

Bear Valley Community Council
Minutes – February 10, 2021

Call to Order

The regularly-scheduled February 10, 2021 meeting of the Bear Valley Community Council (BVCC) was called to order by Council Chair Cheri Lipps at 7:02 pm. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the meeting was held via Zoom videoconference with 19 members and several guests in attendance.

Announcements and Introductions

Chair Lipps introduced guests State Sen. Roger Holland, former State Sen. Cathy Giessel, Municipal Assembly Member Suzanne LaFrance and scheduled guest speakers Rori Van Nortwick and Sean Baski from the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Ms. Lipps stated she anticipated that Assembly Member John Weddleton would join the Council meeting later. State Representative Kaufman was unable to attend but was represented by a staff person.

Approval of Agenda

To make best use of guests' time, Chair Lipps suggested the council take up legislative reports and our scheduled guest speakers first. There was no objection.

State Legislative, Municipal Assembly and School Board Updates

State Sen. Roger Holland introduced himself and provided a brief update on the status of the legislature's efforts to formally organize.

MOA Assembly Member Suzanne LaFrance reported that the Municipality has received \$35 million from the federal government in rental assistance funding. The funding is intended as direct assistance to residents of the Municipality who are unable to pay rent and/or utilities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Ms. LaFrance next explained that there are 7 bond measures on the April 2021 municipal ballot, totaling approx. \$60 million. These include a bond for Anchorage Fire Department funding and public safety measures. Ms. LaFrance also addressed proposed changes to Title 17 of the Anchorage Municipal Code regarding animal control. These include potential changes to leash laws, as proposed by the Animal Control Advisory Board and the Health Department. No legislation has been introduced before the Assembly at this point.

Council Chair Lipps introduced Rick Farrell of the Bear Valley Community Association and asked that he report later in the meeting on the community ice rink at Bear Valley Elementary School.

No representatives from the Anchorage School Board were present.

Guest Speaker: Rori Van Nortwick, P.E., State of Alaska DOT&PF

Chair Lipps introduced guest speakers Rori Van Nortwick, P.E., and Sean Baski, P.E. who addressed the proposed Mountain Air Drive extension project. The current project is part of AMATS (Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions) and is intended to extend Mountain Air to Sandpiper Drive. The project justification is primarily public safety and secondarily emergency access. Additional benefits will include active recreational uses such as biker and hiker access to trails. An overview of prior design work done in 2011 was provided. The project is still in the design phase and all design funding is in place, through a combination of federal, state and municipal funding. As presently contemplated, right-of-way acquisition will occur in 2024-2026, with construction taking place in 2026-2028. Alaska DOT will undertake the construction of the road extension, with the road then becoming a Municipal road, maintained by the relevant LRSA since it will join with Sandpiper Drive, above Goldenview.

Discussion of the project continued, including traffic impact at the Rabbit Creek Rd / Mountain Air intersection. Mr. Baski stated that while the Goldenvue / Rabbit Creek intersection has been identified as a high traffic intersection, there is presently no funding or active plan for road improvements. Members discussed the possibility of a roundabout at that intersection, with specific problems identified regarding the room necessary for a roundabout as well as the placement on a steep grade.

State Legislative, Municipal Assembly and School Board Updates - Continued

MOA Assembly Member John Weddleton joined the meeting, and provided an update on the Assembly's consideration of converting the Acting Mayor's emergency public health orders regarding the Covid-19 pandemic into Municipal ordinance. Mr. Weddleton stated that other matters expected to come before the Assembly in forthcoming meetings included review of the MOA ordinances regulating marijuana, issues pertaining to easements and rights-of-way (particularly traditional footpaths on the Hillside area), and licensing of homeless shelters.

BVCC Updates and Officer Reports

Rick Farrell, Executive Director of the Bear Valley Community Association, reported on the status of the community ice rink at Bear Valley Elementary School. Mr. Farrell explained that the primary function of the BVCA is child care and after-school activities and programs for BV Elementary students. He stated that the ice rink was again cleared and ready for public use. In response to questions, he indicated that the rink was lit until 10:00 six nights per week with an earlier lights-out time on Sundays,

BVCC Chair reported that Treasurer Angie Pinsonneault was unable to attend tonight's meeting but had authorized Ms. Lipps to report that there was no change in the BVCC finances (reported in January as having \$1296.36 in its checking account.) Ms. Lipps reported that the Federation of Community Councils has now filed its biennial report with the State of Alaska and will as a result have its business license renewed by the State. Ms. Lipps reported that she has confirmed with the FCC that the BVCC meeting notice does get mailed out to council members.

There was no HALO report provided.

Kori Marchowski, Member-at-Large, gave a brief report and expressed her interest in working on fire mitigation efforts in the spring.

Bill Ennis, Bear Valley LRSA Chair, reported that the service provider (Northern Gravel & Trucking, which is the contracted service provider for both LRSAs in the Valley) has continued to provide good snow removal and road service during the winter.

Open Forum and Other Business

Chair Lipps announced that she was planning a "hot chocolate social" event to bring the community together and be able to safely meet up face-to-face outdoors, probably to be held at the plowed parking area near the BV Elementary School skating rink, and would provide further notice of when the event would be held. The group expressed enthusiasm for the idea of such a gathering.

Review and Approval of Previous Minutes

Chair Lipps made the minutes of the January meeting available during the meeting. It was moved and seconded (B. Ennis / K. Marchowski) that the minutes of the January 2021 meeting be approved. The motion passed without objection.

Adjournment

Chair Lipps announced that the next regular meeting of the BVCC would take place on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm, again via Zoom. There being no other business, it was moved and seconded (C. Livsey / B. Ennis) to adjourn, and the February 2021 meeting of the BVCC adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Constance Livsey
BVCC Secretary