

Government Hill Community Council
Meeting Minutes 1/20/11

Call to order: at 7:08 PM by President French, Donna Rymut, as secretary.

December Minutes: Gary Miller moved to approve the minutes w/one change: Steve Ribuffo added the words, "if practicable and not without neighborhood involvement" to the sentence about no buildings on the "greenbelt safety buffer" at the former Defense Fuels site. 2nded & unanimously approved.

During introductions it was suggested that we contact local surrounding businesses to invite them to GHCC meetings, and we were embarrassed to find that Steve Fernandez with Flint Hills has been attending our monthly GHCC meetings, without our really realizing. We'll try to make that up to him!

President French made a motion to change the order of the agenda to take up the Anchorage Port Update first to accommodate the Port presenter. Seconded & unanimously approved.

Anchorage Port Update: Steve Ribuffo reports that the former Defense Fuels land transfer to the Muni is underway. If there are no hiccups the documents would be on the consent agenda February 1st for the assembly to vote on sometime in February. He noted that the Port has accepted responsibility for the property after years of DEC using monitoring wells to measure the contamination, and that contamination is considered to be at acceptable levels. Mr. Ribuffo stated that the Port will accept responsibility and liability if new contamination is discovered. He noted the easement for an Air Force pipeline along the bluff and that the greenbelt/safety buffer we fought for in 2001 are required to be honored by the deed. The port is required to coordinate future plans for the site with the GHCC.

He said that the Port will meet with the Maritime Administration and the ICRC for the port expansion plans for 2012. Mr. French asked whether the Port needed more monies and Mr. Ribuffo said that they believe the past problems with bent sheet piles, etc will be fixed with better oversight, and that they believe they are within budget for 2011 and will be for 2012 unless there are additional fixes necessary.

FCC Delegate Brit Szymoniak reported that GH is an official tour location for NUSA. Brief discussion took place on whether the location will be at Sunset Park, the S&RD center, or Suzanne Nightingale Park. Nick Szymoniak offered to look into getting an Enstar gas grill for the event. Also, Marty McGee will share a presentation on Municipal Property Assessments with the FCC who will in turn share it with the CC's via their website.

Board Member Nominations took place and include: Bob French for president; Donna Rymut for Vice President; Stephanie Kesler for Secretary; and Mavis Hancock for member at large. The ability to increase the number of At Large members was discussed. The election of officers will be held at the February meeting.

Assembly Update: Tessa Bay, aide to Assemblyman Flynn reported on: 1) The Fairview revitalization plan has passed the legislature including a \$35,000 supplemental amendment 2) a charter amendment to change DT parking rates passed 3) an amended charter was put forward to increase the number of residents at the Cordova Center (halfway house). A public hearing will be held.

Legislative Update: Heather Beaty, aide to Senator Johnny Ellis, and Representative Les Gara were available via teleconference. Rep. Gara stated that the big issue was potential Oil Tax Reform. He stated that he and Senator Ellis worked hard to pass the current tax bill that helped to create a 12 billion dollar surplus. He noted that jobs and investments have increased but not enough. He suggested that the new reform bill is an unnecessary tax break for the oil companies and the income from taxes is needed.

For FY 2012 the governor predicts a 150 million dollar deficit and the new tax law would lead to a 1.5 billion dollar deficit. Rep. Gara noted that low oil taxes never really spurred increased investment.

Rep Gara continues to work on foster care reform and education and noted that few people discuss how budget increases are needed to merely keep up with inflation. He suggested that we contact all of our reps for small community projects etc. such as needed park upgrades and repairs, as they were able to obtain funding last year for Harvard Park.

Rep Gara noted that it would be good to get information out on the myths about the Knik Arm Bridge. Susanne DiPietro inquired about whether KABATA had asked for the annual appropriations from the legislature that was in their TIFIA loan request, bonding, or both. Rep Gara stated he was not certain at this point.

Knik Arm Bridge Update: Susanne DiPietro summarized that KABATA: was pushing forward to apply for permits. KABATA has not issued their RFP for the “Public Private Partner” but have admitted they will need state money to move forward, which is in violation of the Assembly and AMATS requirements; it is unclear whether they will proceed with the P3 partner taking the majority of the risks, or if they will try to fund it directly through state issued bonds and appropriations. President French said they will most likely request direct funding and avoid a bond issue that would require approval by voters. As noted in the legislative section, Rep. Gara stated no funding request has been made to date.

Mavis Hancock raised the concern that KABATA has never addressed a escape route for West GH in the event of an earthquake i.e. if there is a bridge collapse or tank fire.

Harvard Park VIP Committee has a \$50,000 park renovation budget. President French stated there is not enough money to fully restore the tennis and basketball courts in the park. Instead, the money will be spent to reseal the tennis court and restripe for tennis & pickle ball, improve the flower bed at the Harvard Park sign, replace a basketball standard, and planting new trees near the Subway, new gravel on the bluff trails, and new picnic benches, etc. The views at Suzann Nightingale Park and Browns Point Park are also planned to have view corridors restored as called for by past GHCC resolution through thinning trees as coordinated with neighbors at the time of the volunteer work day on May 21, 2011.

Discussion took place on the sensitive nature of cutting down trees to create views, the balance between the aesthetics of opening up views and cutting low branches and brush to increase fire and physical safety for park visitors, with damages that could include: increased noise, increased light pollution, and adverse aesthetic views of the industrial tank farms. It was noted that homeowners who live around these parks will be notified and have a chance to work with the cutting teams before the CC or Parks & Rec decides to remove trees that serve as residential buffer zones from industry.

Other Business: Mavis Hancock wanted to thank the GHCC for considering a memorial for her recently departed husband Howard Hancock – a longtime resident and dedicated GH volunteer.

Catholic Social Services Deputy Director Mary Beth Bragiel came to introduce herself and to let us know that she took over management of the duplex seven months ago and wanted to thank GH for their continued support.

Flint Hills Terminal Manager Steven Fernandez stated that he wanted to let the GHCC know that Flint Hills wanted to help with neighborhood issues and that he would entertain a formal request to be an at large member of the board.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:52 PM Submitted by Donna Rymut