

**Eklutna Valley Community Council
October 12, 2016
Meeting minutes**

The meeting was chaired by council president Rick Sinnott and began at 7:04 p.m. The council met at the new Eklutna ranger station. Seventeen council members attended: Debbie and Steve Thon, Keith and Vicki Darby, Tena and Skip Cheely, Buff Rix, Margan Grover, Dan Thompson, Glen and Mary Keller, Bob Reagan, Helen Bohn, Steve Remme, Rick Sinnott, Erlinda Downing, and Noel Aspiras (Eklutna, Inc.). Guests included Rep. Cathy Tilton, Gretchen Wehmhoff, Beverly Churchill, and T. Frank Box.

The minutes of the April 25, 2016, meeting were approved with several changes. Bob Reagan requested that four paragraphs include attribution. Curtis McQueen was added to the list of community council members attending the meeting because, in addition to making a presentation on the dam's removal, he represents Eklutna, Inc., a major landowner in Eklutna Valley.

[Note: The revised minutes were sent to all community council members after the meeting.]

Rick reported \$466.64 in the council's funds. He also reported finding two checks for council dues buried in the council's files, both dated approximately 10 years ago. Our new bylaws do not require members to pay dues. A motion was made and seconded to tear up the two checks. It passed unanimously and Rick destroyed the checks.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Rep. Tilton gave a brief legislative update and Gretchen Wehmhoff, who is running for Rep. Tilton's seat, introduced herself, gave a brief background, and asked for members' consideration at the upcoming election.

Beverly Churchill and Frank Box discussed their grassroots effort called Move to Amend, a national movement to amend the U.S. Constitution to clarify that corporations and other artificial entities are not "people" and money donated to influence elections is not "free speech." Churchill and Box are gathering resolutions in support from community councils, who advise the Anchorage Assembly, who may be able to influence state or national representatives to get the ball rolling. Rick suggested that drafting a council resolution, with its accompanying discussion, might be too much to accomplish in one meeting. Members agreed to review the literature distributed at the meeting and we will put the issue on the agenda for our next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Response to Anchorage School District. Rick wrote an email on October 11 to Chuck Moore, ASD's director of transportation, to correct a misunderstanding in Mr. Moore's last email. Our council had asked the ASD to consider reinstating school bus service along Eklutna Lake Road. Mr. Moore's email concluded that only three children in Eklutna Valley attended ASD schools. Rick told Mr. Moore that when our request was made last year at least nine students attended ASD schools. Rick noted that, to the best of his knowledge, no one has been seriously injured or killed in a motor vehicle accident on Eklutna Lake Road since the road was paved 12 years ago, so the road may not be as dangerous as other Anchorage roads with bus service. Rick suggested that the ASD consider using a van or short bus, which might be safer than a full-sized bus. Finally, Rick asked Mr. Moore to recommend specific road upgrades that

might allow future bus service, if we ever get the state to consider upgrading Eklutna Lake Road.

NEW BUSINESS

Eklutna Dam removal. Noel Aspiras discussed recent work at the dam site. This summer workers cleared an area on the canyon rim above the dam. The state's largest crane lowered earth-moving equipment into the canyon, and a pad was built above the 10-year-flood stage to store equipment over the winter. A set of stairs was erected to the bottom of the canyon. The crane will be laid down over the winter. Noel said they have surveillance cameras onsite. The dam removal will commence in late April 2017 and the work should be completed by the end of summer. In response to a question about safety, Noel said the access road would be ditched after work is finished.

Rick said Brad Meiklejohn, Alaska director of The Conservation Fund, had requested our council's support for a \$200,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to help defray some costs of dam removal. Rick read a draft letter to that effect. A motion was made and seconded to send the letter, with today's date and Rick's signature, to Brad. The motion passed unanimously.

Election. Members elected Margan Grover as president, Rick Sinnott as vice president, Bob Reagan as treasurer, and Dan Thompson as sergeant-at-arms. Rick handed over the council's files to Margan and the treasury to Bob.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:10 p.m.