

FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

General Membership Meeting

December 14, 2023-7:00-9:00

Hybrid Meeting: Zoom and Fairview Community Recreation Center

Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm.

Attending: Allen Kemplen, Kelly Ittenbach, Karen Gonne-Harrell, Sharon Chamard, Dave Rittenberg, SJ Klein, Roger Briley, Rene Kennicott, Alexis Johnson & Ellie, Ron Aleva, Chris & Maria Crawford, Joshua Ayo-Akinyemi, Joe Woods, Stephanie Williams, Tasha Johnson, Gillian Tribble, Heather Tribble, Larry Michael, Elena Harper, Michelle Hodel, Roger Branson, Rob Seay, George Harrison, Shawn Hays, Sarah H, Crystal Abbott, Ben Strand, Steph O?, L Johnson, M.S., N John. Zoom: James Thornton, Jim Akers, Suzi Alexander, Janel Walton, Evan Anderson (for Cliff Groh), Lindsey Hajduk, Michael Braniff, Chris Constant, TK, Mikea, Kay Gajewski, Lex Yelverton, Jim Akers, Loui Flora (for Loki Tobin), Carl Jacobs (for Kelly Lessens)

December 2023 agenda approved with no changes.

November 2023 minutes approved with no changes.

September 2023 minutes approved with no changes.

May, June, July, & August 2023 minutes will be approved in January meeting.

Elected Officials:

Loui Flora (for Loki Tobin): Headed into session January 16th. Governor's budget dropped today; not many surprises so far - still going through it. Public safety, the marine highway funding, BSA funding - we'll be looking closely at these. Loki has filed a number of motions: renewable energy is a big one. Parole Board. We're here to listen to any concerns.

SJ: On our agenda is a resolution calling for a call to action to finance homelessness. Are we going to get that support? Will Loki be a leader for that support?

Loui: I'm sure she will.

Allen: I'm requesting for our next council meeting, if the senator could status capital appropriations and DOT related to improvements of Glen and New Seward Highways.

Loui: Definitely.

Evan Anderson (for Cliff Groh): The childcare task force just concluded meetings for the year and recommendations finalized by the governor and the administration and will be two opportunities to implement actions. HB89 and HB46 will address these issues.

ASD:

Carl Jacobs for Kelly Lessens: Operating budget for next year didn't provide an increase to the BSA. The School Board is focused on next year's operating budget. There is a document-a survey in the district chains that is budget priority survey.

Ron: How will you solve the 90 million deficit? The school district was going to consolidate services with the municipality.

Carl: The Board is still looking at it now. That's the reason for the survey. As to consolidating services, it has been looked at several times and we found no cost savings.

SJ: Remote learning days don't work. It's better than extending the school year, but when decisions for snow days are made, the priority needs to be made to get kids in school, and the hillside kids shouldn't let the whole system close down.

Carl: It was a decision by the administration, not the assembly to divert plowing. Roads had impact on buses driving to school safely, which complicated the decision. How we could evaluate other ways to have a portion of the district open? I do see the administration focusing on a solution.

Assembly Members:

Chris: The Assembly just overrode the vetoes the mayor made of the budget. The budget is being uploaded into SAP and should be ready to go Jan 1. Funding for snow maintenance and efforts to invest in housing to stop cycle of shelter, streets were the focus of the budget. There is an assembly meeting Tuesday where we'll take on the Elections manual, and other smaller items. There is a work session tomorrow, then no meeting until Jan 3 or 4. Mayor decided to pivot snow plowing, but I have information that the plows were sent to Eagle River and the hillside. Roads look the same to me as they did on Friday. We received a notice to the state that they agreed to pay the municipality \$30,000. There's something fishy there because we just received news that if we didn't emergency fund \$1 million of hauling, then they were going to have to pull the plows off the streets. The math doesn't add up. We are looking to fill positions. Housing, workforce development are main priorities for 2024. Our workforce is down 35%, so services are down as well.

Roger Briley: When it comes to snow plowing, do you think if we had a better system for moving cars off the roads that this will expedite plowing and if so, how do you think we can enforce this?

