



Bear Valley Community Council Meeting Minutes

BVCC meeting – May 10, 2006

Compiled by Scott Pexton, BVCC Secretary

The meeting was held in the library room at the Bear Valley Elementary School on Mountain Air Drive and began at approximately 7:10 p.m. Twenty-four people attended with at least nine voting members present, indicating a quorum.

Sue Rodman, a forester with the Municipality of Anchorage, asked to address the council about wildfire mitigation efforts on the Hillside. She indicated the municipality is continuing to conduct Firewise Assessments of property lots and passed out brochures about the program. She said there is a 70% reimbursement program for spruce tree removal for property lots that are 5-acres or smaller. The Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation District has a similar program for lots that are bigger than 5 acres. She indicated that she will ask Chugach Electric to contact property owners in Bear Valley to request permission to remove trees near power lines. However, she mentioned there was very little response last year when this was done. Sue indicated that additional spruce tree removal would be coordinated in Section 36 this summer along the south end up to Clarks Road with a possible late fall burn of slash. She also indicated that there would not be an open burn period this spring, but that a new spruce burn permit system would be implemented in late May 2006 to allow larger size burn pit dimensions and potentially allow a wider variety of plant material to be burned. A question was asked about the 2005 Annual Report to clarify what was involved in regards to a \$141,000 expenditure for infrastructure improvements. Sue responded that some road improvements were made to improve access to water resources for truck or helicopter filling areas near culverts, etc., and that she could provide more specific details via phone or email to follow-up. She also said that the Anchorage Wood Lot at O'Malley and C Street is now open seven days a week from 10 AM to 8 PM for free brush and log disposal.

Lindsey Holmes, Hillside District Plan Project Manager, spoke about the process of creating a Hillside District Plan (HDP), which will become a part of the Comprehensive Plan. She works for Rise Alaska, LLC, a construction and project management company and was hired on to the HDP project approximately one month ago. She provided a HDP project organization chart and indicated she is the "chief cat herder" to move things forward. She is working on a proposal to hire a professional lead consultant by mid-June. An Oversight Committee was established and the three community representatives selected to participate were Connie Yoshimura, John Weddleton, and Chris Hamre. Additionally, a 10-15 person Citizen Advisory Committee will be formed with members chosen by Assemblymembers Janice Shamberg and Chris Birch. The Citizen Advisory Committee will involve a large commitment of time (unpaid) for participants and is intended to reflect a wide spectrum of community perspectives. They will work with the lead consultant through the end of 2007. A draft HDP is envisioned to be prepared by the end of 2007. The HDP boundaries include areas south of Abbott Road, East of Lake Otis, and west of Chugach State Park. A website will eventually be set up for the HDP and a number of studies will be done to assist with land use evaluation. Transportation planning, surface and groundwater use and control, wildfire concerns, wildlife habitat, schools, recreation, rural versus urban service areas, infrastructure needs, population dynamics, old and new zoning, Title 21, and community characteristics will be some of the components to evaluate during the planning process. Lindsey indicated that one goal of the process was to achieve a good spatial differentiation of commentators so that no one geographic region dominates the HDP process.

Assemblymember Janice Shamberg addressed the council and indicated that the sign ordinance would be address at the upcoming Assembly meeting. She indicated that many people have expressed concerns about the recently passed state legislation exempting property taxes for some people involved with their religious organizations and that these are good issues to bring forward to legislators. She mentioned that community councils influence Assemblymembers greatly and that councils with more participants can carry more weight with Assembly decisions. She encouraged council participation as it is a good way to keep informed about local issues.

Shawna Popovici, Anchorage Parks & Receptions Central/Southeast Park District Manager, spoke about the SE Parks District Office located at the Hilltop Public Facility which is now open from 12 – 8PM Mondays thru Fridays and from 12 – 5 PM on weekends. She mentioned that the Parks Plan was recently approved by the Assembly and that the current plan is available online from the Parks and Recreation website. Shawna discusses several upcoming parks related items related to the Southeast Park District:

- Clean and green cleanup activities will occur this summer at Huffman Park and Ruth Arcand Park
- Storck Park – a land use permit was issued to the Alaska Radio Control Society (ARCS) for flying electric planes and hand flight gliders over the soccer field on Sundays only. Some of the bollards may be painted and new signage added or consolidated to one area of the park. Boulders may be installed to limit cut through traffic near the park entrance. A natural wind break may be created to replace the expensive plexi-glass panels.

- During the summer, Shawna will offer a bus tour of various parks in the SE Park District for up to 13 people so that they can become more familiar with parks in the area.

Cindi Stanton, the Anchorage Police Dept. liaison, indicated that she had been out of town and apologized if she hadn't responded to emails sent to her recently. She mentioned the Anchorage Trails Watch Program, a volunteer program where people wear armbands or vests and carry cell phones to call in concerns observed while out on hiking or biking trails. She stressed that you should not leave valuables in vehicles at trailheads and to be alert for suspicious behavior. Be aware of unusual sights or sounds in your neighborhoods and report vandalism, trash dumping, and criminal activities as soon as possible. Suspect information is needed to make arrests and priority dictates police response. It was noted that it is illegal to operate heavy equipment in Anchorage on Sundays. You can call 786-8900 and press 0 to reach a dispatcher to describe unusual or suspect behavior. Cindi can be reached at 786-2668 or via email at cstanton@ci.anchorage.ak.us

BVCC Bylaws Amendment Passed

Dan Stone made a motion to call for a vote on a proposed amendment to the Bear Valley Community Council Bylaws. The motion was seconded and the proposed bylaws changes were discussed. The proposed bylaw changes would eliminate the requirement to pay a five dollar annual membership fee as a condition for voting on BV council matters. After determining which people present were registered council members and eligible to vote, a vote was taken. The proposed bylaws change was approved and adopted with eight council members voting for the amendment and one council member opposed. The amended portion of the revised bylaws will read as follows:

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Any person 18 years of age or older is eligible for membership provided that the person is a homeowner, tenant, resident, property owner, business owner, or a designated representative of a corporation or non-profit association physically located within the boundary described in Article II;
- B. A person is a voting member upon fulfilling the requirements set forth in paragraph A **and** appearing at a scheduled meeting and signing as a registered member;
- C. A person is a registered member immediately after signing the membership-voting register available at every **council** meeting;
- D. Membership dues **are voluntary and** shall be \$5.00 annually. Dues are to be paid at the October meeting **or** may be paid at any general membership meeting.

Home and Landowners Organization (HALO) Update

Rodney Powell attended the last HALO meeting and he indicated that Title 21 and the Land Use Plan Map participation were encouraged. He indicated that Assemblymember Debbie Ossiander of Eagle River attended the HALO meeting and discussed issues related to non-conforming properties and potential costs of bringing properties into conformance. The status of the Hillside District Plan is also a frequently discussed topic of interest.

BVCC Summer Meeting Location

Bear Valley Elementary School is not available for council meetings during the summer so the location for the next BVCC meeting scheduled for June 14th was briefly discussed. Scott Pexton suggested an outdoor meeting at Storck Park, if available. If the weather is good, then it could be an enjoyable, less formal opportunity to visit with neighbors and hopefully eat some food (at least one person volunteered to bring home-baked cookies and others seemed willing to bring food or sodas). Cheri Howland indicated she would check into park availability and costs and try to set it up for the June meeting. It was generally acknowledged that council funds could be used to pay for park permit fees and/or food & beverages for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 PM. The next Bear Valley Community Council meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, June 14, 2006 at the Storck Park Picnic Shelter.

End of meeting minutes.