

FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

General Membership Meeting Draft Minutes

April 9, 2020 — 7:00-8:45 PM

ZOOM: <https://zoom.us/j/200388835> (see more details below)

Call to Order 7:05 PM

Welcome and Introductions

Elected Officials

Senator Tom Begich

Passed emergency bill with provisions for COVID-19. Gov. vetoed \$260M+ -- \$30M in education, \$100M in school debt reimbursement, etc. Did so thinking these funds would be replaced with federal COVID-19 funds, but not permitted to use those funds to supplant ordinary funding. Have five days to veto, not sure if it when the veto is issued or until after legislature reconvenes on Monday.

Re: COVID-19, AK is in the top 15 in testing, 2nd lowest in number of cases, after WY, but we are testing more. Dr. Zink said the virus might be getting slightly ahead of us, so we have to stay vigilant. Orders extended until April 21. Schools closed for rest of the year. Need to see if we have sufficiently flattened the curve. Looks like we can hold the line, doing a good job. Begich does not like politicizing of the process. Legislature still in session, will likely stay in session until 121st day. Senate leadership did not want mail-in elections but continuing to work on this. Could try it for primary elections and see how it will work for general election. Recall election could also be by mail. Begich is disappointed by the vetoes.

Q from Leslie Kleinfeld – if you are still in session, are you meeting in person or electronically? Tom Begich – There is no provision to not meet in person. Efforts by Chris Tuck to pass legislation to allow remote sessions not successful. We can meet in committees electronically; we just cannot vote electronically.

Q from SJ Klein – any follow up from DOT re: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies? Tom Begich – no, caught up with other aspects of the end of session. Löki – we received a harshly-worded email back, we need to work on getting people back into the mode of discussing things. Tom Begich – should have a meeting with me, Löki, SJ, and Harry to talk about how to get to that place. Chris Constant – we can talk later about the contents of that email. SJ Klein – can we talk about the PEL now? Dowl has put in for the RFP. I'm curious to hear what they have heard about it. Renee Whitesell – I have not heard anything, understood that RFP have been passed from DOT over to AMATS to be moved forward, have not heard anything else. RFP has not been released yet. SJ Klein– Renee, you have seen the draft RFP and description of scope on state DOT website? Renee Whitesell – no, eagerly awaiting it.

Representative Zack Fields – Tristan Walsh

Thanks for hosting all this by Zoom. Ended session in a mad rush. Rep. Fields worked with Rep. Spohnholz on HB308 (unemployment insurance), 36K Alaskans have lost their jobs. If work was lost in full or in part due to COVID-19, they are eligible for UI. The UI Division is working overtime, planning to hire 75 additional workers, will end up with 125 workers to work phone banks. Best to apply online through MyAlaska.gov. Happy to help people through that process. Starting to get checks out to people. Looking at all the federal policy coming out in the last few weeks – CARES Act Phase 3, big expansion of UI benefits, adds \$600/week to payment. Funds are starting to be disbursed to states. Also \$350B through SBA for small businesses (under 500 employees). Goal is to keep workers employed, even if

business is at a standstill. Intent is for those loans to be forgiven if funds have been used to pay employees, rent, utilities, etc. HB96, Pioneer Bill, passed House and Senate 100%. Concerned Governor may veto. People should contact him to indicate their support for the bill.
Tom Begich – people can go to Aksenatedems.com for more information.

Quorum established at 7:39.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Harry Need, seconded by Leslie Kleinfeld. No objection to agenda as presented. Approved.

Approval of March 2020 General Membership Meeting Minutes

Most people did not read the minutes. Decided to table approval of minutes until May GMM.

