

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting  
Wednesday, April 13, 2022 6:30pm  
REGULAR MEETING  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
Draft MEETING MINUTES

Call to order at 6:32pm by Pete Panarese.

Quorum was established: 17 members; 12 guests in attendance.

Federation webpage: [Federation of Community Councils](#)

**Introductions and Announcements:**

**Kevin Cross:** Newly elected Assembly member replacing retiring Ms. Crystal Kennedy.

- Mr. Cross is meeting frequently w/Ms. Allard and Ms. Kennedy.
- April 26 will be his first Assembly meeting.
- He will be in position 30 days and then required to vote on the budget.

**Meeting Minutes Approval:** Draft meeting minutes from March 9, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by Ruth Armstrong; seconded by Mark Littlefield. Approved by a vote of 17 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain.

**Meeting documents are here:** <http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/viewfolder?id=4549>

**New Business:**

**Douglas Schrage , Fire Chief**

**Anchorage Fire Department**

[douglas.schrage@anchorageak.gov](mailto:douglas.schrage@anchorageak.gov), 907.267.4936

Chief Schrage provided the following update:

- Thank you for the two recent bond approvals for the Fire Department. The bonds included
  - Replacing two ambulances. There are 13 ambulances on the road at any given time.
  - Replacing two aging fire engines in the fleet.
- We have 26 new firefighters; 8 still undergoing training; 18 with previous experience.
- Wildfire preparation – Firewise home assessments. Homeowner signs up for w/local fire station and will receive recommendations to make property more resilient to wildfire. This is last year for this program. We are seeking additional funding to continue this program in the future.
- There are two wood lot locations; same as last year: 100th Avenue @ C Street, and Hiland Road.
- Grants for homeowner reimbursement.
- Obtain state funding for research by UAA on recommendations for egress from wildfires.
- Refresher training underway for firefighters.

**Nancy Clark, Manager, Chugiak-Eagle River Library**

**907-343-1533, [nancy.clark@anchorageak.gov](mailto:nancy.clark@anchorageak.gov)**

Ms. Clark provided the following update:

- Library usage has increased significantly.
- Friday morning story time is very popular with up to 70 people attending. The library also holds a self-guided story time on Saturdays that allows families to walk through at their own pace. Topics vary each week.
- The summer reading program begins on May 14.
- Beginning Saturday, April 16 at 10:30am, a teen tech time will be held to help figure out your electronics.
- We're on the project list for the remaining earthquake repairs including new sheetrock and fresh paint. The FEMA funding is now available.
- Friends of the Library is hosting a fundraiser until May 4. For \$5, you can get a Baby Yoda library card.
- Some new furniture and a cell phone booth have been added using federal funding.
- The library is still short-staffed, with 6 of 8 positions filled. Volunteers are welcome; must be at least 13 years old.

**Benson Subdivision** - See meeting documents link above.

**Marc Eid, Principal**

**Farpoint Land Services LLC**

(907) 522-7770, [Marc.eid@farpointak.com](mailto:Marc.eid@farpointak.com)

Mr. Eid represents a private individual who owns a 13+ acre parcel on Eagle River Rd, east of P&M Greenhouse and near Debbie Drive. The landowner wishes to subdivide the parcel in two, creating a nine-acre parcel and a four-acre parcel. A house exists on the land. No further development is planned. Drawing of the property division is posted on ERVCC website.

Questions included:

- What type of development is planned? The owner has no plans for further development of the property.
- What feedback do you need from this community council? A letter of approval would be appreciated.
- Our Platting Board representative will visit the property and report back to the council.

### **JBER Public Affairs Community Engagement office**

**Kathleen D. Bryant, Public Affairs Specialist**

**673rd Air Base Wing Public Affairs**

Community Engagement

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

DSN: 317-552-4493 / Comm: 907-552-8996. Send questions to [JBER.PA@US.AF.MIL](mailto:JBER.PA@US.AF.MIL)

Ms. Bryant provided the following update:

- The next unaccompanied veteran committal service will be Wednesday, April 27 at 2:30 PM at the National Cemetery; contact Virginia for help getting on base, [Virginia.Walker1@va.gov](mailto:Virginia.Walker1@va.gov) (Burial without family present.)
- Please remember to use iSportsman if recreating on JBER; register for an account, see if training areas are open for recreation and sign in and out of recreation areas at <https://jber.isportsman.net>
- April is the Month of the Military Child which includes events across the base to celebrate children of military members.
- On April 30, the last Frontier Honor flight will arrive from Washington, DC. The community is invited to welcome this group of veterans home.
- Municipality's Memorial Day event "Anchorage Remembers" will be on Monday, May 30 at 9:30 AM at the Veteran's Memorial on I St between 9th and 10th Ave, downtown Anchorage.
- ANG Band of the South will perform at the Veterans Wall of Honor in Wasilla on **May 30** for Memorial Day; more info about the Band of the South at <https://www.music.af.mil/Bands/ANG-Band-of-the-South/About-Us/>
- Arctic Thunder Open House and Air Show is back this year, July 30-31. Find updates at <https://www.arcticthunderopenhouse.com/2021/12/30/2022-is-coming/> or on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/events/s/arctic-thunder-open-house-2022/868294350700826/>
- JBER has released the Economic Impact Assessment for FY21. See meeting documents link above for a breakdown on JBER's impact on Alaska. Total economic impact is \$1,935,591,078. See Meeting Documents link above.
- 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Arctic Valley Run will be June 4, 10:00am.

