



# GOVERNMENT HILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

Stephanie Kessler, President

Melinda Gant, Vice President

Arran Forbes & Brian Fields, Co-Secretaries/Treasurers

Kyle Stevens, FCC Representative

Mavis Hancock & Donna Rymut At-Large Board Members

## **GHCC Monthly Meeting Minutes September 19, 2013**

**Meeting opened by Stephanie Kesler at 6:33 pm**

### **Introductions – Round The Room**

### **Review/Approve March Minutes-**

1. Stephanie asked those in attendance to review May Minutes
2. On minute review: "March minutes" will be changed to "April minutes"
3. May Minutes approved with corrections with all in favor.

### **Legislative Updates**

#### **Matthew Moser for Johnny Ellis:**

1. The Anchorage legislative office is scheduled for renovations beginning November 9<sup>th</sup>. Representatives' offices will be scattered across town during construction. Constituents are encouraged to schedule meetings prior to this date if possible.

2. Johnny Ellis and Les Gara provided attendees with copies of letters requesting details regarding KABATA's planned demolitions on Government Hill. The letter opposes this action and expresses concerns over the processes under which these decisions are being made. The letter additionally requests details for mitigation measures, and calls into question KABATA's premature plans for demolition, particularly provided the current lack of finances.

3. Over interim, Representative Ellis has continued to work on legislation pertaining to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Last session the legislature passed a proposal regarding insurance coverage for ASD. Ellis is now working with a taskforce to address additional challenges pertaining to diagnoses and treatment in rural and urban Alaska.

4. Healthcare exchanges are effective Oct 1. United Way will be the point of contact. Navigation and exchange can all be done online. Legislative offices are happy to help connect residents to resources.

5. Legislature will be back in session January 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **Les Gara:**

1. Les shares in the community frustration with new trash collection problems.

2. His priorities in next legislative session: KABATA, loss of Anchorage School District staffing cuts, and student loan rates.

3. Regarding KABATA: letters to the editor will help. He is happy to help with media strategies. Last session he believed some republicans would cross over, but they instead went with the caucus. As he sees it, current standing is that AHFC will promote this project. It is critical to increase public understanding of costs.

4. Resident comment: we need school counselors and support staff; to keep cutting funding in a state awash with oil dollars is a disappointment. Les is in agreement.

5. Resident question: is there any legislative discussion on revival of the ferry? Les: a ferry is logical considering current [low] demand for a Knik Arm crossing, and the ferry currently exists, but the bridge advocates aren't hearing it.

## **Assembly Update: Joshua Aultman Spring for Patrick Flynn**

1. No updates from assembly

2. Call or email to relay questions to Patrick Flynn: 907-903-2854 or [joshuaaultmanspring@gmail.com](mailto:joshuaaultmanspring@gmail.com)

3. Resident concern over KABATA premature taking of residential properties: "KABATA should get its butt kicked for that."

4. Resident concern over city roads: there have been no long-term fixes on the roads, only temporary patchwork pothole work. Would like to know what commitment city has to fixing this problem.

## **FCC Update: Kyle Stevens**

1. Municipality is changing boundaries for community councils. No plans to change Government Hill boundaries.

- Resident question: has port property been incorporated into Government Hill boundary? Joni: Assembly needs to formally approve Council's motion to adopt the property. Stephanie will follow up.
2. Ordinance amending community council bylaws under review.
  3. Review of access to the UMED District (Bragaw Extension)
  4. Highway safety improvement projects: additional street bulges to protect pedestrian crossings.
  5. Towing ordinance will be discussed October 8 to prevent predatory towing.
  6. Motion to award Kyle a gold star sticker for attending FCC meetings.
- Approved with all in favor.

## **Kings Landing at Ship Creek**

### **Presented by HDR and Municipality of Anchorage**

1. Municipality has been interested in improving fishing access, implementing environmental enhancements, and adding visitor facilities at Kings Landing.

2. Foot traffic from anglers has caused erosion surrounding the creek bed; foot traffic has created informal trails; area currently has no handicap access and lacks adequate sanitation facilities. Project will address these damages and needs.