Anchorage Assembly member Christopher Constant

Deferred comments until after Jason Bockenstedt, Mayor's Chief of Staff. Jason said he just listening in, nothing prepared. Tom Begich – did the Governor get ahold of the Mayor about his veto of the funds for COVID-19 homeless support? Jason – prior to the veto no, but after veto they have had discussions. Chris Constant – the muni is quite busy and is in 4th week of emergency posture. Rapidly transforming procedures, how we can function in age of COVID. Going to be making changes to allow boards and commissions to operate by telephone. Assembly also struggling over teleconference issues. Passing an ordinance to extend deadline for municipal taxes by 30 days to provide some relief, but cannot extend it too much because of need for tax revenues. Also reducing all Title 21 and Title 23 development fees by 25% to spur development. Protested another liquor license. AMCO Board upheld the protest. Update of Title 21 code, P&Z Commission sent recommendation of approval. Translation of old code into new code, but some things lost. E.g., Left out allowance for photo studios in Downtown area. Just concluded an election, resounding in some ways, people confident voters would reject bonds and alcohol tax. But voters did end supporting the bonds and the alcohol tax and returned all incumbents.

Under emergency power, Mayor opened Sullivan and Boeke arenas as emergency shelters, which created problems for the district from creek to creek. Downtown is a wasteland of disenfranchised people and the mentally ill. There is a de facto camp on 3rd Avenue. There is a new unserved population. Brother Francis Shelter is only serving medically-fragile people. The general homeless population is being served at Sullivan/Boeke, but there are some people who were thrown out and cannot go to Brother Francis. There are reports of break-ins and needles in yards. It feels like a big setback, but it could be way to move forward by decompressing shelters. This is not permanent, but we will not go back to what we had before. Have to open new shelters in midtown and other parts of town.

There is a workshop from 10:00-11:30 am tomorrow, and they are also meeting to discuss the extension of the emergency order. There is tension between the Assembly and Mayor, how to extend, how long, what measures to put in place. What to change orders to include homeless people in social distances. How do we legally, morally, ethically include homeless people in those executive orders? If they are major vectors, we cannot turn our heads any longer. Need to make sure this is not permanent but is transformative for our neighborhood.

Q from Leslie Kleinfeld – what support do you need from us now? Chris Constant – nothing right now, take care of yourself and your neighbors, I have great faith in this leadership, they have been impeccable in this crisis, our numbers show we are flattening the curve, have confidence in our municipal leadership, but be ready to show them the way

Q from Allen Kemplen – for the homeless population who are causing grief and being uncivil members of our community, I hope that part of the conversation is establishment of a remote shelter in the rural part of the municipality. If people cannot be good neighbors, we do not have to accept them as bad neighbors day after day. Can still provide shelter, food, etc., but not in a place that allows them to continue to be bad neighbors.

Chris Constant – the answer is housing, but there are populations that require some correctional efforts, but we cannot do that now. Mayor says what we have is what we have, cannot wait for Juneau or DC to give us the answers, we have to work with the tools we have. We have to figure out a legal remedy for those who continue to be problems.

Chris Constant – I want to express gratitude and appreciation for the leadership training I learned here with FVCC. The passage of the extra assembly member resolution was the highlight of my political career.

Allen – this is a big deal, it is structural change, we will have two voices and double our power in the decision-making process. After this is implemented, the downtown core will have more of a say. Game changer.

Anchorage School Board member Margo Bellamy
Not present

Standing Reports

President – Allen Kemplen

Extension for one-year request on Challenge Grant because of COVID-19. Response from Beth Nordlund, looks like all Challenge grants will be extended one year. We will have more time for fundraising and everything else.

Allen put together a white paper on the proposed innovation area proposed as part of the overlay district. Will bring to general membership in another month or so, show why the innovation area is in the best interests of Fairview, Downtown Core, Anchorage, even all of Alaska.

Q from Chris Constant– what progress has been made to date on challenge grant for Eastchester Park?

Allen Kemplen – we put together some designs and put forward a specific request for repurposing of dead spruce trees for additional design elements—an historic info kiosk and a pedestrian gateway. Parks and Rec responded and said they want to make sure anything put forward is consistent with their design standards. Chris Constant – please send me the designs.

Treasurer

\$7 bank fee. Current balances:

General \$470; Comm. Dev. \$1013; Beautification \$274; A Better Fairview \$4930. Total \$6687

Q from Chris Constant – what is the purpose of the Better Fairview Fund? Allen Kemplen – fundraising effort for matching for community gardens at 14th and Ingra, Challenge grant at Eastchester Park, design work for the overlay zone. Chris Constant – suggests seeking donation from FNBA to match the fund.

