

RUSSIAN JACK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, January 13, 2021

At Zion Lutheran Church – 2100 Boniface Parkway

Present: Ed Leach, Kathleen Plunkett, Emily Sobek, Dan & Sherry Wright

Present via ZOOM: Kendra Kloster, Louie Imbriani, Renea Miller, Lisa McGuire, Fred McLeary

Meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by Chair Kendra Kloster.

1. Welcome and introductions. Recognition of the native lands where we are able to meet.
2. Dr Anne Zink provided an update on COVID-19 vaccines. Heidi Hedberg and Tessa Linderman also attended with Dr Zink. Logistics of getting the vaccine out is one aspect they are considering with equal access a primary goal. Those who are most 'at risk' are primary. There is a disproportional burden on Hawaiian Islanders and Alaska Natives being adversely affected by COVID. Lack of running water affects some of the villages. Alaskans with underlying health conditions was touched on. Age of 16 or above are the recipients. [Covidvax.Alaska.gov](https://www.covidvax.alaska.gov) is the web site for vaccination information. There are more providers than vaccines. Alaska is getting monthly allocations vs weekly allocations. This helps overcome transportation issues (Aleutian chain weather challenges). She provided some statistics on the vaccines that have been administered with 114,800 vaccines allocated. Most vaccinations prevent transmission, and we are hopeful that will be the case with this vaccine. Testing 3 days prior to travel – be tested and quarantine when you return for at least 7 days and then test again.

Public question re: 2nd dose and allocation amount. Recognizing we are in an Administrative change (in Washington DC) so there may be a few hiccups. DHSS is accessing potential barriers to various parts of Anchorage and accommodating any recognized areas lacking access to the vaccinations. Any unused vaccines will be re-allocated to another facility – we don't want to waste ANY vaccines.

Public question re: 2nd dose timeframe. Completed vaccine series – right now they are allocating the 1st dose. A concern of missing the 2nd dose was expressed for any number of reasons. The providers where you receive the first dose are putting in orders for that 2nd dose, which will help get the doses needed to the communities.

Public question re: wasted shots due to not being in the priority group. Is that happening here in Alaska? The providers are being instructed to find someone to vaccinate if they have any extra doses. There was a failed shipment to Ketchikan (due to temperature issues). They are being flexible with any extra doses to get them into people's arms.

Public question re: necessity of the extension of emergency order – CDC are looking to the local authorities to determine this based on local numbers and information.

Public question re: prioritization of communities that don't have hospital facilities. Villages that don't have running water are a priority.

Public question re: glad that Alaska is doing better than most of the other states. He got a shot yesterday and is thankful for those giving the shots.

Public question re: travel vaccines and the timeframe of COVID vaccines. COVID vaccines should be taken outside of 2 weeks before and after other vaccinations.

Public question re: adverse reaction to the shots. Any of these type of reactions are being tracked by the provider. Issues so far have been specific to the individuals. 11 in a million odds of an adverse reaction.

Public question re: overall goal in terms of population? 60 – 75% vaccinated was what was expressed to the Assembly. CDC concurs with that percentage and is based on who is able to receive the vaccine. Demographics include adults at this point. The question seems to be referencing the herd immunity concept and we don't know what that number is yet with all the variables with this disease (how it spreads, how it affects different people, etc). So the goal remains to get as many vaccinated as possible.

Public question re: if someone has had COVID do you still recommend they get vaccinated? Yes they should get vaccinated, but they are looking at more of a 90 days waiting period.

3. Anchorage Police Report – Officer Brett Eggiman attended via ZOOM. He is assigned to the Russian Jack area and provided a report of the types of calls taken in RJCC area. Top calls are regarding disturbances. Welfare checks, noise violations, accidents. Seems like the calls for services are going down in the area.

Public question re: patrol at RJSP. There is not a specific patrol, but they do stop by. That is appreciated by the regular park users.

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4. Legislative report (3 minutes each)

Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson (Keith Bauguess) – submitted her report electronically (attached).

