

TO: Federation of Community Councils
THRU: Ted Carlson, President
FROM: Erin Dovichin, Secretary
SUBJECT: Chugiak Community Council Minutes for January 16, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Roll Call

Present:

Ted Carlson, President
Randy McCain, Vice-President
Erin Dovichin, Secretary
Deborah Jones, Treasurer
Maria Rentz
Benjamin Sherburne
Deb Thorall
Pat Tilton

Jake Horazdovsky (alternate)
Harold Parker (alternate)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dovichin raised a point of clarification needed for the minutes on a vote at the September meeting. The recording is not clear. It was clarified that Randy McCain was voted in as the Chugiak Community Council's representative on the Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board not as a recommendation for the Mayor's appointment to the Parks & Rec Board. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from September 2013 with the minutes reflecting that the vote was for the Advisory Board position. Motion passed unanimously. Rentz motioned that the Council wait for the next meeting to approve the minutes for October and November so that everyone has a chance to read them. Jones seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Copies of the Chugiak Community Council's meeting minutes and bylaws are available on the FCC's website at www.communitycouncils.org (Click on Chugiak). These minutes are a summary form of the discussion and key decisions. Audio files of the full discussion are also available on the website.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Carlson reported that R&M could not make the meeting and there would be a presentation on the Glenn Highway instead. Dovichin pointed out that normally we would do elections here in January but since that was not on the agenda and the public hasn't had a chance to consider elections we should defer the elections to February. Rentz also asked for the introduction of our Birchwood Community Council to be added to new business.

APPEARANCE REQUESTS

Assemblywoman Amy Demboski

Demboski provided several updates.

- *The Chugach Access Plan* has passed Planning & Zoning. Demboski encouraged the Council and residents, particularly those close to the park, to take a look at it. It identifies potential access points – including 62 private parcels that are “parcels of opportunity”-- for the park.
- *AO37*. Demboski anticipates the Assembly will take this up at the next meeting. They need to decide whether or not to appeal to Supreme Court or override the mayor’s veto.
- *The tennis court issue* is resolved. Funding is moving forward on *the McDonald Center*.
- *MEA substation*. Demboski testified against the project. It is a rare time she can testify because the issue does not come before the Assembly. Planning and Zoning has denied MEA a second time. MEA can appeal if they choose.
- *Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board*. The recommended members should be introduced to the Assembly on Jan 28th.
- *Student Resource Officers program*. The SRO program places law enforcement officers within local schools to enhance safety and to develop partnerships between law enforcement and the school community. There is a debate about who is responsible for paying for this program –the school district or the municipality. Demboski has requested an independent board to complete an unbiased study of the program and its origins. During budget discussions, she was against the municipality paying more for the program, but she is open to changing her position depending on the results of the study.
- *Community Council Ordinance*. Demboski distributed the current draft of the ordinance, the informational memorandum and a letter describing key changes. The ordinance will be open for public testimony at the Jan 28th meeting so if the Council or individuals wish to comment they need to get their comments in before then. The clause changing the voting age to 16 years old remains in this version. There are also restrictions on Councils defining their own attendance requirements for voting. Demboski is available to answer questions but if the Council wants to discuss action she will step out in the hall so she does not influence the discussion.

Stephen Mierop, Three Bears Alaska

Mierop shared the plan for the new Three Bears to be constructed off the North Birchwood exit. There were questions and concerns about potential for traffic snarling, liquor license issues, semi-trucks potentially staying in the parking lot, lighting (residents prefer dark skies but there are also security issues after closing hours), and signage plans. Mierop discussed the questions with residents and said Three Bears is open to input from the community and wants to be community-minded.