### **[Alice's Marijuana \(retail cannabis store\)](#)**

Lonn Goldbeck, Vice President

[lonn@alices-ak.com](mailto:lonn@alices-ak.com) 907-715-8683

Mr. Goldbeck provided the following information:

- Four partners with Alice's; two long-time ER residents; two Willow residents. They own local businesses.
- Alice's would be a locally owned shop.
- Trying to get text amendment to allow B-3 property for a cannabis store in Eagle River.

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- 2017 municipal map we received showed this was an acceptable use of property. However, there was an amendment that prohibits cannabis on B-3 property in ER. Only real parcel available is at the shooting range.
- We're trying to get community support for a text amendment to receive approval for cannabis on B-3 property in ER. Majority of people we have talked to are supportive of a local option for cannabis in ER.
- Some neighbors we've engaged with have been supportive. Building would be upgraded to meet Title 21 requirements. Security would be upgraded.
- Industry has raised \$30M in tax revenue for state annually; \$5M for Anchorage.
- Industry provided almost 7,000 jobs to date. Average \$40,000/yr. before tips. Would like to bring some jobs to ER.
- ER doesn't always receive the tax revenue they deserve, but we would provide jobs.
- No legislation to put forward at this time. We feel community is 50/50 on this. We are gaining community support. We've had 40+ residents support us to date.
- We ran a poll on NextDoor app, 500 responses and have 53% support at this time; 47% against.
- We're building a campaign, website to build support.

Comments from Ms. Allard—

- We don't receive any tax money here in ER and unlikely we would in future. Assembly decides what to do with it.
- Reviewed opinions on Ms. Allard's social media post. Only 4 people were voters/residents of ER.
- ERCC meeting had ~62 people attend. We asked who were voters of ERCC and residents of ER, asking those individuals to sign in. Fourteen people were from ERCC and of those none were supportive of Alice's.
- It is currently illegal to have marijuana shop in ER in B3. This restriction includes other types of business as well.
- Ms. Allard does not support marijuana shops in ER and has received many messages from residents that they share her view. They don't post on social media due to being attacked for such posts.
- Sitting Assembly persons would be required to carry legislation to change the law to allow marijuana shops. The feedback received indicates ER residents do not want marijuana in ER. Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Allard will not move legislation forward.
- Have received ~600 letters to date against this.
- Regarding Mr. Goldbeck's suggestion to limit number of marijuana shops in ER, state law and municipal code does not allow us to limit number of shops. This is discrimination; all business must be treated equally.
- Municipal code change is required to allow marijuana in B3 in ER. There are no variances allowed under current code.

Questions:

- What will a text amendment do? Allow B3 properties be used for retail cannabis store. Also propose you can limit number of stores if the community wishes.
- Code states shop must have 1000 ft barrier from schools, day cares, churches, etc. Anchorage limit is within 500 ft. Will this text amendment change to ER to 500 ft? No, just B-3 property would allow cannabis shops. A variance would still be required for Horseshoe Drive location.
- What is a text amendment? There is no such thing as a text amendment. Legislation/amendment is required to change municipal code and a variance is also required to place the shop within B3 zone due to 1000ft barrier.

**ERVCC Board Elections will be held at May 11 meeting –**

Please consider volunteering for a position, particularly the **vacant positions** listed below in **red**.

- President - Julie Jessen (Incumbent)
- **Vice-president - vacant**
- Treasurer – Ruth Armstrong (Incumbent)
- Secretary – Joy Webb (Incumbent)
- **Education – vacant**

- Platting Board – Pete Panarese (Incumbent)
- **CBERRRSA – vacant**
- CBERRRSA Alternate - Arlene Rasic (Incumbent)
- C/ER Advisory Board – Julie Jessen (Incumbent)
- **C/ER Advisory Board Alternate– vacant**
- **Federation of Community Councils Alternate – vacant**

#### **Old Business:**

##### **Representative Kelly Merrick - Alaska House of Representatives**

Representative Merrick provided the following update:

- Operating budget work passed in the house and now moves to the Senate.
- On Monday an Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act workshop was held on how to distribute funds; what qualifies.
- House Bill 304 regarding Lions Park property land swap passed the House and Senate Resources Committee. Waiting in Rules to be scheduled on floor and then on for governor's signature. Current Lions Club lease expires in January 2024.

