

NOTE: There were no minutes taken during the December 11th potluck, but for the purposes of including the election recap, the following were present and nominations for officers from the November meeting were confirmed. Present: Tami Hanson, Kathleen Plunkett, Megan Holland, Tom Atkinson (for Rep Josephson), Geran Tarr, Ed Leach, Dan Wright, Michelle Scaman, Kendra Kloster, Renea Miller, Daniel George, Loki Gale Tobin. Officers are as follows: President – Ed Leach; Vice President – Fred McLeary; Treasurer – Kendra Kloster; Secretary – Sherry Wright; FCC – Kathleen Plunkett; Trustee – Michelle Scaman

The only other item of business in December was approval by unanimous consent of a liquor license for Denny's.

RUSSIAN JACK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, January 8, 2020

At Wonder Park Elementary School

Present Today: Ed Leach, Fred McLeary, Dan & Sherry Wright, Kendra Kloster, Monty Dyson, Kathleen Plunkett, David & Alice Banks.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Ed Leach.

1. Legislative report

Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson – no report

Sen. Bill Wielechowski - Session begins in 13 days (January 21st) at 2 pm. Next week on January 14th, Rep Ledoux, Spohnholz and himself will have an open house 6 pm to 7 pm at Kava's on Muldoon. Survey has been mailed out and he would appreciate taking the time to fill them out. It is also available online. Friday – first round of pre-filed bills come out. Last year's bills are still alive – one is a provision for S Corporations which comes into significance when large companies (like Hillcorp) file as an S Corporation. A bill to treat larger corporations differently is in the works using a \$\$ amount to define. Online checkbook for state business and accountability and would improve government transparency. Governor's proposed budget is similar to last year's final budget – with some cuts still in place for University. However, it still leaves 1.5 billion dollar deficit, leaving the legislature to figure out where to make cuts or increase income. They will have 5 days to over-ride the governor's budget.

Sen. Tom Begich - Budget picture and believe Senate should start where the Legislators left off (from June). They also have a better relationship with the governor, going into this session. Many people sent letters regarding the cuts. Basic services funded – CBR funding or other ways of funding. They have a good working relationship among the Senate with a desire to work for the benefit of Alaskans. There are several revenue bills that may affect everyone - \$30 head tax on everyone's first pay-check for education, possibly amount depending on what you make. Motor fuels tax of 8 cents per gallon – airlines generate the real income. Removing credit on oil and gas taxes is another bill that will generate revenue. There is another initiative regarding this measure. Draw on the revenue of the PFD was able to be used because of the good market return we have gotten on those revenues. Governor Dunleavy brought the legislators together and they

are talking to one another – recognizing common ground. There are some proposals to have sustainable education funding that includes pre-K and reading intervention.

Question – How can we improve rural schools – need to have conversations with the tribes. There is a large turnover rate with teachers that come from outside to work in rural Alaska. A local teacher’s training would help alleviate that through the local university. Ideas that are generated from the communities themselves work better.

Comment – determinant of students being able to read is parental support. West High class reunion of 1959 – remember a very different school system. The teacher’s were given more liberty in what they taught – it wasn’t curriculum driven. Concern of standardized teaching which over the last 30 years has degraded. Anchorage has a very transient population, which adds to the issue. Anchorage “M” scores have improved. Community development component is written into the bill (gets to the heart of how people connect).

Rep. Geran Tarr - Less specificity about how budget is written allows broader usage of funds. Personal priorities are on rape kit reform, restorative practices for schools (Justice Summits). Resources Committee issues in agriculture, outdoor adventure tourism. Lots of activities for winter– destination events. February 8 constituent event in Juneau.

Info on the Restorative Justice Summit - school to prison pipeline. Funds were restricted to school districts if they didn’t put into place a zero tolerance policy, but the funds were misused. Restorative practices were put into place (rather than instant expulsion). Policy at schools needed to be more reflective of what was happening in the home, student’s environment. Bussing for high school students is not provided, yet the school expels students that come late. Concern of parents working outside the home creating a higher degree of need on teachers and the school.

Rep. Ivy Spohnholz - Moving on Thursday next week. Regular Saturday morning 10 am to 11:30 am at Presbyterian Church, just off Boniface. Bring shelf stable food if you can for the church’s food pantry. The budget won’t be as difficult next year – supplemental budget has a large amount for Medicaid. We had a record-breaking fire season last year that created a lot of health issues, and also was expensive. Legislation on health care – 2.4 million on Medicare alone; working on access (Telehealth visit coverage), Health Care Transformation Council to help put in place an all care claims database – where we are spending money on health care. If we don’t spend enough in the right places, it just gets more expensive. New bill to allow Dental Hygienist to practice independently (similar to physician assistants).

Rep. Andy Josephson - no report

2. Assembly report

Pete Petersen – Forrest is welcoming Sister City delegation from Japan. There was a resolution to improve relationships with Eklutna Native people. Resolution opposing sending state prisoners to outside prisons. Losing touch with family makes it problematic integrating them back into society. Small increases to port tariffs with support of the port user groups has been done. It will raise just enough money to help finish the cement and fuel terminal. Still need funding to restore other parts of the port. Tuesday meeting will have testimony on what bonds should be put on the March/April election ballot. School, drainage, park, public safety, fire, transit, facility capital improvement, Girdwood project improvements are examples of the bonds

in consideration. Debating yes or no on sales tax (3% - 1/2 toward property tax relief and 1/2 toward homelessness). 5% Alcohol tax is another one that will be considered. One is an amendment that goes between 2 and 5%. Muni.org has more information on these.

Question on utility for storm drains – Girdwood, Eagle River and Hillside were included in the Council on the Commission for this issue. These were supposed to be excluded so wondering why they are included – this was where most of the inquiries on this issue were coming from – but the concern is that the Anchorage Bowl are the ones paying the price. Regulatory Commission of Alaska will have to approve the Commission.

Forrest Dunbar – no report

3. School board report – Margo Bellamy - Excited that the school has the opportunity to make things happen for the kids that may not happen anywhere else. Community Report is out which provides an update regarding current goals. Through their strategic planning process, they got lots of information from the community. They are going into phase II to synthesize all they gained from those conversations. Capitol improvements are how they take care of the facilities and meeting with assembly today provided good questions, particularly regarding FEMA. School District has to get their own insurance. Budget survey is still live on the Anchorage School District web page. Superintendent is looking at naming an ASD facility after Bettye Davis.

4. Principal report - Tammy Hanson - don't forget box tops.

5. FCC report – Kathleen Plunkett (FCC meeting is next week).

6. Brown Jug liquor license renewal - Ed Leach provided a letter from Dept of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development regarding a renewal for their package store on Bragaw. They had one violation and took care of it. One member will not approve a liquor license as there have been several robberies, and liquor is a contributing factor to domestic violence, and homelessness in our community. Several people have been observed sitting outside with open bottles consuming around the property. Recommendation of some restrictions on smaller bottle sales like what was done in Mountain View, which can be a contributor to litter in the area. Motion was made to no objection for the liquor license renewal with recommendations that Brown Jug agrees to keep the grounds clean and provide a report to the Russian Jack Community Council on their efforts every two months. Vote: 4 in favor, 4 opposed – 0 abstain - Motion Failed.

February and March meetings will be potentially held at the church located at 6th and Pine, if confirmed. Ed will keep us posted.

Monty Dyson introduced himself and will be running against Pete Peterson for the Assembly.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Sherry Wright, Secretary