

GOVERNMENT HILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
C/O Community Councils Center • 1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99503



Bob French, President
Donna Rymut, Vice President
Stephanie Kesler, Secretary-Treasurer
Brit Szymoniak, FCC Representative
Mavis Hancock, Brian Fields and Melinda Gant, At-Large Board Members
Stephanie Kesler, Past President

GHCC Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2012
Submitted by Stephanie Kesler

Introductions: Customary round-the-room introductions

April Meeting Minutes Approval

Mavis Hancock moved and Bryan Fields seconded to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.

Heather Beattie aide to Senator Ellis

- The end of the session was very busy with the oil tax debate. Senator Ellis was "Not interested in the \$2B giveaway the Governor was promoting"
- 10 year extension of film industry deal passed
- Also a bill was passed requiring coverage of children with autism spectrum disorders
- Senator Ellis' office in downtown Anchorage is open
- Johnny's office worked very closely with President French in fighting the Knik Arm Crossing
- Harriet Shaftel asked about the KABATA bills that didn't pass - the \$150MM grant for the reserve fund for the Knik Arm Crossing didn't come up, but the bill that would establish the state guarantee for toll shortfalls passed the House but was did not make it out of the Senate Finance Committee.

Assemblyman Patrick Flynn

- Budget passed. Mill levy was also passed. Small increase in the mill levy.
- State monies were used for property tax relief. However, Patrick is concerned about how that will set us up for next year.
- Legislature: Lowered maximum local match for School Districts. Replaced it with more state money. Assembly was not sure how it would play out so they did not lower the mill levy for the school district budget. Next year will be interesting.
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan is done. Policy committee approved, even though the "Firewall" to protect local projects from KAC toll shortfalls was weakened by the removal of language that prohibited additional state funding for the bridge. However, local funds still cannot be diverted to the bridge.
- Assembly still working through the aftermath of the municipal election. The results will not fundamentally change. But there will be procedural changes.
- President French asked, "What's next in the MTP process? "Has the MTP been transmitted to FHWA." Patrick thinks there may be a few tweaks prior to transmittal to FHWA.
- Patrick thanked Steve Ribuffo for his great job as the Interim Director of the Port of Anchorage. Huzzahs and applause.

Representative Gara

- Nice to be back home after his cancer surgery and treatment
- Legislature Activity this past session
 - \$150K for Government Hill Elementary
 - Access improvements to Ship Creek
 - Elderberry Park Upgrade
 - Best thing the legislature did for Government Hill: stopped the Bridge. The killer on the deal was language that held the State liable for operating shortfalls.
 - Much of the session was on oil taxes.
 - Some decent successes: the scholarship bill that incorporates needs base as well as merit based. Did pretty well on Pre-K education bill
- A candidate has announced to run against Representative Gara

No Legislative update was available from Representative Saddler

Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Brit Szymoniak

Stephanie Kesler reported for Brit: Brit was elected Vice President of the FCC.

Alaska Railroad (ARR) - Tim Sullivan

1. Summer season has started. Daily trains north and south
2. 412,000 – 415,000 passengers expected this summer
3. The Open House on May 5th was great. 4,000-5,000 people visited. Everyone had lots of fun
4. Federal funding
 - a. \$30MM reduction in Federal funds for the ARR
 - b. Why is Alaska being singled out?
 - c. Pink sheet - request folks to send comments to congressional delegation and conference committee
 - d. The bill is in conference committee: Senate/House. Representative Don Young is on the committee
 - e. Harriet Shaftel: does funding impact the Port MacKenzie Rail project? No - that will be funded by the state.

Parks - Mavis Hancock

- Harriett Shaftel asked if we have enough people present for quorum so that we can vote on the Parks Resolution. We do have enough people because business representatives are voting members of the council.
- Suzan Nightingale McKay Park and Garden
 - Mavis: We adopted park and garden. Will need to vote on that again – park adoptions need to be renewed annually.
 - Mavis: Met with the horticulturalists at Muni.
 - Adopting a park involves: keeping it clean, keeping an eye on the park
 - Bob French: Harriet has really helped out on keeping the park clean.
 - Harriet, A lot of people have helped keep the park clean
 - Harriet: moves and Steph seconds that we adopt the Suzan Nightingale McKay Park and the Garden. The motion passed unanimously
- Some discussion about the number of parks that Government Hill has: 8 total, 6 official.
- Sylvia Villamides volunteered that The Anchorage Responsible Beverage Retailers Association (ARBRA) would like to adopt a park. Bob suggested Harvard Park. Sylvia will pursue.
- Harvard Park flower gardens
 - Matted with roots - needs to remove the matted roots. Rototiller won't work.
 - It will require a Sawzall to remove the roots. Needs to have it done before June 8th. Bob French and Bob Atkinson will do it.
- Spring Parks Resolution
 - Items to add to the Resolution:
 - Replace the tennis court backboard.
 - After the snow melted, we discovered the fence around the flower bed needs to be replaced

