

**Rogers Park Community Council Minutes**  
**7 PM Monday, April 14, 2014**  
**Rogers Park Elementary School Library**

**Board Members Attending:**

Janet Bidwell, President  
Iris Matthews, Vice President  
Jim Wright, Secretary  
Cheryl Forrest, Treasurer  
Bob Churchill, FCC representative

**I. Welcome.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. Members were asked to sign in for this, the annual meeting at which elections are to occur.

**II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes: January 13 and February 10, 2014.**

Bob Churchill moved to accept both sets of minutes; Marilyn Pillifant seconded the motion. The Minutes were duly adopted.

**III. Assembly Reports.**

Assembly member Elvi Gray-Jackson presented, as follows:

- Mr. Birch, Mr. Starr, and Ms. Demboski introduced an ordinance to move the April election to November effective in 2017. The Public hearing was held on February 25<sup>th</sup> and approved by a vote of 6-4 with one absent.
- Rules Committee met and determined which recommendations from the Citizens' Task Force on Public Hearings could be codified and which would be implemented through policy. The draft ordinance was introduced at the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and the public hearing was opened at the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting and continued to the meeting of February 11<sup>th</sup>. There was a substitute version that addressed some concerns, and at the February 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, after continued public hearing and one amendment brought forward by Ms. Johnston, the ordinance was approved. A copy can be found on line at [www.muni.org](http://www.muni.org).
- The Assembly and Mayor endorsed First Lady Michele Obama's "Let's Move!" Initiative dedicated to solving the problem of childhood obesity. Anchorage now joined 400+ cities across the country who have committed to reaching the five goals. This effort is a move to raise a healthier generation of kids. More information

can be found at <http://www.letsmove.gov/> Our next meeting to establish the Task Force will be held on April 24<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 – 1:00 in the Mayor’s Conference Room.

- Ms. Gray-Jackson and Mr. Traini brought forward a resolution encouraging the Governor and Legislature to increase the Base Student Allocation and inflation proof the funding. The resolution was approved 10-1.

- Ms. Gray-Jackson and Mr. Traini were in Juneau on February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> along with three constituents to encourage support for capital projects within three community councils. We also encouraged support for other projects throughout the District. We met with 12 legislators within 1 ½ days.

- A public hearing was held on the ASD Budget on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Total budget is \$743,449,248 and of this amount - \$233,776,423 are property taxes. Mr. Starr requested that there be two public hearings on the budget instead of the required one. The public hearing was continued to the meeting of April 8<sup>th</sup> but we were advised that the Charter requires approval by April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The budget presented by the ASD to the Assembly on March 25<sup>th</sup> is now the budget for FY 2014-2015.

- The Assembly approved an ordinance that will allow public disclosure of absentee mailing addresses with the option of opting out of this disclosure. In other words, if you do not wish for anyone to know where you’re out of town, you can opt out. This ordinance was approved at the March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting and is effective 45 days from that date.

- Bond propositions and Charter amendments that passed at the April 1<sup>st</sup> election follow:

- ASD Bond - \$57,285,000
- Public Safety Facilities and Police Service Area Capital Improvements - \$650,000
- Anchorage Fire Service Area Capital Improvements - \$1,950,000
- Park and Trail Improvements - \$2,550,000
- Safety and Public Transportation - \$1,793,000
- Roads, Storm Drainage, and Related Capital Improvements - \$20,200,000
- Charter Amendment – Gender Neutral Terms
- Charter Amendment – continue to allow Community Service Patrols to write tickets in the area outside of downtown instead of police officers and allow for an administrative hearing process instead of challenging a ticket through the court system.
- Areawide Facility Improvements - \$5,550,000 – Failed by only 14 votes.

- Ms. Demboski’s ordinance requiring municipal employees and elected officials to appropriately reimburse the city when a fundraiser is held during business travel was approved unanimously.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Revision ordinance is scheduled for public hearing on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Assembly will also approve the Mill Levy for 2014.

ASD Mill Levy – 6.99  
General Government – 8.77  
Total Mill Levy – 15.76

Taxes on a \$300,000 home - \$4,728

Actual Example:

Assessed Value - \$278,300  
Taxes - \$4,386

Value after \$20,000 Residential Exemption - \$258,300  
Taxes - \$4,070  
Savings - \$316

Value after \$20,000 Residential Exemption and Senior Citizen/Disabled  
Veteran Exemption - \$108,300

Taxes - \$1,706  
Savings - \$2,680

Next Meeting – April 15th – Election Certification, Oath of Office for elected officials, and Assembly reorganization

Next Regular Agenda Meeting – April 22nd

With regard to the failed bond to fund needed work at Loussac Library (see Areawide Facility Improvements above), Jim Richardson noted that there was a “poison pill” tied to the Loussac issue, which folks would otherwise likely have favored. Ann Lorber agreed that tying other more controversial issues to the Loussac funding was wrong.