Chris: We no longer have NIXLE, but we now have RAVE. You can receive RAVE alerts by text message to move cars. I heard the plow this morning, and moved my car, but no notification system is available right now, so there can be no enforcement. It's a budgeting fault. We do need to innovate and investments.

Allen: Housing: What is the draft housing action strategic plan status?

Chris: Ongoing. Comments still available. We'll be introducing an assembly information memorandum that compiles all the comments. On the 19th at noon, there's another opportunity to ask questions online with Charles Marohn from the housing summit from Houston. I want to underscore that if you have a specific street you can't get out because of plowing, email me with specific information. Response is generally forthcoming with more specific information.

Karen: I'm impressed with my street, however, they plowed in my dumpster. Maybe leave a comment with them?

Chris: There have been several instances where Solid Waste Services wasn't picking up trash. I was able to find a solution because they emailed me with specific information.

Allen: We are the only major metropolitan area on North American continent . That's Anchorage. That makes us unique which brings challenges and opportunities. As conversations continue, if we could raise the level of awareness that we are unique and need to be more innovative.

Chris: Merrill Field: previously the director had claimed there was a robust process regarding these new IFR procedures and routes. Since then, the director has been fired and yesterday the group held a meeting at noon and I was given enough information that shows the safety flight path narrowed again over the greenbelt of the park instead of the neighborhood. There was some confidence that helicopters don't have instrument ratings and won't fly that path. There is no new director, but an interim, who is also Kolby Hickel, who is also the department municipal manager, so nothing is really moving forward, but they did correct the error in flight approaches to the FAA and put a stop to it.

Allen: I want to thank you for your support.

Chris: I'll get the map to you for your records.

Presentations:

Ben Simonds: I'm the senior fire captain at station 1 downtown. We have a recruit academy graduating next week. New academy and new recruits start Jan 16th through April. We got funding for additional mental health clinicians for the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT). They are hired now. The goal is to provide 24 hour services for the city. Thank you for your funding support. We hired our 1st public information officer in over a decade full time to inform general public of events and incidents we respond to. Pulse Point, an App, helps the public know what's going on with accidents, or you can have it notify you that someone is within 1/4 mile who requires CPR and you can respond if you want. Getting the PIO is a big deal - the assembly just approved 10 additional positions to increase our much needed staffing. On pace for 45,000 calls this year. We get almost 20 calls in a 24 hour period. Reminder that smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms are working. Make sure your electric heaters are being used safely. Clean your heating systems professionally. Always welcome to swing by.

Karen: Where do we dispose of old fire extinguishers?

Ben: You can't refill them, so the easiest thing to do is turn them upside down, then disperse the gas that's inside and throw the powder left inside away.

Ron: Are fire hydrants being shoveled...what about ones not getting shoveled? What can we do systematically about this?

Ben: There's no program, but if you have the opportunity, please shovel your fire hydrant. AWWU will come out and clean them. Our computers show every hydrant in the city and we carry shovels that we can shovel out. We also carry water with us, so it doesn't delay our operations to where we are concerned. You can locate where all the hydrants are at fire stations.

Ben: For liability reasons, we can't tell you to save the fire extinguishers. They are pressure tested, and they have dates on them. Make sure they are in the green.

Allen: Regarding the MCT, what is a good metric for a citizen to contact the MCT?

Ben: Do we request them specifically? You call 9-1-1 and dispatch will ask questions and determine where to send the right apparatus. When you call 9-1-1 to report someone say, sleeping, we have to go out and confirm if they are intoxicated or not. The more information you give, the better the services. We also tend to feel more comfortable dealing with these folks. We don't want to waste our resources, but provide the correct resources.

Committee Reports (Ad-Hoc):

Homelessness: Numerous ongoing talks, but will talk about that later under new business.

Garden Committee: Karen: No update, but I have a petition for folks to sign. 150 or so signatures so far.

Merrill Field: Karen: At the meeting - nothing to add from Chris' report. I suggested they hold meeting for concerned citizens to address noise issues.

