

Minutes of the Tudor Area Community Council
Dec. 3, 2009
First Church of God, Tudor and MacInnes

President Sheli Dodson called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. There were eight members and four guests present. The council approved the minutes for the Nov. 5, 2009, meeting without objection.

Speakers:

Assembly: Assemblywoman Elvi Gray-Jackson reported that the last public hearing on the budget had been held and that the final budget was up for approval next week. The Muni charter requires the budget to be approved by Dec. 9, 2009. The assembly majority added amendments to fund the Federation of Community Councils (FCC) and to cancel the bond refunding proposed by Mayor Sullivan. The mayor vetoed the latter amendment. The Muni still needs an ordinance to execute the bond sale. That will be on the assembly's agenda after the first of the year.

Ms. Gray-Jackson said she would like to compromise with the Mayor on the budget and not spend an inordinate amount of time bickering about it. She prefers to provide more of the services that are needed by the community. Mrs. Gardner asked how the \$98,000 for the FCC compared to previous year's funding. Sheli Dodson said that the FCC has been funded at \$108,000 a year for twenty years. Dick Tremaine, the FCC's president, testified before the Assembly twice on the budget. When asked by a constituent, Elvi thought there was a fair chance that the Assembly would be able to get funding for the public bus system.

Mrs. Gardner also asked about the Muni's obligation to Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) for their annual meeting to be held in Anchorage in 2011. Sheli thought that the Muni would need to provide funding for a coordinator, probably about \$30,000 to \$40,000. The FCC is planning to apply for grants for some of the funding for the NUSA conference.

Legislative Report: Rep. Berta Gardner said the Legislature was getting ready to meet in January. Neither she nor Sen. Johnny Ellis had legislation that they were ready to discuss. She feels that energy policy and the natural gas pipeline will be major issues this session. Sen. Ellis said that he had worked with Mayor Sullivan on the Clithro public inebriate treatment center at Pt. Woronzof. Rep. Gardner and Assemblywoman Gray-Jackson were also involved in the project.

Sen. Ellis said that he and Rep. Gardner worked on improving the Highway-to-Highway (H2H) project office's choice of routes for the H2H project. He said his goal was not to destroy neighborhoods or schools or churches, which current project route choices do. He has a survey on his webpage on state energy policy, and he would appreciate your opinions.

KABATA: Sheli Dodson said that the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority (KABATA) representative did not come to our meeting as promised. They had asked the Council for a resolution in support of the Knik Arm crossing. The Council invited a KABATA representative to appear at our December meeting along with representatives of the Government Hill Community Council (GHCC) to discuss KABATA. Bob French, the GHCC president, did come to our meeting. He also represented the Anchorage Citizens Coalition.

Mr. French presented some background information on the Knik Arm Bridge. His basic point was that the bridge is not free. KABATA wants the State of Alaska to pledge its full faith and credit in backing the approximately \$700 million cost of construction of the bridge. Operation of the bridge is not included in that cost. U.S. Rep. Don Young got \$106 million appropriated for KABATA, leaving some \$600 million plus remaining to be funded. The bridge authority has proposed a mix of public and private funding, but they have not been specific on what entities will be involved or what their stake might be. KABATA have already spent some \$47 million already on staffing, consulting firms, studies, lobbying, and operating the Authority.

An independent study by Wilbur Smith Associates, an infrastructure consulting firm, indicates that the new Knik Arm crossing will take 59 minutes for a trip from Wasilla to Anchorage, compared to 48 minutes for the trip on the existing Glenn and Parks Highways. KABATA estimates the one-way passenger car toll at \$5 to \$8.

Other issues not addressed here, include KABATA's projected level of traffic and revenues, critical habitat for beluga whales, Corps of Engineers permitting, expansion of the Point McKenzie or Anchorage seaports, Point MacKenzie-area historical earthquake activity being significantly above the Alaska state average, Anchorage International Airport expansion, land values in Anchorage, availability of gravel for construction, accommodating increased traffic in the downtown Anchorage area (and who pays for the road improvements downtown), et cetera ad infinitum. There was further discussion and many questions. Even though asked, a KABATA representative was not present for discussion.

It is clearly evident that nothing is settled on this issue. The Council took no action on KABATA's request for a supporting resolution. The issue of the bridge is back at the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission to determine where the project should fit in Anchorage's development plans.

Further information is available at KABATA's website, <http://www.knikarmbridge.com/>. The Anchorage Citizens Coalition website is <http://www.accalaska.org/transportation.html> - KAC. More information on the Knik Arm Bridge may be found at <http://www.knikbridgefacts.org/>.

FCC Report: Sheli Dodson said that 11 of the 38 community councils attended the last Federation of Community Councils (FCC) meeting. The FCC members present did not form a quorum. She reported that travel to the NUSA conference came from FCC "corporate funds", not from the Muni grant for FCC operations. Sheli said that one-quarter of the FCC's operating expenses are for mailing information to residents. There are 46 people in the Tudor Area that get hard copy mailing of the TACC newsletter. This is under the amount needed for bulk mailing, so these newsletters are sent first class. There was a short discussion on mailing, including missing mail and e-mails. It seems that many TACC members do not receive e-mailings that are supposed to be made by the FCC office.

A question was asked about the possibility of state grants for funding the FCC. Rep. Gardner pointed out that the grant money that state legislatures have some control over had to be spent on capital projects, not on operations expenses.

Old Business: None

New Business: The Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) meeting in 2011 is a big subject for the FCC. The Anchorage delegation to NUSA must come up with a theme and logo for the conference, which the national NUSA board must then approve. "Wild about neighborhoods" was Anchorage's previous slogan. Sheli Dodson explained what the FCC wanted in a slogan and asked for suggestions from the people at the council meeting. The members present brainstormed ideas and came up with "Neighborhood fun under the midnight sun", among others. Sheli will take the suggestions to the FCC.

The council adjourned at 8:45 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.

*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 17th 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.”

<p style="text-align:center">Tudor Area Community Council We want to hear from you! 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 style="text-align:center">Contact Info Anchorage Police Dept. Comm. Center (Dispatcher): 786-8900 Emergency: 911 Code Violation Hotline 343-4141</p>
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