3. Phase I currently under construction. Improvements focused on creek side along West Whitney Road and north of the C Street bridge. Phase I includes addition of observation platforms, re-vegetation of north creek bank, trail upgrades along West Whitney Road, new stone steps in three places to discourage trampling to creek, and addition of a pedestrian crossing. Phase I expected to be completed soon. Landscaping and signage will be implemented next year.

4. Bridge will be closed as early as tomorrow (9/20). Resident expresses concern over bridge closure as Government Hill's secondary egress. HDR received input from truckers and railroad, which was incorporated into the design, but did not consult GHCC. The traffic control plan will include emergency access. GHCC requests being consulted prior to any closures. Phase II next year does not involve road closures.

5. Phase II will include: extending existing parking, improvements to drainage system in parking areas, addition of a public plaza area, new paving, a plumbed restroom open only the summer, a children's fishing area, a boot wash area, fish cleaning table, landscaping, and ADA accessible fishing deck.

6. Project is fully funded. Phase I: \$1 million. Phase II: \$2.5 million. Phase I covered by grant from Fish and Wildlife Service. Department of Environmental Conservation awarded grant to treat surface runoff. Remainder of costs covered by

legislative grant and the US Department of Transportation and Maritime Administration.

7. Project website: [www.shipcreek.net](http://www.shipcreek.net)

## **New Waste Collection Services**

### **Thomas Pease (resident) and Brian Van Der Wood (General Foreman for Refuse Collection—SWS)**

1. Delivery of roll carts currently scheduled for Sept. 24.

2. SWS has agreed to one-year pilot project to see how the automated system works in the alleys. The effort will require cooperative effort from residents to maintain spatial requirements. Additional requirements that will be under observation during the trial period: overgrowth, personal property encroachments, low-hanging lines, and snow removal.

3. Payment allows for choosing size of containers, which includes recycling service every other week.

4. The new cans will come with informational packet with all contact information, sorting and storing information, and recycling procedures. Also included will be stickers to mark old garbage cans for free removal by SWS at a designated time.

5. Discussions ongoing regarding SWS providing dumpsters for dismantled racks. Suggested date is Sept. 28; residents express concern this is insufficient notice.

6 You can also subscribe to multiple containers; one can also call for a pickup on an irregular basis. New rate is \$10/service plus \$2/bag.

7. Resident: no one has identified individual properties that are not in compliance with zoning. SWS: the pamphlet includes contact information for whom to call to ask. SWS does not have authority to enforce codes, and has requested assistance from zoning and community councils on this matter.

8. Resident question: what about duplexes? SWS: they are required by municipal code to have two separate services.

9. Resident: we are not clear on what the functional spatial requirements are, which has made it impossible to comply. SWS: that information was included in the pamphlet distributed last month. Truck is 8-feet wide. Container requires three feet of clearance on all sides. Truck requires 16 feet of vertical clearance. New equipment is not substantially bigger than existing equipment, but requires additional lateral space, which creates an issue for snow removal.

10. Resident question: what if waste is put in the recyclables container? SWS: First would be warnings, repeated offenses will be charged.

11. Resident question: what about bear proofing? SWS: best practice is to keep bear-bait out of reach prior to setout date. New containers have a tight fitting lid, which reduces odor. There are mesh enclosures the containers can be placed in (can be purchased online).

12. Resident: would residents currently using 3 cans require the 96-gallon container? SWS: if they are diligent about recycling, then likely not. SWS generally sees 50% or more recycling rate.

13. Resident: on the weeks opposite pickup, why not give a bin for green waste? SWS: that is an option that can be considered. This would be a seasonal endeavor, which makes it difficult as a capital investment; also, many people do not throw out their green waste, which minimizes the demand.

14. Resident question: who is responsible for the surveys of our alleys to determine whether they are adequate? Why do we not have an answer to this when we are a week away from the transition? SWS: Deferring this to the director, who is not in town. It was thought that the community councils would resolve these issues.

