

RUSSIAN JACK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, December 8, 2021

At Zion Lutheran Church – 2100 Boniface Parkway

Present: Ed Leach, Kathleen Plunkett, Fred McLeary, Kendra Kloster, Lindsey Hadjuk, Portia Erickson, Junior Aumavae, Lori Pickett, Dan & Sherry Wright

Present via ZOOM: Keelin Baughman, Pete Peterson, LG Tobin, Forrest Dunbar, Naki

Meeting was called to order at 6:47 pm by President Kendra Kloster.

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

2. Anchorage Police Report - no report

3. Legislative report (3 minutes each)

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

Sen. Bill Wielechowski - Nice to meet in person. Gearing up for January 18 start up session. Governor budget expected out next week. Expected to be decreased deficit because of oil prices increasing (closing the gap). Redistricting lawsuits filed by MatSu Borough and other challenges for some of the pairings that have taken place. Probably won't be decided until next election. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals struck down some campaign finance laws – not sure what it means. Waiting for guidance from APOC. Bills to introduce include: campaign funding limits set factoring inflation (apx \$1500 maximum); and online checkbook for any expenditures over \$50.

Sen. Tom Begich (Brix Hahn) – no report

Rep. Geran Tarr - Glad to see everyone in person. Poverty and Opportunity Task Force (23 members) meeting tonight – will keep fighting for the PFD. Important for investing in kids. We know we have to make changes to the program – shouldn't disproportionately impact the lowest income people. Recommendations due to Legislators end of 2022. Generally, the people with less money don't have a lot of power or input. Summit of Justice happening Friday – school based restorative practices. 110 people are registered from all around the state. These are different models to address disciplinary issues. Inclusive school communities (including the staff) is important. Improved disciplinary methods also improve academics in students (not being expelled makes a big difference in grades). They have a good mix of community participants. A Bridge naming bill in Cordova came through, sparking interest in a bridge naming for the bridge on Bragaw. Elsa Sargento was a name suggested – she was very involved in Bridge Builders and will have names to present at the January meeting. Geran is looking for community council support and suggestions. Recognize and honor work that has been done and can be an educational opportunity as well. Mother Lawrence – Cal Williams are some other names that have been suggested. Clare Swan is another suggestion.

Ed likes the idea of naming a bridge after a Bridge Builder. Church has a missionary couple visiting from Florida who mentioned that GPS shows our highways by number (unlike Lower 48) rather than name. Alaska is unique in our highways having names rather than numbers.

Daniel George brought up the Russian Jack Community Council considering changing the name due to the notorious nature of our namesake. There have been some conversations on this topic in the past. Anchorage Museum may be able to provide historical native names.

Rep. Ivy Spohnholz – Happy December. Prefile – make permanent some of the temporary telehealth opportunities that were used during COVID. Advanced practice permit for dental health hygienist (if serving in an underserved community) with several requirements to apply. Looking for areas of efficiency in government – reports no one reads was an example. Cut about 3 billion from the budget. Chelsea Ward-Waller has joined Ivy's office (former MOA employee).

Ed spoke about ASD budget article being covered by federal funds. We are currently spending about \$1000 less per child than we did in 2011. Pre-file bill to update the way we spend money from the PFD to use half of the balance of fund for education which would allow that funding to grow over time. Federal infrastructure monies will be another revenue we will be looking at.

Ed asked about pre-filed bills – are they accessible for other legislators to review? Yes, and also accessible to the public.

Kathleen asked about redoing the funding formula for education. Needs to be done. Local communities have to be involved as it gets complicated. Part of the complication is using Anchorage as the base (as costs in Anchorage vs rural Alaska vary greatly). Kendra asked about ASD budget in regards to the MOA budget. This has varied over the years where state funding and/or municipality funding work on the resource officers.

Daniel George asked about police budget funding. General budget funding (lots of OT costs and are working on that). 5% reductions.

Rep. Andy Josephson (Tristan Walsh) – no report

4. Assembly report (3 minutes each)

Pete Petersen – Meeting Friday to consider overriding Mayor vetoes. Started reapportionment meetings – declared districts are not malapportioned. Dec 9 is next committee meeting. January 6 & 12 will be Town Hall meetings. Hired a firm with GIS capabilities to allow people to draw their own districts. Voted to lift the mask mandate. Emergency ordinances only last 60 days. Several hospitals are out of crisis care status. Title 28 – Election ordinances review will be on the agenda for public hearing on December 14 and 21st.

