

Government Hill Community Council
Meeting Minutes 10/21/10

Call to order at 7:05 PM

September Meeting Minutes: Approved with the following changes: corrections to the spelling of Duane Wyatt's name and Mr. Ribuffo's last name; changed the word "importers" to 'imports from down south' in reference to those believed to have been involved in the graffiti off Minnesota.

Gary Miller moved to approve the minutes, Brit Szymoniak seconded, unanimously approved

FCC Delegate Brit Szymoniak volunteered to be our GHCC FCC delegate.

Firefighter Matt McSorley reported that municipal budget cuts include a 3.1 million dollar cut to the fire department. A decrease in the number of available rigs and apparatus in Anchorage and Eagle River include: station 10 engines on Rabbit Creek Road; station 11 trucks in Eagle River; and medic 7. New buildings for station 6 in Muldoon, station 3 in Airport Heights, and station 5 in Spenard are scheduled to open soon. Two new deputy chiefs are John Drozdowski and Chris Bushue.

A reduced Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating can affect city, commercial and residential property owner's insurance rates if the fire department has a reduction in fire equipment and services.

October is national fire prevention month. As winter approaches, review home safety plans with kids; clean out dryer vents; and do not store anything too close to a heat source.

The Community Service Patrol (CSP) contract will now go through the Health & Human Services (HHS) department instead of the fire department.

Assembly Update: Patrick Flynn reports that the ordinance to impose uniform restrictions on alcohol package store conditional use permits passed. Assembly discussions focused on product issues such as bottle size, product labeling for store identification, ID checks, and security tapes. Tesoro's official application to transfer alcohol license to GH Tesoro location was received. These items were included in the conditional use permit before they codified it and we will wait to see if/how it will work.

Budget discussions are ongoing. There will be a minimum of three public hearings on the budget starting Tuesday, October 26th. The public can speak to any issue on the budget. Issues include MLP, AWWU, and the need for a noise monitoring system in Fairview due to their proximity to Merrill Field. Two priorities in the administrative budget are 1) to keep property taxes at a minimum and 2) to keep taxes below the tax cap. An Anchorage sales tax was considered but charter restrictions on sales tax would mean that it could not occur until April. There is public concern over library and bus transit cuts and there is talk of increasing bus fares.

Several of our community members expressed concern that basic public services such as transit, APD, firefighters, and libraries should not be the first items to be cut, and that efforts should be made to reduce administrative costs first.

Assemblyman Flynn reported that the graffiti near West High School discussed at our last Council meeting has been cleaned up.

Mr. Flynn retired from the AARC and suggests we extend an invitation to the new president of the AARC to attend our GHCC meetings. He will be out-of-town during our next GHCC meeting.

Ms. DiPietro inquired about Tesoro's alcohol permit & Assemblyman Flynn noted he received a second notice on their GH license transfer. There may be different ways to affect the alcohol permit including some that would require assembly action.

Legislative Update:

Zac Mannix, aide for Senator Ellis, sat in for Senator Ellis. No report given but said he is here to listen.

House Representative Les Gara: Rep. Gara indicated that he and most legislators on both sides support Measure 1 which would increase the number of legislators. He indicated that increases in Anchorage's population support the need for additional representation. The addition of 4 representatives and 2 senators would cost about 2 million dollars.

Rep Gara had mixed feelings about the rural education bond measure that might create more disparity between how urban and rural schools are treated. When asked about another school bond that community members suggested had an even higher price tag, Gara said he would look into it and get back to us with more info.

KABATA: President French reported to Rep Gara that KABATA has been trying to obtain TIFIA bonds since last March. French indicated that the TIFIA bonds would require the state to pay for shortfalls in funds if tolls were insufficient to pay KABATA costs. Mr. French emphasized that legislators need to be informed of provisions being made to 3rd parties and that KABATA is in violation of both AMATS and the LRTP. Rep Gara asked to meet with President French for a status update.

Knik Arm Crossing Update covered above during discussion with Representative Gara.

Hollywood Vista No new applications for designs. Currently no residents sit on the ARC board. Residents can sit on the board when they obtain 50% occupancy.