Brian Schumacher, Department of Transportation, Glenn Highway

Schumacher gave an overview of the upcoming “Hiland to Artillery Capacity Improvements” project on the northbound lanes of the Glenn Highway. It is a \$35 million project. The original intent was simply to add a lane but the bridge does not actually meet seismic requirements. They will now be building new northbound lanes right between the existing north and south lanes in order to reduce the grade of the hill leading to the bridge. Once completed, the old lanes may become a frontage road and the bike path will remain along that road. They noted that traffic is expected to double by 2035. They aim to break ground this summer and complete the project by fall of 2016. The entire project will be design-build and a best value contract. Discussion ensued on several questions and concerns from residents including the possibility and costs of removing the dip in the road as it comes down to the Eagle River bridge, the highway’s capacity vs. projected need, the design build process, the large amount of material that will need to be moved, traffic management plans during construction and how the gasline goes through the location of the new lanes. Residents can go online to learn more and to comment at www.eagleriverbridgenb.com

Eric Croft, Anchorage School District Board Member, Budget Cuts and Student Resource Officer program

Croft gave an overview of the budget situation at the Anchorage School District. There were \$25 million in cuts last year without losing teachers, but this year they will have to cut another \$25 million and this will affect class size and

teachers. About 40% of the funding for the school district comes from the state and the state foundation formula has not kept up with inflation. The School Board is only putting out bonds equal to the amount of the bonds they are retiring so in essence they are limited to where they were 20 years ago as they are 20-year bonds. The Student Resource Officer program is extremely valuable, but it is a public safety function and no longer appropriate to be funded out of the education budget. Vigorous discussion ensued about whose responsibility the SRO program is, with some residents feeling that the school district has a fiduciary responsibility for safety. There are conflicting accounts of how the school district got involved in the SRO service in the first place. Demboski pointed out again that she has requested an independent study of the program to address issues like these.

Jill Flanders Crosby, Birchwood Community Council

Birchwood Community Council leadership introduced themselves. They are interested in more communication between our councils, and they are visiting other council meetings as well. Jones suggested that they also secure an FCC representative to increase interaction with other councils.

There was a motion to extend the meeting, seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Jones reported that the FCC will provide a full day of training for community council members on March 1st. There are only 60 slots and the FCC is hoping the presidents will attend. Carlson cannot attend. Rentz and Thorall both expressed interest if there are open slots.

OLD BUSINESS

Eklutna Monofill

Carlson reported that the Department of Environmental Conservation reviewed and rejected the permit application for the monofill. Horazvodsky motioned that we share our resolution opposing the monofill with the DEC and attach the petition. Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Bylaws Review

Dovichin said we should defer the issue until the next meeting because we don't have time to discuss it.

REPORTS

CBERRSA/Road Board – Randy McCain

No report.

Eagle River-Chugiak Parks & Recreation Board – Pat Tilton

The board approved a capital budget of over \$3 million. They are also looking at the possibility of locating a skateboard park at Loretta French park. Sherburne said the issue is less the location and more the problem of skateboard parks being a magnet for less desirable characters. There was short debate about this issue, as well as some suggestions for transforming the skate park into a snowboard park in winter. The Council agreed that the community needed to be engaged in this decision and the topic should be on the agenda for our next meeting and further discussion.

There was a motion to extend the meeting another 15 minutes. Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report –Deborah Jones

Jones reported no change since last month. Alaska USA needs the Treasurer to provide a resolution from the Council that we want to open an Alaska USA account. Dovichin motioned that the Council resolve that the Treasurer open an Alaska USA account. Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Title 21/Consortium of Chugiak-Eagle River Community Councils - Randy McCain

No report.

FCC Update –Deborah Jones

No further report beyond earlier discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

Community Council Ordinance

At the request of the Council, Demboski and Croft shared the most contentious issues such as the voting age and the ability of the councils to set their own attendance rules for voting. There was a brief discussion of what comments the Council might provide. Our Council is one of two councils whose bylaws met code, though we would be out of compliance if this ordinance passes because it allows 16-year-olds to vote and ours is 18. Dovichin motioned that the Council submit comments saying that community councils should be held to a minimum standard but still allowed to set their own bylaws on issues such as membership, age and attendance. Jones seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Dovichin will submit the letter with our bylaws attached.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Thursday, February 20, 2014, 7:00 pm at the Elsie Oberg Community Center.

The Chugiak Community Council serves Fire Lake, Chugiak, Peters Creek, Mirror Lake, Thunderbird Heights and Eklutna. We meet at 7pm on the third Thursday of the month at the Chugiak Benefit Association's North building, the Elsie Oberg Community Center (18606 Old Glenn Highway).