Allen: Key thing is municipality asking FAA to publish new procedures to IFR. IFR can impact runway safety protection zones. Citizens were concerned that homes would be taken. We discovered that is not the case and our concerns are allayed. Still have other issues.

Ron: Helicopters changed the training flights landing. That's a big part of the noise landing on the east/west runways. That's already been done. That's contributing to the noise.

Grant Implementations:

Completed matching grant for the Anchorage Parks Foundation. Eastchester Park has had improvements. We'll fill planter boxes this spring to improve that part of the neighborhood.

EPA EJ Grant fulfilled. Got formal acceptance and signed a contractual agreement from US DOT on reconnecting communities grant. I want to point out here there will be some positive stuff happening associated with this grant. The purpose is to deal with the Gambell/Ingra corridor. Hope to come up with an approach that makes things better. It's important for neighbors to participate and be part of the community and advocate for our voices to be heard.

Public Safety:

Maria: Mental Health first aid training is available to us. Several instructors in Anchorage we can utilize. Can arrange a Fairview group training. Can find free courses. Still doing reading club every Wednesday at the annex here. When people are connected, they feel that there is somewhere to go for help. Working on starting an emergency food pantry here at the rec. center. If interested in helping, there is a need. Children's Lunchbox is here in the afternoons, but not every week or every day. Need for something more local for Fairviewers for Fairview.

Standing Reports:

Allen: It's the end of the year and important for us to take stock and get sense of what's happened and get a sense of what the neighborhood has done. Lighting initiative: more vibrant every winter. Community gardens: hope to get that going next year. EPA EJ Grant: which included air quality monitor, videos -Voices of Fairview. We produced a community workshop on scenarios for a better future for Fairview. Successful in getting reconnecting communities grant - a national grant - and collaboration with DOT and now they're paying attention to us and coordinating with us. Eastchester Park improvements: We had a successful block party.

Safety walks were organized both with AARP and AMATS and IDing what we can do to improve safety for pedestrians in our neighborhood. We had a Spring Cleanup event. Completed Lion's Park challenge grant. Moved forward with our Fairview Rec. Center master plan. New security system here at the rec. center as well as WI-FI because of advocacy of council. Homelessness issue is a big issue. The council in March organized a workshop on homelessness. Well attended - had mayor and assembly and state legislators. Good conversation that resulted in recognition that Sullivan Arena had to close. In May, Sullivan Arena closed down. Council members participated in the council task force. Been advocate for reducing neighborhood negative impacts, and now any new shelter has to come up with an impact analysis before it opens up. There is a collective effort with six other councils to work on homelessness issues. Positive things are happening. It may not seem like it, but they are. There will be more and there are many opportunities for people to participate. Our motto is Fairview: where people make the difference.

Karen: The Eastchester Park people will be here at noon tomorrow, so if you want to participate, please come.

Quarterly Treasurer's report: Sharon: Income: \$375 from block party tabling and donations; expenses: check from block party cashed for \$250. Zoom annual fee \$149.90. AutoTats signing: \$290; Traffic control for block party \$500. Total expenses: \$1189.90. Assets: general subaccount: \$2639.40, community development subaccount: \$1013.24 beautification subaccount: \$484, block party subaccount: \$1101, Toward a Better Fairview subaccount: \$10,643. petty cash: \$261.08. Total Assets: \$15,349.56. Total liabilities: none. 15,349.56 total assets.

Dave: 2023 block party move to 2024?

Sharon: Move it to next year

Old Business:

Winter festival: with the success of DOT contract, it will be on Hyder St around Feb 24. Offering many activities. Can I have a motion to appropriate up to \$1000 match funds from Fairview account to winter fest?

SJ: I'd like to make a motion for the \$1000 for the winter fest.

Rene: What are the activities going to be?

Allen: Still doing details. Will need to create a winter festival committee to work out details of the event. Maybe sled dog rides, food trucks, warming centers with fires, snow maze/hay bale maze. Maybe some kind of kids race? Anchorage Museum as part of design week hopes to include some of their activities as part of the festival.