Northpointe Bluff Condominium Association Dave Marker, owner of a newly built Spinelli condo on Bluff Drive, spoke on behalf of nearly 20 other condo owners that showed up to the GHCC meeting to discuss potential violations in the Lumen design project and how it related to their ARC contract. He said the Lumen design project, across the street from their condos, was causing them to lose their southern views. Mr. Marker stated that the Lumen project is violating contractual agreements that the Lumen design cannot impede or obstruct Northpointe Bluff (NPB) Condo views.

Mr. Marker expressed concern that the Lumen design had been approved despite the fact the GHCC Committee was not in agreement with the design presentation made at the GHCC February meeting. President French noted that some of the Lumen design changes may have been made due to unforeseen problems due to contaminated soils. Other NPB condo owners noted that the master development plan has specific guidelines requiring the preservation of the NPB southern views and that they were told the Lumen design was for one story houses with basements when they purchased their NPB condos.

President French noted that another problem related to a design requirement that the Lumen building designed not be identical and that minor changes in glass and colors of garage doors was not in that spirit.

NPB residents were interested in preserving their contractual rights and asked what actions might be taken? Ms. DiPietro suggested we draft a resolution to the ARB. President French noted we have not heard about any of these issues from Sue Lukens. Thomas Pease noted that changes were being made without notifying the GHCC Committee. Another issue concerning the appropriateness of a fence between the project and the Panorama Apartments was discussed.

Ms. DiPietro noted that a month notice is needed before the GHCC votes on a resolution. Stephanie Kesler suggested that the Muni should fund a mediator to help resolve these issues.

Some additional discussion on how the original topography of the area had been changed during the regrading process and how this had affected drainage and views were heard.

In summary, the GHCC agreed to highlight these issues in the minutes and to put out notification that a resolution on this issue would be taken up at the next GHCC meeting.

Parks Committee Update: Volunteers are needed to serve on the Harvard Park VIP committee – 4 adults and 2 children - to work with Parks & Rec on park improvements. Community member's not present but whose names were brought forward were Melinda, Janel, Seth and Bonnie, and Steve and Laura. Mr. Atkinson said he had trimmed a spruce tree and cut down cottonwood trees, one of which had fallen behind a transmitter along the Harvard greenbelt. The council reiterated a new Parks & Rec rule that forbids the use of power equipment inside parks and along the greenbelt.

Anchorage Port Update: Steve Ribuffo informed the council that Assemblyman Flynn is chairman of a newly established port committee. Mr. Ribuffo reported that the Muni, the port, and the Army have reached an agreement to transfer property on the other side of the fence off Bluff Road to the Muni. Garrison and the port have signed the agreement and it will then go to the Army Corp. of Engineers for review before it is forwarded to the Assembly. The assembly should have it signed by year end but final approval from the Army in DC may take another year. The port will have management authority over the property on behalf of the Muni.

Neighborhood Concerns: Vehicle Thefts: The community was informed of a flyer that was posted on neighborhood doors last weekend to alert GH to recent thefts from automobiles. The anonymous author of the flyer had their vehicle broken into twice within a one week period and wanted to warn others.

Old Detail Shop: Thomas Pease reported that the old Detail Shop site near the GH Elementary School has been used as a car lot with 10 to 20 cars regularly parked on the lot. He contacted the Heritage Land Bank. Ms. Kesler suggests we contact Cora Weaver with Code Enforcement as she had attended our GHCC meeting last month and discussed parking violations.

Bobbie Bianchi reported having notified the police about an unidentified man lurking outside her home within inches of her living room window. She said the police just drove by with a spotlight but never stopped to check her yard, her home, or to discuss the incident with her directly.

Mr. Atkinson reported that graffiti was found on the newly installed circular block seating in Al Miller Park. He said he knew who they were and would have a talk with them.

Other Business: NUSA 2011 Conference to be held in Anchorage. Conference committee will offer at least 20 workshops from local organizations. Individual community councils will host a custom tour of their community and provide lunch. Conference attendees will sign up for tours based on community tour description and interest. Ms. Bianchi expressed interest in the tour. Volunteers are needed.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:06 PM Submitted by Donna Rymut