Forrest Dunbar – Co-Chaired the budget this year. Restored school resource officers, mobile crisis program, evidence-based grants child abuse, building inspectors, altered capital budget with RJCC resolution to restore funding passed and was added to the bond. Traffic calming was also restored \$500,000 (to include all of Anchorage). Assembly has 21 days to meet and override the Mayor's veto. Special meeting scheduled for next Tuesday – reorganization of administrative departments. There will be a public hearing on those. Largest changes are dissolution of Economic Development department, putting half under Municipal Manager. Library merged to Parks & Rec. Restoring library to a full department is an amendment. Native Village of Eklutna met with Assembly – spoke about tax issues, federal funding, missing and

murdered indigenous women – suggested they reach out to Public Safety Commission. Chief McCoy retiring. Michael Curl will need to be confirmed as new chief.

Geran asked about gaming for revenue – that has not come up. Casinos are a federal law issue.

Mobile crisis team has heard many successes and would like to see it continue. Assembly kept it at the fire department and prior level of funding. Switching to a private contract model has been discussed, focused around mental health and paramedics. Currently no organization that does that combined service.

Geran asked about Community Service patrol, which is a similar model, but Mobile crisis team would use different people.

Portia & Junior – Mayor’s Bronson office – COVID resources moved from Loussac Library to Anchorage Neighborhood Health Works location (off C Street). Anchorage Public Library – Mountain View has been doing lots of activities, kids programs. Junior introduced himself – Equity and Justice Community Tour – to allow people to engage in government. Engage Anchorage – racial tension at the schools – local resources are being used to work on this issue. Inviting Uncle’s & Aunties to walk the halls at the school resulted in a ‘normal day’ at school. Cultural Equity training – elders are involved in the schools, normalizing indigenous cultures. There are over 100 languages spoken – lots of cultural richness in the Anchorage community – with lots of opportunities for community voices to be heard. ASD is excited about the local resources that can be used as a springboard for cultural pride. He is reaching out to various cultures in Anchorage and providing feedback to the Mayor’s office.

Ed spoke that 50 years ago the racial tensions were not a problem in the Anchorage schools. Education plays a big role in helping improve racial tensions.

5. School board report (3 minutes each) – Andy Holleman or Margo Bellamy – no report

6. FCC report – Kathleen Plunkett – we are having an ongoing issue with Zoom link for our meeting link. The FCC hasn’t been updating the link. We will use the same Zoom link for our meetings in 2022 (set them up as a recurring meeting).

7. Report from JBER Public Affairs – no report

8. Capital Improvement List Approval for 2022. The list was provided for RJCC review last month. Motion to approve the list was made by Fred McLeary. 2nd by Ed Leach. Motion carried .

9. Elections of RJCC Officers President - Kendra Kloster – President; Lori Pickett – Vice President; Ed Leach – Treasurer; Sherry Wright – Secretary; Kathleen Plunkett – FCC & Trustee. Motion to approve the slate of officers was made by Lindsey Hadjuk. 2nd by Fred McLeary. Motion carried.

10. Neighborhood/Community Announcements: \$10,000 grant is being spent on beautification of Russian Jack Springs Park for the buffer along Pine Street just south of 6th Avenue, which was part of the Polar Bear playground plan.

Keelin Baughman – The Mountain View Library is hosting several events this month. Dec 10th, 2-4pm, is a Winter Craft Day. Paint some ornaments, build a paper snowman, whatever you want. Supplies provided. Dec 14-16th, 3:15pm is a Teen Health class led by an AHD nurse. Kids who attend all three days will earn gift cards, and other cool prizes. Dec 29th, 2-4pm is Leap into Science: Lights and Shadows. This is an event for kids kindergarten and younger where we will be exploring lights and shadows in a number of fun activities. Storytime continues every Tuesday at 6pm. The library will be closed Dec 24-25 and Dec 31, Jan 1. Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions or want a full copy of the calendar. keelin.baughman@anchorageak.gov and 907 343-2904. Thank you and happy holidays!

Lori Pickett – putting boxes together Saturday for an end of year PLN Food Drive.

Sherry Wright let the group know that Dimond Boulevard Baptist Church is having a Caroling & Cookies event on Christmas Eve at 6 pm (3616 Dimond Boulevard) – all are welcome.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 12th at 6:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Sherry Wright, Secretary