Rene: I think we should form a committee first and then appropriate funds.

Allen: Comment noted.

James: I would like to donate \$1000 to offset costs of the festival.

Sharon: The money is coming from the Towards a Better Fairview sub account which was created to support activities related to the council to create better unity between all parts of the neighborhood. So, technically according to the bylaws, this is money raised for special purpose. Don't need a motion to move money.

Allen: Motion approved.

“Call to action” Resolution: Sylvia with downtown council wanted to raise profile on homeless issue and she approached other six councils in north Anchorage area along with midtown, and we hammered out this resolution with recommendations to the mayor and assembly folks. We are the last community council to address this resolution. Every community council has unanimously passed the resolution. Can I have a motion to approve?

SJ: Move to pass resolution 2023-? as presented. Karen seconded. A powerful statement from the community that we want to see more resources into the community to help with this issue we have been dealing with for the last few years.

Allen: Resolution approved as presented.

New Business:

Traditionally, our December meeting is broken early to celebrate and have a potluck. This year, we are in having it in conjunction with Neighborworks Alaska reconnecting grant at our January meeting.

Proposed warming Center:

Stephanie Williams (director and founder Graceful Touch): Our operation, which has been open for a little over a year, is at 1536 Gambell. We realized a need a few weeks ago after deaths that a warming center was in need. We started to collaborate with Alexis Johnson to put together a warming center and submitted a proposal to the council. A lot of pushback from the community and another meeting was held that addressed proposed suggestions. One that we thought was good, was put in an updated proposal and we're here today to submit that proposal. Referral only warming center collaborating with another agency in town that provides shelter facility. GT would tentatively act as a response partner for the agency received. We propose to initially cap at 15 to be based on performance metrics without increased calls to APD. We would find a way to compensate that agency, enabling them to transport folks to the locked front door. A lot of people had concerns about which way people would be coming in and out, but there would be controlled access of front door and back door for emergency only. We are willing to sign a good neighbor agreement. The agency that I'm speaking about is the Brother Francis Shelter. They turn people away every day. When BFS reaches their cap, they could be brought to GT via arranged transportation through a referral service. Insurance needed has been okayed except for the cyber portion which should be arranged in the next few days.

Karen: So no loitering. In the morning, when it's time to release the people go, will there be transport?

Stephanie: That's what we're thinking. We're trying to strategize. We offer transitional services, the navigation center offers transportation so they can pick them up and bring them to the navigation center. Henry House serves breakfast. Perhaps the shuttle can pick them up there. Any other agency can also be included.

Dave: Anticipated to work wouldn't be 15 in, 15 out. Brother Francis turns away teens to twenties every day, so this would allow individuals to warm up and offer them the potential to connect with services. It would be more one or two in and out at one time. Slow and flow.

Karen: During day, you're a service agency. At night, a warming center? Does everyone have to in by a certain time?

Dave: We're full by 9:30 am usually. We would become a subcontractor essentially to provide taxi rides or other transportation.

SJ: I Appreciate you dealing with this process. After seeing different shelters, I have real problems with your proposal. This neighborhood has PTSD. For 40 years, we have served the underserved populations. A warming center is not a shelter, but when people get turned away, they usually have serious mental issues. I'm not confident that two workers can handle these issues. Our experience is beds increase as need increases. I don't see how this can't grow as needs grow. As far as to access to that population, they get referred and brought in by vehicle. You can't prevent them from walking out the door. Gambell is a federal interstate. More will die by getting hit by cars at that location. Attractant of people at the end of their rope is a negative. It will bring vultures and the sharks. I don't think you've solved these issues. For that reason, I'm opposed to this.

Roger Branson (mental health advocate): During the daytime hours, will you be offering services like Webelow?

Stephanie: No.

Joe Wood: I was homeless off and off for 33 years. I adamantly oppose this. I went in to the office of GT last week. They have no services and can't direct you anywhere. Last night I saw people dumpster diving right after they closed. Once the Sullivan Arena closed, we didn't have dumpster diving issue until the warming center opened up.

