

Bear Valley Community Council
Minutes – October 11, 2023

Call to Order, Announcements and Introductions

The regularly-scheduled October 11, 2023 meeting of the Bear Valley Community Council (BVCC) was called to order by Council Chair Cheri Lipps at 7:03 pm. As decided and announced during prior meetings and in this meeting's announcement, the meeting was held in person at the Bear Valley Elementary School library. Chair Lipps announced a quorum of eight community council members present, along with a few guests, also attending in person. As this is the October meeting, BVCC executive board elections are the primary agenda item.

Legislative, Assembly, School Board and JBER Updates

Chair Lipps introduced State Senator / Senate President Cathy Giessel, who in turn introduced her Anchorage staff person Paige Brown. Sen. Giessel provided an update on recent state legislative activities and her priorities for the upcoming session, including improvements to the state's energy transmission system. As part of her interest in state energy issues, Sen. Giessel led a brief discussion of Cook Inlet gas production and Iowa's small nuclear reactor power generation project. There was also brief discussion concerning road funding for Anchorage, including both maintenance and capital improvement monies, as well as the work of the Anchorage Blood Bank. Sen Giessel reminded attendees that she puts out a weekly newsletter each Thursday and can be contacted by email at senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov

There were no other Assembly, School Board or legislative representatives present. A brief discussion was held regarding the difficulty to our representatives' attending in-person BVCC meetings versus Zoom meetings, particularly insofar as they frequently have multiple Community Council and other evening meetings to attend.

BVCC Officer and Committee Reports

Chair Lipps lead off by describing the relationship of BVCC with HALO (Hillside Home and Landowners Organization.) HALO meets on the first Thursday of each month at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Elmore and via Zoom. It was agreed by attending members that BVCC values HALO's work and although we have a Member-at-Large seat for a HALO representative, the seat is presently unfilled. Chuck Berray proposed that BVCC increase its annual donation to HALO from \$50 to \$75 and a motion to that effect was made and seconded (A. Pinsonneault / C. Livsey). The motion passed unanimously.

BVCC Treasurer Angie Pinsonneault provided her report, noting the BVCC checking account as of Sept 30, 2023 has a balance of \$786.69. This is a decrease in cash balance of \$125.03, reflecting funds expended on the BBQ held at the Lipps home following the neighborhood clean-up in May 2023. Ms. Pinsonneault also noted she had been successful in persuading Global Credit Union to waive the \$5 monthly account fee since BVCC is a non-profit organization. Several members (including your Secretary) confessed to being remiss in not making any (voluntary) contribution to the BVCC's coffers, and to Treasurer Pinsonneault's delight, wallets were opened and cash contributions made. These will be reflected in future monthly reports.

Neither BVCC Vice Chair Kaitlyn Jackson nor Member-at-Large Kori Marchowsky were in attendance, so no FCC report or Firewise reports were received.

LRSA Updates

RCVH LRSA Chair Verne Pomraning expressed some recent frustrations with his LRSA's present contractor, largely due to lack of timely responses to requests for road service. Conni Livsey relayed a brief report on behalf of Bill Ennis, Chair of the Bear Valley LRSA, that road service was satisfactory in that service area, although he continues to have concerns regarding funding levels for anticipated winter work since we have a very low LRSA mill rate.

Annual Elections

Chair Lipps opened nominations for all BVCC officer and committee seats, reminded attendees that candidates must be present to be nominated and members must have attended 2 meetings in the prior 12 months in order to vote. All seats are for a 1-year term.

The group acknowledged that some current seat-holders whom council members would like to have continue in their roles were not in attendance, and no other nominations were offered, so nominations for the three Member-at-Large seats (Committees Coordinator, Assembly Liaison and HALO Representative) were tabled until a future meeting. It is hoped that Kori Marchowsky will accept nomination to continue as Committee Coordinator and Sean Holland may accept nomination as Assembly Liaison.

Nominations were opened for Treasurer and current Treasurer Angie Pinsonneault was nominated (V. Pomraning, C. Lipps) and asked if she would continue to serve. She accepted nomination and was re-elected by unanimous consent. All present expressed sincere thanks to Ms. Pinsonneault for her continued service as our Treasurer.

Nominations were next opened for Secretary. Current Secretary Conni Livsey expressed reservations about remaining in the role due to anticipated frequent out-of-state travel interfering with availability during meetings and attempted to persuade another member to take on the office. Seeing no show of enthusiasm, Ms. Livsey agreed to continue to serve, and was re-elected by unanimous consent.

Nominations were opened for Vice Chair, currently held by Kaitlyn Jackson, who was not present. No other nominations were received and this position was tabled for a future meeting.

Nominations for Chair were opened, and members proposed (nay, begged) current Chair Cheri Lipps to continue, despite her protestations. Ms. Lipps was formally nominated (A. Pinsonneault / C. Livsey) and rapidly re-elected before she could leave the meeting.

Other Business and Adjournment

Discussion returned to the merits of in-person versus Zoom meetings. Chair Lipps read an email received from a council member complaining of difficulty attending Zoom meetings. It was agreed that Zoom meetings offer convenience, particularly during inclement winter weather, probably foster greater participation and enhance the ability of representatives and guests to attend. Everyone also agreed that the in-person meeting contributed to an esprit-de-corps that is difficult to achieve via remote attendance. It was moved and seconded (V. Pomraning / C. Livsey) to hold two meetings per year, October and February, in person at Bear Valley Elementary School with the remainder of the meetings to be held via Zoom. Following discussion, a friendly amendment was offered and accepted to set the October and April meeting as in-person, to avoid winter driving conditions. The motion carried with no opposition.

Chair Lipps noted that there would be no December meeting due to the Holidays, and also reminded members that due to busy summer schedules and low attendance, there were usually no meetings in June, July and August. The annual Community Clean-up is anticipated to take place in May 2024. Brief additional discussion followed regarding efforts to increase community attendance, including mailed newsletters and potential use of the Door Direct (Every Door Direct Mail) targeted mail services, which Senator Giessel indicated she had used satisfactorily.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Lipps at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Constance Livsey
BVCC Secretary