Assembly member Dick Traini reported as follows:

- Waldon Lake parkland will now be purchased, thereby precluding construction of site condos on that land.

Mr. Traini inquired of Tim \_\_\_\_\_ regarding a proposal to label the source of individual bottles sold at stores. Tim responded that this step would be reasonable if there is a level playing field – that is, if all stores have to do it.

#### **IV. Legislative Reports.**

Representative Andy Josephson appeared telephonically from Juneau. He reported that the session is winding down. The Rules Committee is now seeing what party leaders want to press at this end stage. This is disturbing to Andy. He discussed the following bills.

HB 370 involves efforts to reform Alaska's workers compensation system. It includes a provision to drug test injured workers to see if they are not taking the drugs prescribed to them. The inference is that injured workers are drug dealers – that they are distributing the drugs to others rather than taking them for their own treatment. When objections were raised to this, the rationale was rephrased to emphasize the concern whether the drugs should be prescribed if they aren't being used.

HB 316 is intended to reduce premiums for workers compensation insurance. Alaska is the highest premium paying state for workers compensation coverage; but Alaska also has the highest health care costs. The goal of this bill is to reduce what a doctor can charge, or be paid.

HB 278 is the education bill. Democrats voted against an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) because the proposed increase was not enough to withstand increased costs, and was coupled with certain poison pills. It requires school districts to subscribe to state salary standards, which was felt by some to be overreaching. It would also extend the period to reach tenure from the third year of teaching to the sixth year. Andy's opinion is that there is not much benefit to tenure, beyond some due process protections before a teacher can be terminated.

HB 384 is the minimum wage bill. Democrats voted against the increase because it appears intended to pre-empt the pending citizens' initiative which, if it passes, will be locked in for at least two years. Many believe that the GOP will pass this bill now only to take it away next year, after the people have been denied the right or ability to vote on the issue.

A decision on the KABATA bill is impending as the session nears the end.

The capital budget bill is also impending. At \$2.2 billion, Andy believes it is too high.

The large diameter gas line issue remains. Andy favors it.

Helen Nienheuser asked about the prospects for a significant BSA increase? Andy characterized those prospects as "good." A one-time incremental bump is not reliable. The Anchorage School District says it needs a more than \$300 per student increase. \$8 million is affordable in his view for adequate funding of schools. Support by Great Alaska Schools (GAS) is persistent and influential.

Marilyn Pillifant asked about the status of the voucher bill and whether it will rear its head in the final days? Andy thinks it will not come to the floor of the House. It needs two thirds in each house to pass and he doesn't think that the proponents have the votes. They are a couple short in the Senate and even shorter in the House. Republican Click Bishop is heroically withholding support.

Jim Wright inquired about the effort to pack the judiciary by packing the Judicial Council – i.e., packing or shifting the makeup of the Judicial Council with appointees favored by the Governor for their ideology. Andy declared that effort dead this session. It has been pulled from the calendar. Again, two thirds of both houses is needed, and the votes are not there.

No other legislators were available to report, given the pending session.

#### **IV. Presentations.**

**A. UAA Health Campus Pedestrian Bridge.** John Fonts, John Hansen, Joe \_\_\_\_\_ and Michelle Ritter addressed the group on behalf of the UAA pedestrian bridge project. It will connect the Engineering Building to the Health Science Building, across Providence Drive (36<sup>th</sup>). This project is at the permitting stage and will go before the Urban Design Commission on May 14. They hope to begin construction in the summer, to be completed the following summer. The bridge has an arch support, with no pedestals in the median, that will be 60 feet above the road at its highest. The buildings are about 70 feet high. The bridge will be 50-60% translucent. It will cost about \$6.1 million to design and construct. Livingston Sloan is the architect and Reed Middleton is the structural engineer. There will be a roughly two week closure of Providence Drive in December, projected to coincide with the Christmas holidays.

Bob Williams asked about the timeline to complete the Sports Arena. He was told that the Sports Arena will be operative in August 2014. The spine connection to the main campus is contingent on future bridges not yet planned.