Steph: I too have been homeless. We are not a warming center. We operate as a resource center that offers case management and other services. I haven't had one APD call, one OD, one fire department call. Not one neighbor that has complained. I encourage you to come by. I will always operate as a referral service. My team will come and clean up any mess if you call me with a problem.

Heather: We can pin down a specific uptick to when you placed a sign in your window saying a shelter is coming soon. As soon as you advertised a warming shelter is opening up, we had noticeable uptick in issues.

In Chatbox: James noted for first time ever, his two dumpsters were broken into last night.

Roger: Introduced resolution regard this opposing Graceful Touch to operate as a warming Center.

Allen: Next, our council will take up the resolution next month. This allows for adequate consideration before the body. It will be brought up in the January meeting under old business.

Community Comments/Concerns:

Karen: I read an article in the newspaper that said the assembly and municipality is no longer considering a warming shelter in Fairview.

Alexis: No insurance documents have been submitted until today. Government process is slow. Warming is 24 hours a day, and it's come and go. CSS can provide a shuttle, but you can't force people to get on the shuttle. Is CSS planning on taking them in the middle of the night to

Third Ave to a closed shelter? If people want to leave 10 minutes later, there won't be a shuttle. They can't sleep; it's a code violation. It's Considered overnight habitation. They are in a heightened state of fight or flight. As for 15 people capacity: when get down to a certain capacity, staffing ratio doesn't change. Same cost, so the price tag has no cost benefit. It's a government process; we need to get the appropriation before the assembly and bring the contract before the body. It's a two assembly meeting process. Now you're looking at operating the first week of February. Will we even need this then?

Ron: I want to adopt a hydrant. I'll get the map, get people to volunteer and make sure every hydrant is shoveled. Name it after a dog.

Roger: What is ADOC:

Allen: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. It's a PEL project managed by DOT: planning and environmental study looking at a new connection between New Seward Highway and the Glenn Highway and looking at controlled access. In the past, they've said their solution is that the best way to make that connection is an underground freeway under Hyder Street. A lot of disinvestment has been associated with it.

Roger: What is the Ad Hoc homeless committee and how do you join?

Allen: It was created by the council to address neighborhood needs associated with homelessness and the Sullivan Arena impacts.

SJ: The ad hoc part is because the council used to have a number of standing committees. They were on the agenda all the time and if these committees aren't doing anything, why have them, and why not add them as needed and who is the chair?

Allen: Right now there is a lack of chair of the homeless committee, so it falls on the president of the council.

Roger: How do we get someone to do it? Rene wants to be on this committee. I feel like Graceful Touch has been misled and we could have saved Graceful Touch three meetings.

Steph: We agree. My mother saw a need; we addressed the hurdles; we came back a third time; I feel like you might owe us apology.

Rene: Allen owes you the apology because Allen is the one the day after the last meeting sent you the email saying don't sight me as the source of this information, even though we were already against this and we made our feelings known about it.

Stephanie: Alexis, You have done nothing but keep us informed. Every hoop we had to jump, we don't need to pursue this. We're being attacked and we're not going to take this. Alexis: We've come to you with all the information. We didn't need to be in this third meeting with this proposal. My mom didn't need to open this center. If anything, we are wanting to be supportive and find out how we can help. We feel attacked and that you don't want us to be here. We have been invited to these meetings, but we've been disrespected and attacked and it's been no every time. You could have said no the first time.

Roger: You can't even open until Feb 1st. All the assembly is doing is kicking the plan down the road. You needed to come in April to go into effect now.

Alexis: From a municipal standpoint, we have government processes, one of which is sending a pro forma. A pro forma is not permission to start out.

Stephanie: But when you said hire people, we hired people. She was misled and did that next hurdle and still got spit on during these meetings and Alexis, you threw us under the bus.

Alexis: We're still waiting for insurance.

Stephanie: I understand, but you dais to hire people first.

Sj: point of order: we are past allocated time.

Meeting adjourned 9:19 pm.