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- Harrie Shaftel: would like to propose pruning some of the trees around Suzan Nightingale McKay park. The trees are really obstructing the view, and this is one of the few parks established as a view park. The park gets a lot of visitors for the view. Can't even see the port now. Also cannot see the cruise and container ships. Harriet also related an account of the recent visit by former Alaska first lady, Ermalee Hickel.
- Thomas Pease moved and Stephanie Kesler seconded: to amend Spring Parks Resolution to initiate selective cutting of trees to the North and below the Suzan Nightingale McKay park.
- Discussion:
 - Steve Ribuffo - if the trees are on the Port property, the Port will take care of them. Mavis - some of them are.
 - Mavis: lots of visitors to the park because it's so peaceful. Most visitors are not from Government Hill.
 - Bob: At times in the past, some residents were opposed to cutting trees, and encourage that their voices be heard when deciding which trees to cut.
 - Mavis related a bit of history regarding the tree pruning on Suzan Nightingale McKay park
 - Bob: three years ago we had a resolution specifying that we open up views on the park, and that was only partially accomplished.
 - Amendment unanimously passed
- Spring Parks resolution unanimously passed (see resolution "[here](#)")
- Big thanks and kudos to Mavis

Port Update – Steve Ribuffo

- As of Monday, May 14th, the new Port director is Rich Wilson. Will attend the September meeting
- Mr Wilson has a wealth of public sector experience, city manager, development director at TSAIA, etc.
- Cruise ship season starts on Friday June 8th - every other Friday visits
- Petroleum Barges are back - spring is sprung
- Still awaiting confirmation on the commission of the USS Anchorage in April of 2013
- Harriet LOVES all the information presented at Community Council Meetings - can we get more attendance that the community council meetings. John Aronno - Mt. View Community Council prints out their own newsletter and distributes it to the stores

The Liquor Store - Sylvia Villamides of Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailers (CHARR)

- Sylvia recaps activities and meetings during the past month:
 - A translator meet with Mr. Ham and Mr. O'Neill
 - Went through the ordinance and the Government Hill resolution
 - Just two changes to the proposed resolution:
 - They want to be able to sell bottles of wine that are less than \$10/bottle. There are good wines less than \$10T
 - They also want to be able to sell splits/half bottles of wine (less than 750 ml).
 - They propose that resolution language focus on fortified wines less than \$10.
 - If the resolution passes, we'll forward the changes on to Tesoro
- Thomas Pease moves to amend the resolution to incorporate the changes proposed by the Liquor Store. Bryan Fields seconded. The motion was unanimously approved

Neighborhood Planning: Joni Wilm

- Joint Open House with Neighborhood Plan and Historic Plan on May 31st at Pioneer School House, food and beverages will be provided
- Fun and interactive walkthrough – “passports” will be provided as a part of the walkthrough.
- Can vote on design scenarios
- Had the May 1st meeting with KABATA:
 - Bob French and Donna Rymut attended. Meeting was for programmatic meeting signatories
 - Main concern was that KABATA was not communicating with Plan organizers
 - Because of the project delay, our neighborhood plan will be incorporated into the RFP process. The bridge consultants will be required to consider plan requirements
 - Mavis asked, “What happens to the plan if the bridge goes by the wayside?” Joni answered, that the neighborhood and historic plans move forward even if the bridge does not.

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- Harriet Shaftel asked: "What about all the money required to implement the plan?" To clarify, the plan will go through the Assembly process
- Had the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee meeting on May 15th: big shout out to Steve Ribuffo for port conference room. Went through the design scenario and implementation strategies.
- Will try to have a meeting with interested developers on Friday June 1st
- The Plan has a two year timeline
- Barbara Lavallo stopped by Joni's office with the proposed logo which Joni shared with us. We loved it!

Historic Preservation Plan – Joni Wilm

- Mavis Hancock volunteered to be on committee to view historic preservation plan
- Joni has been working to gather more oral histories. So far she has met with: Mavis Hancock, Jack Karterman, Lucille Halfacre, Tom Brennan, Melanie Lynch and Margie Ellis
- We encourage Joni to take the message back to the historic plan consultants that we want them to complete their scope of work
- Bob: "Has the muni met with the folks that are doing the JBER encroachment study?" JBER has commissioned an encroachment study: how the base and the community are interacting with each other. Purpose is to facilitate communication with the base and their neighbors.
- Bob - we received copies of the Historic 4 Preservation Plan. Deadline to get comments back is the end of June

Knik Arm Crossing – Bob French

- KABATA has purchased one of the Right of Way properties.
- They also have an open RFP for property management.
- Bob will follow up with KABATA to determine their new timeline for ROW acquisition

Meeting Adjourned at 8:39 PM

sak