

Turnagain Community Council Minutes
Regular Meeting January 5, 2006

Cathy Gleason, Vice-President, called the meeting to order and made opening remarks.

I. Approval of Minutes.

The November 3 and December 1, 2005, minutes were approved.

II. Assembly Report.

Assemblymembers Dan Sullivan and Pamela Jennings gave the Assembly report.

Dan Sullivan discussed Assemblyman Chris Birch's proposed Eminent Domain Ordinance that would prohibit the Municipality from using eminent domain to obtain land for leisure recreational activities, such as the southern coastal trail extension.

He also discussed the Assembly's Legislative Program for road and other capital projects that are funded by the State. He noted that he was serving as Chair of the Legislative Committee.

Pamela Jennings noted that the Assembly adopted two convention center contracts. The Alaska Convention and Visitors Bureau will manage the facility and a nonprofit corporation, Civic Ventures, will own the convention center until the bonds are paid off. Property taxes cannot be used to fund the facility.

Dan Sullivan discussed the sales tax proposals before the Assembly. Dan Coffey's proposal would place 3% on goods only and reduce current property taxes by 25%. Sullivan's proposal would be 4% on goods and services and reduce current property taxes by 50%. Sullivan's proposal would have a \$100 cap on the amount of sales tax on a particular transaction and Coffey's cap would be \$500. Sullivan's proposal would not exempt food except for food stamps, etc. He noted that the Assembly would be hearing the proposals on January 24 and that he expected a work session before the 24th.

He also discussed the Assisted Living Ordinance, under consideration by the Assembly, which would regulate where such facilities can be placed in the community. Proposal would allow 8-person facilities to be placed in R1 zones without a conditional use permit. This ordinance is in response to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling concerning permissible zoning limitations on such facilities under the

Americans with Disabilities Act. That ruling indicated that zoning laws cannot prohibit disabled and elderly from living anywhere they want within a community.

Pamela Jennings announced the Alaska Railroad's Open House on Tuesday, January 24 at the Railroad Depot, which will discuss Anchorage projects.

She also provided a draft of the Transportation Project List for our area and asked the TCC input on what projects we thought are a priority. Cathy Gleason indicated that the Board would look at the list and provide feedback.

She provided a report on the West High/Romig Middle School Renovation Project. She noted that a traffic analysis of existing problems was presented at the last project meeting. The analysis noted problems with the drop off/pickup location being too close to the entrance of West High. It also noted crossings at the mid-block of Northern Lights at Aurora Carrs as being a problem. One possible solution is a new campus access at the back fence of the school, although the school may have a problem with it from a security standpoint. The next meeting is Tuesday, January 10 2:15-4:15 at West/Romig. Draft Supplemental Education specifications for the school will be discussed and a master plan out in June.

She mentioned the Thursday, January 12 meeting in the Turnagain Elementary School multi-purpose room to discuss the AWWU Pump Station 10 project.

She announced ongoing work on the Municipal Pedestrian Plan and that a Northwest regional public workshop has been scheduled for February 2, 7-9 pm at Romig. Cathy Gleason noted that this was the time of our TCC monthly meeting and asked if a member of the council would attend the meeting. Douglass Marshall indicated that he would attend the meeting and report back to council.

Cathy Gleason announced Saturday's aluminum can pick-up beginning at 10 am that serves a fundraiser for the TCC.

Breck Tostevin announced that TCC has its own Website at the Federation of Community Council's homepage: www.communitycouncils.org. The Website hosts our recent agendas, minutes and resolutions. We hope to use the Website more to include a calendar of upcoming events of interest to Turnagain and provide access to projects and documents of interest. Check it out.

III. Parks & Recreation Report

Doe Anderson, Northwest District Manager for Parks and Recreation, introduced the two new community planners who will be working at the Spenard and

Fairview recreation centers and coordinating parks and recreational activities with the Anchorage schools. They coordinated Winter Holiday Vacation activities at the Egan Center and will do another on Martin Luther King Jr- Day Jan. 16th at all four recreation centers. She noted that the Parks and Recreation Department was holding an Open House at City Hall on January 6 from 4-7 pm.

She discussed the Matching Challenge Grant Program from the Rasmusen Foundation that is available for local park and recreation improvements. There is \$400,000 available in matching grants with up to \$40,000 available per project. There is a meeting on February 28 from 6-7 pm at the Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W. 48th Ave, where P&R staff will discuss how to apply for a grant and how in-kind volunteer effort can count as a match to the grant dollars. The Council discussed and chose upgrades to Didlika Park as a candidate project for this effort. Pat Redmond will contact Candi English to discuss the project.

Cathy Gleason will represent Turnagain CC on the Northwest District's Advisory Committee.

IV. Spenard Hostel International.

Bill Madsen, owner of the Spenard Hostel International, gave a presentation on his permit and zoning problems at his facility. Currently, he does not have a rooming house permit nor a conditional use permit and his facility does not meet code requirements for parking. He provided the results of his neighborhood survey concerning the Hostel, which overwhelmingly support his Hostel with no complaints about parking. Mr. Madsen asked that the TCC support his request for a waiver/variance from parking requirements and his conditional use permit request for the existing facility. Nelson Page moved that TCC support Spenard Hostel International's request for a parking variance and a conditional use permit. The motion passed 16-0.

V. Community Policing Issues.

Anchorage Police Department Sargent Cindi Stanton asked for community feedback on APD's performance. This feedback will be used for the department's Strategic Plan on where to focus resources and how to better serve the community. Comments made at the meeting included: online reporting very convenient; appreciated her attendance at council meetings; support new traffic unit focusing on speeders/red-light runners; Kincaid Park vehicle break-ins after 9:00 p.m. a problem; length of time to be on hold for non-911 calls too long.

If you want to find out what's going on in your neighborhood, Muni has new Web site: www.myneighborhood.com.

VI. Sign Ordinance Amendment.

Assemblyman Dan Sullivan discussed his proposed changes to the existing sign ordinance. His proposal would grandfather in all existing, noncompliance pole signs and allow banners/pendants. It would also allow 80% of business signs to have “changeable” elements.

VIII. Platting Board’s Action on Subdivision of the Simonson Homestead parcel east of Pete’s Place for a new AWWU Pump Station.

Breck Tostevin, Bob Durst and David Nyman gave an overview of the Platting Board meeting regarding the Simonson replat. The TCC Board of Director’s request that the Platting Board delay or deny action was denied and the plat was approved. The Board did grant the TCC’s request for a 25-foot natural vegetative buffer for the coastal trail. The Platting Board moved to reconsider the approval at their next meeting to ensure that any development on Tract B would have to go through a public process. TCC will submit additional comments to the Platting Board as part of the February 1 Notice of Reconsideration on the conditional plat approval.

Brian Baus indicated that AWWU has met to discuss how better to meet community concerns regarding the project. He also provided information regarding the ownership of the subdivided parcel. Originally, the Muni wanted to acquire the entire parcel, but couldn’t afford it. Pamela Jennings added that no property taxes have been paid on the Simonson property. Also, the RID property owners have filed a quiet title civil lawsuit to acquire Tract B.

David Nyman moved that the TCC subcommittee look into the land ownership status of the property, including requesting public records from AWWU and the Muni. The motion passed 9-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Breck Tostevin, Secretary/Treasurer.