15. Resident: so we are paying more for a service we did not ask for, and getting this complicated matter dumped on our laps? SWS: Duly noted.

16. Resident comments she's thrilled that Government Hill finally has recycling services.

## **Liquor License Renewal: Stephanie Kessler**

1. Curling Club and Liquor Store liquor licenses are up for renewal. Residents are asked for any concerns to raise to the municipality.

2. Resident expresses concern that stickers are not being used. Stephanie will report.

## **Parks Committee: Mavis Hancock**

1. Over 100 man-hours invested in park improvements this season. Kudos to Carl!

2. Parks Department Representative visited and had the following comment:

- o "Brilliant job so far, I am so impressed."

- Some issues with trees, including mountain ash and willow that need to be removed.
  - Municipality will chip the brush at the top of the bluff. Residents are not permitted to do this.
  - If Council can rent a chipper, Municipality will cut down the trees obstructing the mountain views on the bluff. Stephanie requesting this be in writing. There are funds in the treasury dedicated to parks.
3. Community understanding was that the Port can open the Bluff Road fence for brush removal. Tim Sullivan confirms, but Mavis has been told to the contrary. Mavis will contact Tim and Steve Ribuffo to clarify.

### **Traffic Calming: Stephanie Kesler**

1. A representative from the municipality will attend the October meeting to address traffic calming on Hollywood Drive.

### **Alaska Rail Road Update: Tim Sullivan**

1. Summer season over and was successful.
2. CEO is leaving, search is underway for replacement.
3. Resident question: will the Rail Road be taking care of the fallen trees on south border of Sunset Park? Tim: the Rail Road real estate guy states that is municipal land.
4. Resident: What about the downed fence along Loop Road? Tim: Believe that is Muni land as well.

### **Tank Farm Update: Bob Cox (Crowley)**

1. Updated aerial photos of farm showing tanks in/out of service. New photos show relationship between tanks and homes.
2. Will not be putting westerly tanks in service or installing a truck rack. Working on different options
3. Crowley will be sticking with DLA (Defense Logistics Agency) tanks. Not expanding at this time.

### **Knik Arm Crossing Update:**

#### **Bob French and Stephanie Kesler**

1. Bob and Suzanne attended the Resource Development Council breakfast. KABATA gave an update: they have a new demographer working on calculating populations, disposable income, and densities. This data will be used to determine bridge-use figures, which is being done by same firm who has produced all other numbers.

2. KABATA is not giving clear answer on when demolitions will take place. Just finished up analysis of three properties and getting ready to put out RFP for demolition contract.

3. Committee is continuing to work with sympathetic legislators to raise this as an issue. They wrote a letter to Commissioner Kemp in August and did a media release. Big issue is: no one believes it's going to happen, and it's turning into a game of chicken. Revving up for next round of media. Hoping that talk of demolition will get media and legislators involved.

4. Melinda spoke with someone who did a walk through of the targeted properties done with ADOT. ADOT intends to demo the two houses first, and the hotel would be done next year since it has lead contamination and asbestos issues. The intention is to have demolished before the end of October.

## **Other Business & Neighborhood Concerns**

1. September is National Preparedness Month. UAA has opened a preparedness website for earthquake emergency scenarios. Government Hill Elementary is the designated emergency shelter for the neighborhood in the event of an emergency. The school has a new generator and boiler.
2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) nominations are due October 28. The Anchorage Metropolitan Transportation Solution has been picking priority projects for bicycle route improvements. \$1 million will go toward pedestrian improvements.
3. Next week (Sept. 23) Flynt Hills will be conducting spill response exercises. Residents may hear alarms. It will not affect bridge traffic.
4. If anyone sees an '80s Honda with one black rim and three silver rims, the black rim belongs to Carl.
5. Nextdoor.com is the new private social network for Government Hill to report alerts and other news.  
[https://governmenthillanchorage.nextdoor.com/news\\_feed/](https://governmenthillanchorage.nextdoor.com/news_feed/)

**Meeting adjourned by Stephanie at 8:46 pm.**