**B. U-Med Project Update.** Rachel Steer and Brad Milesec presented the update. The preferred route is the “Orange” route, previously presented, between Providence Drive and Northern Lights Boulevard. It is expected to include three roundabouts, three multi-use overpasses, and incorporate sidewalks and bike lanes. The speed limit will be 30 mph. There will be two 12 foot driving lanes – one each way – through most of its length, with a 5 foot bike lane on each side. It will have a multi-use trail on one side with a separating vegetation buffer, and a sidewalk on the other side. Both are to be kept largely snow-free by plowing performed by the Municipality of Anchorage.

Dave Evans asked about the schedule. The request for jurisdictional decision and post-permit application to the Corps of Engineers are expected to occur in early summer. It should be put to bid in November or December 2014.

Helen Nienheuser asked what will happen where the bypass road meets Northern Lights Blvd? What will the intersection look like? It will be signalized, with a right-hand turn lane from the eastbound lanes of Northern Lights, and possibly multiple left-turn lanes from the westbound lanes of Northern Lights. There will be a transition zone between Northern Lights and the 1<sup>st</sup> roundabout, or about 400 to 500 feet of the 700 feet to that roundabout. The transition zone would be a wider segment of roadway to merge traffic into the one lane moving in that direction.

Dave Evans asked when the Design Study Report (DSR) will be done? It will be on the website soon, they said. Jim Wright asked that the DSR be defined for the non-engineers in the group. The DSR states what is contemplated and why. Standards are plugged in via notes. It is a step that occurs at the 65% design phase.

Jim Richardson disputed whether roundabouts are effective to calm traffic, and whether this road is truly intended to serve the university, as opposed to serve as a cut-through for cross-city traffic, or otherwise. Brad responded that there have been lots of studies of expected usage, and acknowledged that lots of people will use it as a cut-through. One member noted that legislators in and around this district disagree with this project. Iris Matthews asked whether the median on Northern Lights Blvd. allows for construction of left turn lanes there? The answer was “yes.” It was noted that there is an Executive Steering Committee that includes members from UAA, APU, Southcentral Foundation, and Providence Hospital, suggesting that the university community and health care providers meant to be served by the road are having their goals met.

Dave Evans noted that this was a 4-lane road in earlier plans, and is now a 2-lane project. The project representatives affirmed that understanding, subject to the transition zone near Northern Lights. They were asked how much the traffic analyses cost? Brad said that four studies were done for about \$50,000 total.

**C. Proposed Bylaw Changes For RPCC To Align With Recent MOA Legislation.** Bob Churchill spoke to this issue. He said our existing Bylaws are pretty good. He prepared a draft revision to meet the new requirements and/or recommendations. Ours is unique for its term limits provision. The draft revision is a work in progress and input is welcome. Bob favors the MOA provisions whereby we can reduce the age requirement to 16 or 17 years of age, with the caveat that banks will not allow a member of that age to sign checks. He asked the group to consider whether it wishes to keep the term limits provisions of our existing Bylaws, or not.

Marilyn Pillifant noted that section VI.A says 18 years of age is the limit. Bob said yes, and it can be lowered now. Marilyn expressed her support for lowering the age, and Bob said he believes we’ll be voting on that in May.

**D. Annual Election Of Officers.** Bob Churchill offered the slate of candidates willing to serve in the upcoming year:

Iris Matthews, President (currently Vice-President);  
Travis Smith, Vice-President;  
Jim Wright, Secretary (incumbent); and  
Cheryl Forrest, Treasurer (incumbent).

Bob Williams moved to accept the slate of candidates. Before seconding, Helen Nienheuser asked for information about Travis. He explained that he is a former Marine, 26 years old, and a student at the university. He is interested in keeping the district clean and was drawn to the community council as part of that interest. Dick Traini and Elvi Gray-Jackson asked whether he votes. He said, yes, in the last few elections he had. There was a quorum of 17 members present, and the slate of candidates was approved unanimously.

**E. Treasurer's Report.** Cheryl Forrest reported that we have \$202.84.

**F. FCC Report.** Bob Churchill reported the events of the last FCC meeting. The FCC heard a presentation in support of school bonds. Assembly member Dick Traini had addressed parks and designated land for parks. FCC members noted their understanding that many parks, or what they had thought were parks, had been sold by the Municipality. Mr. Traini is arranging for designations in map format for our information, showing what lands are designated parklands. The FCC granted certain funds to community councils, including an allocation for community council signs. The new FCC website is expected to be up and running soon.

The meeting was then adjourned.