Presentations

Shelley Rowton, Land Management Officer, Real Estate Department, Municipality of Anchorage, regarding brownfields and the 3rd and Ingra property.

Provided contact info: <https://revitahub-muniorg.hub.arcgis.com/brownfields@anchorageak.gov> 907-343-7531

Presentation of key aspects of <https://revitahub-muniorg.hub.arcgis.com/> Brownfields website, including what kinds of assessment are possible under the grant and process for selecting sites. Q from SJ Klein – is the Brownfields project supplemental to work done previously by the state Department of Environmental conservation (DEC)? Shelley Rowton – it is in addition to, but can also supplement. This is not intended to be a “gotcha” process pointing fingers at property owners, but we may under certain circumstances share information with the DEC. Some DEC sites are not eligible for inclusion in this project, E.g., a Chevron site.

3rd and Ingra site – there is currently a proliferation of homeless people there, but have been working hard on this site. We have great things planned. Came up with concepts from the Master Plan. Concept 1 – still need to do a market study, intend to submit this as a brownfield for the assessment project. Working on a public-private partnership, working with Alaska Food Policy Council, faculty from UAA, SWS, etc. Looking at an urban sustainability farm with a solar component to serve as a demonstration project. Want to involve as many community groups as possible, part will be under a lease with a private partner but there will be a significant public component.

Q from Leslie Kleinfeld – sounds like we cannot use the Brownfields project to deal with a property with an owner who is doing nothing to cleanup contamination. Shelley Rowton – best to get DEC involved with that.

Q from Chris Constant – pleased at the level of detail that now exists in the planning for the urban sustainability farm. Would like to talk to Joy about the memorial.

Motion to extend meeting to 9 pm, no objection.

New Business

COVID-19 Community Response

Harry Need – want some generative dialogue about what is happening in Fairview related to municipal policy about homeless populations, especially in Arena district, major impacts on neighbors. Also, what is the impact on the census due to the relocation of a large population from one tract to another prior to Census Day?

Allen Kemplen - how can we maintain physical distancing but show folks the community is still there? One example was the parade of teachers a couple of weeks ago. If this follows the pattern of the 1918 epidemic, we could have a respite of a few months and be back into physical distancing in the fall again. We should think about how we can improve our sense of community.

Chris Constant – think about how a community could do a neighborhood cleanup that complies with the executive orders re: social distancing? Allen Kemplen – we can do it, but could do it differently. Chris Constant – can you put it into a short brief, a page or so, to share with administration? Harry Need – one of our bigger impediments in past cleanups was the cost of tipping fees. SJ Klein – issue with Ramsey not being permitted by SWS to dump during dump day. Chris Constant – that it not an issue now. We need to figure out how to do it first, can deal with SWS later.

James Thornton – no need for fear of COVID-19 if you wear a mask, keep your hands clean, and engage in social distancing. More problems with homeless people around his property. Where are they getting money for booze? There are many mentally ill people. Seems to be getting worse every day. Customers are more on edge. If you just follow the guidelines, there is no need to be scared.

Chris Constant – thinking of idea of serving a beer an hour inside the arena, making it so if you go outside, you lose the privilege of getting beer that day.

Laura Orenge de Gaffory – thank you everyone for all you have been doing

Harry Need – check in on your neighbors, see what they need. It is really important for us to be getting together right now. Let us know if there is anything you or your neighbors are seeing that we ought to be aware of. The Council is still doing business.

Neighborhood Spring Cleanup

SJ Klein – we need to decide whether we want to go ahead with the cleanup.

Allen Kemplen – I feel comfortable that we can move forward with it. If we follow proper protocols, I think we can do it okay. Recommend that we move forward with it.

Harry Need – moves that the FVCC proceeds with the cleanup, seconded Laura Orenge de Gaffory.
Passed no objection.

Unfinished Business

None.

Community Comments

None.

Adjourn 9:00 PM