Sen. Bill Wielechowski (Nate Graham) Session begins next Tuesday. Senate and House are not organized yet. Big issue is the budget deficit. Price of oil coming up helps a bit, but cuts or revenues are going to be necessary. Legislation he will submit – create online checkbook which requires the state to put all expenses and revenues for public review. Alaska is one of the worst in terms of transparency. 2nd legislation would put the Permanent Fund into the Constitution as it was originally written. Many want stability and consistency and we should have that with the dividend. This will allow for discussion on this topic.

Public question re: how much longer can the state operate using the savings we have? There are several savings accounts. Permanent Fund generates almost 5 billion dollars in revenue annually and is where we have been paying for government. SB 26 is where the pressure comes in on the Permanent Fund spending.
Public question re: pre-filed bills available for public review? They are available right now. BASIS Alaska web site provides that information.

Public question re: is there a deadline when they have to be organized? There is not. There are many tough decisions that need to be made.

Sen. Tom Begich (Luki Tobin provided the report) They will not be on site until after January 20. Some of the bills he is putting forth: AK Constitution Day, text on bills are available when they are read across (approximately January 19). February is black history month (which passed last year). They will not be doing any in person meetings this session.

Rep. Geran Tarr (Magdalena Oliveros, Simeon Bearden) – no report

Rep. Ivy Spohnholz (Meagan Holland or Ted Madsen) – no report

Rep. Andy Josephson (Tristan Walsh) – no report

5. Assembly report (3 minutes each)

Pete Petersen – no report

Forrest Dunbar – 2 meetings since our last RJCC meeting. Downtown improvement district was approved and they have 57% agreed (50% needed). A re-zone very close to us (U-Haul over by Boniface/Glenn on Boundary) has already been through planning and zoning. Most controversial issue was extension of the emergency declaration until mid-April. The Assembly retains the power to rescind the emergency declaration. Verbiage of the declaration is on the Assembly web page and the Emergency Order is on the MOA web page.

Public question re: restricting restaurants not to a percentage, but maintaining the social distancing that has been advised? Not that Forrest has heard – thinks the issue is more of an enforcement resource issue and it would complicate enforcement. Most places are compliant where enforcement has checked. They did use some of the CARES funds for government, but preferred to get that into the hands of public.

Public question re: why is there such focus on enforcement? Most people don't respond positively to other's will being forced on them. Other larger facilities have mask requirements and not the restrictions. The Assembly is appreciative of those who have complied and the restaurant and bar associations requested that bad actors be charged, because they make others have more difficulty in keeping their doors open. It's like speed limits, drunk driving – many things that those who follow the laws try to find help against violators.

6. School board report – Andy Holleman – School will begin next week 5 days per week with many mitigating components in place. Community spread numbers are lower than anticipated at this time. Schools offered their facilities to provide vaccinations, since they were not having classes.

7. FCC report – Kathleen Plunkett (provided by Ed) – no meeting in December and they will meet next Wednesday, but no agenda has been posted yet.

8. Neighborhood/Community Announcements

Sherry Wright - Russian Jack Springs Park is hosting the StoryTRACKS Walk every Sunday in January from 12 pm to 5 pm.

Louis Imbriani lives near RJSP and had a person trying to open doors. He has a photo that can be made available to those interested.

Lindsey Hajduk - StoryWorks Alaska through the schools are partnering with AK Black Caucus – event for the Sunday prior to Martin Luther King Day at 7 pm on Facebook. City put out a draft non-motorized access trail plan which includes the Trail Plan from 1997, bike plan from 2010, and the pedestrian plan from 2007. AMATS web page has the info available. Public comment will be received through March 5th.

Next meeting February 10th at 6:30 pm – NeighborWorks community survey information will be presented, other possible topics include: Russian Jack Springs Park Master Plan, Public Safety Advisory Commission. If there are agenda items you would like to see added for future meetings, please contact Kendra.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Sherry Wright, Secretary