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

Stephanie Kesler, President
Melinda Gant, Vice President
Brian Fields and Arran Forbes, Co-Secretaries-Treasurers
Kyle Stevens, FCC Representative
Mavis Hancock and Donna Rymut, At-Large Board Members
Bob French, Past President

GHCC Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2014
Submitted by Arran Forbes

President Stephanie Kesler Presiding

Stephanie opened the meeting at 6:32 pm

1. Typical round the room introductions

2. Approve May Minutes

- Steve Ribuffo had two edits: Change Railroad to Port, and Sharen Walsh spelling
- Melinda Gant corrected a typo on item Number 3
- Bob French makes motion to approve. Melinda seconds. Minutes pass unanimously.

3. Assembly Update: Joshua Spring for Patrick Flynn

- Uber, the ridesharing service, has arrived in Anchorage. There have been many conversations regarding the legality, and the future is unclear.
- Resident questions whether the service has a record of safety, and whether a special drivers license is required. Joshua will check on both questions.
- Next school board meeting is September 19.
- Patrick hoped to complete work on Chugach State Park Access Plan.
- Resident concern that half the lights on the C-Street Bridge (south end) are not going on at night.

4. Legislative Update: Matt Moser for Johnny Ellis

- It is Hunger Action Month at the Food Bank of Alaska.
- Open enrollment for healthcare exchanges begins November 15.
- Ellis is focusing on “back to basics”: roads, schools, and public safety. He is preparing for a district drive around, so bring any issues to his attention prior to October.
- Capital Improvement Project (CIP) lists are needed soon. It will be a lean year.
- Resident concern with bump in right hand lane going south on C-Street Bridge. Additional concern regarding uneven paving blocks outside of AT&T.

5. Summer Recap: Stephanie Kesler

- J-Bear and four cubs took up residence in neighborhood. They disappeared for about a month, but were seen just prior to this meeting, all looking healthy.
- Neighborhood banded together to protest ADOT demolition of neighborhood homes/building.
- Local gardens were featured on social media.
- Trash challenges were addressed with the use of social media and fliers.
- The neighborhood was a great host to the Arctic Cyclocross Race, as well as the Twilight 12K.
- Bobbi Bianchi and Bob French led a very successful Walking Tour of the neighborhood last weekend.
- The Nextdoor Website has been working well at communicating amongst neighbors.

6. Anchorage Port Update: Steve Ribuffo

- Steve will be transitioning council attendance to Sharen Walsh.
- Todd (Port Engineer) and Lon (CH2MHill) are present to discuss Port Modernization project. The Port Expansion Project has been re-designated; the Modernization Project aims at replacing and rehabilitating infrastructure at Port. The vision is inclusive of the next 75 years.
- Resident questions regarding corroding sheet piles at Port McKenzie. Todd states he does not have firsthand knowledge about this, except that they are seeking corrosion control experts.
- Discussion regarding mid-Summer late-night Crowley alarm. Residents address need for improved communication between Port/ARRC/JBER for evacuation procedures and all-clear notifications. Melinda will contact the Muni to inquire as to whether there is a Port Emergency Response Alert for the neighborhood. Steve notes that the Port has a unified messaging system; a representative from GHCC could be added to this alert system, but disseminating the message from this point person would need to be addressed.

7. Legislative Update: Joe Casey for Les Gara

- Call your local school to find out ways to get involved—they are in need of volunteers.
- Gara is thinking ahead to future fiscal years and likely teacher layoffs.
- Resident notes that she made a complaint to Gara and the problem was quickly resolved.
- Traffic signs are being put on sidewalk on the A/C street bridge, forcing pedestrians into street.

8. Update on 2012 Crowley Storm Water Violation: Bob Cox, VP Crowley

- At the end of April there was an EPA Press Release.
- Construction in 2013 resulted in contaminated soils discharging pollutants into Cook Inlet through the storm water system.
- This resulted in a \$147K fine.
- Contractor didn't follow the plan and there were some additional challenging weather events that exacerbated the situation.
- Crowley took samples of the storm water discharged during construction and self-reported these violation to the EPA.

