** We will make sure everything that is in the chat is captured in the minutes. The minutes go out pretty fast. Ron does a phenomenal job, he inherited it from a very difficult act to follow, Rachel, but Ron has been doing a phenomenal job and we'll get those minutes out.

**Ted Eischeid:** November 8th, big election. Early voting starts Monday, the 24th and goes for two weeks. If you want to vote absentee, get a ballot, you have to make that request a ballot by October 29th.

**David Ulmer:** For those that didn't see the newspaper, the mail in ballots are 84 cents stampwise. If you put a regular stamp on it will come back to you.

**Ivy Spohnholz:** No, the Post Office will not return ballots that don't have enough postage on it.

**George Martinez:** Yes, the Board of Elections has determined that all ballots, even if they don't have the right amount of postage, will be forwarded to the Board of Elections because they saw that as a major problem. Our next meeting happens on November 17. I would like us to consider a little potluck action.

**George Martinez adjourns meeting at 9:07PM**

**Respectively submitted by,**

**Ron Meehan, Northeast Community Council Secretary**