##### **Jamie Allard - Anchorage Assembly**

(907) 343-4114, [Jamie.Allard@anchorageak.gov](mailto:Jamie.Allard@anchorageak.gov)

Ms. Allard provided the following update:

- A redistricting resolution was presented. This was a partisan action to remove one house representative and one senator from Eagle River. First time since 1983 that we would only have one senator and two house seats representing Eagle River. Suggested that it wasn't the Assembly's place since State is still taking testimony and that Assembly members could testify as individuals instead. All amendments by Ms. Allard and Ms. Kennedy were voted down. Mayor presented veto. Assembly will likely override. However, Alaska Redistricting Board did pass an alternate map, 3B, that retains 2 senators and 3 representatives for Eagle River.
- Continuation of the Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board was approved but municipal Clerk has not funded this for past 10 years. Clerk's office won't fund. The Administration agreed instead to fund this. Local resident in municipal office volunteered to take on these responsibilities (be clerk for meeting).
- Nominations of our CER Advisory Bd representative and alternate should be submitted to municipality for approval in August.
- Majority of Assembly voted against approving Eagle River residents who had volunteered to fill various board positions.
- Town halls coming for new homelessness navigation center, near Elmore & Tudor. Looking at July 1 to begin redoing Sullivan Arena for \$2M. \$42M was spent running the Sullivan Arena as a homeless shelter for two years.
- Still trying to get fourth officer for our community.

##### **Eagle River Community Patrol – Cliff Cook**

Mr. Cook provided the following written update:

- March patrols were conducted for 17 hours covering 158 miles.
- Be bear aware, they are starting to wake up looking for that late night or early morning trash can.
- If anyone has questions regarding individuals who appear to be homeless in the area, you can contact APD's Community Action Policing or non-emergency 311 number.
  - A community patrol member saw the Anchorage Community Assistance van in Eagle River recently so it appears assistance is available in Eagle River.
  - Our Assembly reps can also take action as needed.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**CBERRRSA (Road Board): James McCurtain/ Arlene Rasic**

[James.mccurtain@hotmail.com](mailto:James.mccurtain@hotmail.com), 907-301-4042

Mr. McCurtain provided the following update:

- Last meeting lacked a quorum.

Mr. Mark Littlefield provided the following update:

- Street sweeping on mains will begin on Monday, April 18.
- Eagle River Valley sweeping will begin late next week; then will move toward downtown area.

**Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board – Julie Jessen – no report.**

**School Board Report – Pat Higgins, Anchorage School Board**

[Higgins\\_Pat@asdk12.org](mailto:Higgins_Pat@asdk12.org), 907-952-5871

Mr. Higgins provided the following update:

- Expect an announcement at 11:00am tomorrow regarding new superintendent.
- Heavily focused on improving academic outcome for children. So many kids are behind. In discussion, curriculum differentiation by level; based on how kids are performing. Heavy reading and math focus.
- It appears the school bond will not be approved. The board has not discussed yet.

**Education: Open position – See School Board report.**

**Federation of Community Councils – Tom Freeman – no report.**

**Chugiak/Eagle River Parks and Rec Board: Pete Panarese (Chair)**

Mr. Panarese provided the following update:

- Proposed Peters Creek Dog Park is moving forward. See <https://www.muni.org/Departments/ERparks/Pages/DogParks.aspx>
- Board looked at Loretta French Equestrian Park.
  - Can public have free access to this facility?
  - Facility is well-managed and possibly under-utilized.
  - It includes enclosed areas, rinks, storage, and maintenance facility.
  - Model airplane club
  - Archery range and trail
  - This links to parking with ballfields.
- Edmunds Lake Park – undeveloped area of land that could be developed for similar uses to equestrian park.

**Platting: Pete Panarese – nothing to report.**

Motion to adjourn at 7:40pm by Ruth Armstrong; seconded by Paul Forward.

Next meeting is on May 11, 2022, 6:30pm via Zoom.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: Julie Jessen (2022); Vice President: open (2022); Treasurer: Ruth Armstrong (2022); Education: open; Parks & Rec: Pete Panarese/Ruth Armstrong - Alt (2023); C/ER Advisory Board: Julie Jessen (2022); Platting: Pete Panarese (2023); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Tom Freeman (2023)/Alt: open; Road Board: James McCurtain (2022)/Arlene Rasic – Alt (2022); Secretary: Joy Webb (2022)