

## Minutes of the Tudor Area Community Council

Nov. 5, 2009

### First Church of God, Tudor and MacInnes

President Sheli Dodson called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. There were ten members, five firemen, and five guests present. The council approved the minutes for the Sept. 3, 2009, meeting without objection.

#### **Speakers:**

**Assembly:** Assemblywoman Elvi Gray-Jackson reported that there were about 200 people attending the Campbell Creek and Rogers Park Community Council meetings in response to the Highway-to-Highway (H2H) Environmental Impact Statement. She worked with Assembly members Selkregg and Claman to amend the six-year fiscal plan. The amendments passed but the Mayor vetoed the revision in the same meeting. Most people testifying on the budget were concerned with quality of life issues. The budget is required to be approved by Dec. 9, 2009.

Elvi said that Mayor Sullivan's proposal to refinance some municipal bonds would not get any more favorable interest rates. She and others feel that refinancing will only stretch payments out over a longer period of time and will cost taxpayers additional money in the long run. She is part of the slim majority on the Assembly that want to use any revenue sharing from the State of Alaska to lower property taxes. Mayor Sullivan proposes using revenue sharing to fund services, and Assemblywoman Gray-Jackson wonders where we will get the money to provide those services in those years when the State doesn't provide any revenue sharing. She finds it ironic that this was Mr. Coffee's position in February 2009; now he's with Mayor Sullivan.

There were questions and some discussion about taxing to the tax cap limit, and the impact if the Muni does or does not tax the full amount. In terms of the taxpayer it appears to be a wash. Using revenue sharing to reduce property taxes allows the Muni to tax to the tax cap limit. If revenue sharing is used to provide services, taxes are not levied to the amount allowed under the cap. Since each year's taxes collected set the base for the next year, not taxing to the amount allowed sets up revenue shortfalls in future years when revenue sharing may be lower or eliminated entirely. Mayors Weurch and Begich both faced budget shortfalls because previous mayors had not taxed the allowed amount, according to Ms. Gray-Jackson.

**Fire Department:** Fire Dept. personnel noted that October was Fire Prevention Month and made sure that we all were aware about checking smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries. Rep. Gardner asked about the impacts of the rolling closures on fire stations. A civilian said that the closures were an attempt to level manpower shortages across the city. Vacation season is mostly over so the closures are probably over for now. Who knows what will happen next year given the uncertainty of the Muni budgets at this time. There was some decrease in quality last summer.

There has been an increase in the number of calls for carbon monoxide (CO) alarms due to furnaces malfunctioning at the start of the heating season. Please remember that there is no charge for reporting a smoke alarm or a CO alarm. Firemen will be checking children's car seats at Station 4 on Saturday, 11/09/09, from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. A new car seat will cost \$10 if you need one. The fireman said that it's good to replace child car seats every five years or after an accident.

**Legislative Report:** Rep. Berta Gardner reported that the alcohol detox unit run by the Salvation Army at the Clithroe Center at Pt. Woronzof has reopened thanks to legislative efforts spearheaded by Sen. Johnny Ellis to put people who use massive amounts of public resources into secure treatment. (Mr. Matthew Moser represented Sen. Ellis at the meeting.) The council Chair said that

the Anchorage Assembly pays attention to community councils with regard to liquor license applications.

Rep. Gardner also noted that she and Sen. Ellis took about 300 pages of public comments and testimony to the Highway-to-Highway project office. The project must make a “good faith effort” to evaluate alternative routes. Rep. Gardner said she and Sen. Ellis would closely monitor the H2H process going forward. She said that people do pay attention to government in action, but as long as they perceive that all is going well they do not show up at meetings. They do participate when there are issues that concern them.

Rep. Gardner expects that prominent issues in the next legislative session will include natural gas production and storage for Anchorage-area users, the small (bullet) gas line, and the big gas line to the lower 48.

**FCC Report:** Jason Bergerson, vice chair of the Federation of Community Councils, reported on the state of the FCC. The Assembly cut funding for the FCC, and they need community support to keep funding. He said that over half of the money that the FCC gets from the Muni goes directly to communications, primarily postage for U.S. mail at \$1,800 a month. In a twist of fate, the reduction of hours for libraries is having a negative effect on the FCC’s efforts to convert primarily to e-mail for community council newsletters, as some people who use computers at the libraries do not have access to computers at home. Tod Butler said that Tudor Area has 32 mail-outs. There was further discussion on requirements for bulk mailings.

Mr. Bergerson is also the chair of the Muni Budget Advisory Committee. He said that budget cuts are affecting code enforcement, libraries, kids’ programs, and transportation. All have been reduced in scope or hours or availability. More cuts are on the way.

**Old Business:** The KABATA (Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority) representative wants a resolution of support from the council. Sheli Dodson will make arrangements to have the KABATA representative, Anchorage Citizens Coalition (group advocating for responsible development of transportation corridors), and a Government Hill Community Council representative (they are the area directly impacted by the Knik Arm Bridge and access roads), all present at the next meeting. The Tudor Area secretary asked that any proposed resolutions be presented electronically, so that the council can disseminate them to area residents for consideration. There was some further discussion on the merits of KABATA.

**New Business:** None

The council adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

The president asks that we register our e-mail addresses with the Federation of Community Councils’ new e-mail list manager at <http://www.communitycouncils.org/>. Use of the new e-mail list manager will cut down on the labor-intensive process of having the office manager enter each e-mail address by hand.

<p>Tudor Area Community Council <b>We want to hear from you!</b> Contact me at: Tudor Area Community Council Sheli Dodson, Chair PO Box 230808 Anchorage, AK 99523 (907) 522-6436 or sheli@gci.net Put Tudor Community Council in the subject line</p>	<p>Contact Info Anchorage Police Dept. Comm. Center (Dispatcher): 786-8900  Emergency: 911  Code Violation Hotline 343-4141</p>
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*Assemblywoman Elvi Gray-Jackson  
Assembly Notes for Tudor Community Council  
November 5, 2009*

Brought forward a resolution supported by Mr. Coffey opposing any H2H alternative that will destroy neighborhoods. The resolution was unanimously approved.

Worked with Assembly members Selkregg and Claman to make necessary revisions to the Six Year Fiscal Plan. The amendments were fair and included goals that should be part of the quality of life for our citizens. Six members approved the amendments but the Mayor vetoed the revision on the floor.

2010 Budgets – Operating and Capital public hearings for both general government and the utilities ended on Tuesday, November 3rd. The Assembly will offer amendments to the budget and approve the budget at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

If the proposed Assembly amendments pass, and Mayor and vetoes the amendments, the Charter has changed and now states that “If the assembly fails to approve the budget and make the necessary appropriation within the time stated, either before or by veto override after a veto of all or a portion of a budget, the Assembly shall hold such regular or special meetings as are necessary to adopt a budget and make the necessary appropriation.”

Refinancing Bond – Not a good deal because it will cause the taxpayers an additional \$6M over the life of the extended bond payment.

State Revenue Sharing should be used for property tax relief because it is not promised. To pay for services with these funds is simply not good public policy.

The effect of not taxing to the cap = a budget shortfall to fund services in the future.