- Crowley has engaged an environmental engineering firm to address the soil contamination from the old tank farm uphill from Crowley's facility.

9. Parks Department Update: Steve Rafuse

- Funding for Suzan Nightingale-McKay Park is approximately \$140,000
- Requested resident sign-up for a Parks Committee
- Will go to bid in spring; construction next summer.
- There is currently no arborist on staff; in the future the department will likely hire a natural resources manager.

10. Parks Update: Mavis Hancock

- Browns Point: some trees were removed to open the view, and new trash cans, a picnic table, and bench were installed. Mavis is concerned that Parks Department is not aware of brush beginning to obstruct view from Park.
- Parks Department performed work on shrub beds in Suzan Nightingale-McKay Park.
- Fixing the faucet in Sunset Park will require CIP allocations. The piping system is inadequate and the Parks Department does not have the resources to fix it (estimated \$15,000 or more).

11. Alaska Railroad Update: Tim Sullivan

- Passenger market is up and freight has had a record year; however, Flint Hills closed in June, so effects from that loss have yet to be felt. Freight consists mostly of drilling materials headed for the Slope.
- ARR is working to secure funds for Positive Train Control (federally mandated upgrade), but lacks about \$60 million. Will not meet 2015 deadline, but have impression this may be a soft deadline and may not have to cancel passenger service at that time.
- Season 2 of Railroad Alaska reality show premieres in October.
- The water tower will be repainted next summer as part of the Anchorage Centennial. Same colors.
- ARR intends to erect a six-foot chain-link fence with barbed wire around the water tower to prevent vandalism and ameliorate potential safety concerns. Vital communications infrastructure is on top of the water tower. Ladder cages will be installed in addition to a fence. SHPO has not approved this impact.
- Resident concerns that the fence is an overreaction and the neighborhood ought to be consulted on a way that maintains the water tower's safety, the visual appeal, and the corridor. Steve Gerlek passed around a sheet outlining the drawbacks to a fence, including the creation of a hidden area above the bluff, snow removal problems, and blocking of the dog-run corridor. The sheet additionally outlined the benefits to ladder cages. Tim agreed to email the ARR president to arrange a meeting between him and GHCC members to discuss this issue next week, and perhaps implement ladder cages as a Phase I.

12. GHCC Bylaws Update: Stephanie Kesler

- Bylaws passed last spring did not conform to municipal bylaws. New bylaws have been written to be in conformance with requirements.
- Biggest change is the JBER residents cannot be community council members.
- Additionally removed language regarding 30-day resident waiting period.
- One vote per resident (not per household), and one vote per business.
- Stephanie makes motion to approve bylaws. Melinda seconds. New bylaws pass unanimously.

13. Tesoro Go2Mart Liquor License: Stephanie Kesler

- Tesoro liquor license is up for renewal.
- Containers appear to be consistently tagged, and residents have noted a reduction in litter from containers.
- Resident recalls that GHCC worked hard with Tesoro when they moved in to the neighborhood, and the relationship appears to be working well.
- Council has no objections to renewing the liquor license.

14. Knik Arm Crossing Update: Bob French

- KABATA is now KABADOT.
- ADOT received bids for demolition of neighborhood structures. Due to delays, will likely occur this spring.
- Resident requests a meeting with ADOT 30 days prior to demolition to discuss traffic, noise, and air impacts. Bob will communicate this to Judy Dougherty.
- Socioeconomic Report was due exactly a year ago, and there is still no sign of it. Council has worked on several public records requests, but ADOT states that since it is a draft, it is not public.
- According to Judy Dougherty, the \$50 million appropriated by the legislature will not be used to advance from a 35% to 60% design. Instead, existing documents will be the basis for the design contract. It is unclear how the \$50 million is being spent.
- Anchorage Muni and Mat-Su may be on the hook for federal funds used on the EIS if the project does not advance.

15. Other Business & Neighborhood Concerns

- Scotland voted against secession.

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.