

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 11, 2022 6:30pm
REGULAR MEETING
Zoom Virtual Meeting
Draft MEETING MINUTES

Call to order at 6:36pm by Julie Jessen

Quorum was established: 12 members; 4 guests in attendance.

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

Introductions and Announcements: none

Meeting Minutes Approval: Draft meeting minutes from April 13, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by Tom Freeman; seconded by Crystal Kennedy. Approved by a vote of 12 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain.

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

New Business:

Shall there be a Constitutional Convention? – November 8 General Election ballot

<https://defendakconstitution.com>

Cathy Giessel, Co-chair, Defend Our Constitution Coalition

907.242.5450 cgiessel@me.com

See Meeting Documents link above for Ms. Giessel's presentation and additional printed materials.

Ms. Giessel provided the following information:

- Per Alaska State Constitution, every ten years voters are asked if they wish to have a constitutional convention, at which the entire State Constitution may be changed.
- Our Constitution's authors provided an amendment process that allows a 'single subject' constitutional amendment to be proposed. Forty (40) constitutional amendments have been proposed to date with 28 approved and 12 rejected.
- To conduct a constitutional convention at this time is (1) unnecessary, (2) expensive, and (3) dangerous.
- The convention allows 65 delegates and 75 days to potentially re-write the entire Alaska Constitution. Estimated cost is \$17M. Additional real cost in instability in our economy and in local government.
- Speakers from "Defend Our Constitution Coalition" are available to present this topic to all types of organizations.

Questions from attendees included:

- The principal of the PFD is protected in the Constitution. Could a constitutional convention change that? Yes
- Could the State Constitution be changed in conflict with US Constitution? Federal rules must be met first.
- Who pays for the convention? Estimated \$17M comes from state treasury funds. Sixty days are allotted to set up the convention. It meets for 75 days or longer (no upper limit on length) and then 30 days to wrap up.
- What if voters don't ratify the revised constitution? The current Constitution remains in effect.

2023 Community Council CIP Survey: <https://www.muni.org/communitycouncilsurveys/homepage/>

- Review the list of projects and provide feedback to our Assembly representatives and via the survey.
- The annual Community Council Survey is an important tool in assessing proposed capital project needs in Anchorage. Once a community's highest priorities are identified they can be properly considered when developing the proposed CIP. The survey will be open through June 15. www.muni.org
- We will revisit this in fall to consider what other projects we might add for next year.

ERVCC Board Elections

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

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- **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**

Open positions were reviewed, and several individuals agreed to fill open roles.

Crystal Kennedy made a motion, seconded by Tom Freeman

- to nominate Mr. Tom Roth to the ERVCC Board for a three-year term, filling roles of Vice-president and Education representative;
- to nominate Mr. Scott Bailey as Alternate on Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board; and
- to nominate Mr. Eric Gunderson as Alternate on Federation of Community Councils Board.

Tom Freeman made a motion, seconded by Paul Forward

- to nominate Ms. Crystal Kennedy as CBERRRSA representative.

The above nominations were approved by unanimous vote.

The remaining positions will be considered at the September 14, 2022 meeting.

Ranked Choice Voting Information:

See presentation by Alaska Common Ground & Alaska Division of Elections here: <https://youtu.be/BRQ5ttSPoHE>

More information from Alaska Division of Elections here: <https://www.elections.alaska.gov/>

More information from Alaskans for Better Elections here: <https://alaskansforbetterelections.com/>

Non-platted road issue in Chugiak

Ms. Jessen provided the following update:

- Aurora Borealis Rd, which is not in ERVCC, is treated as a public road but is not an official right of way. Has been shut off to some regular users. A resolution was drafted by that community council to re-open and maintain this road as a public right-of-way.
- We may have similar situations in Eagle River Valley Community Council.

Old Business:

Representative Kelly Merrick - Alaska House of Representatives - no report.

Jamie Allard - Anchorage Assembly

(907) 343-4114, Jamie.Allard@anchorageak.gov

- The Assembly approves local commission and board nominations in October.

Eagle River Community Patrol – Cliff Cook

Mr. Cook provided the following update:

- April patrols were conducted for 35 hours covering 346 miles.
- Be bear aware! Put trash out day of pick-up. Close garage doors.
- Mail theft in Chugiak/Peters Creek area where older-style mailboxes are found. Use mailboxes that lock.
- There are new APD officers in Eagle River.
- Some people experiencing homelessness have been in area. Report to APD and our Assembly representatives.
- Report all crime to APD; either via 911 if emergency or 311 if non-emergency.
- Watch out for motorcycles on Eagle River Road.

Committee Reports:

CBERRRSA (Road Board): James McCurtain/ Arlene Rasic

Ms. Arlene Rasic provided the following update:

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- Mr. McCurtain has served as our representative for the past three years. He was recognized and thanked for his service.
- The Road Board created a Resolution 2022-022, Resolution Requesting for transportation Improvement Plan to have equitable funding for MOA, District 2, regarding percentage of AMATS funds that we receive. Considering population percentage or tax base percentage, we are not receiving our proportion of funding compared to Anchorage. See Meeting Documents link above.
- An avalanche study on Hiland Rd. was discussed as a possible CIP project.
- Any road work or drainage issues projects should be forwarded to Mark Littlefield and Arlene Rasic for consideration by the Road Board.
- There were a few heavy snow events in March that required a full plow out, partial plow outs and snow haul off.
- Sweeping operations began on April 18th with the sweepers first working in locations that had snow melt early, with the curb and gutter locations done later.
- The clearing of the avalanche on Hiland Road kept everyone busy, the cost is estimated at \$810,000.00, which will be paid for by the Municipality and not out of our road budget.
- Materials for the Capital Improvement Projects have been ordered to complete projects listed, but there are a few delays in pipe. Hopefully the main road projects can get completed as planned for this season.
- The Birchwood Community Council requested the MOA do a safety and traffic study for the Chugiak HS driveway and Hillcrest Dr on South Birchwood Road. The design study is available to review.
- Starner Bridge repair funding is still being pursued by representatives, and the board voted to allow \$1,000,000 of reserved funds to be used to complete this replacement when state funding is available.

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board – Julie Jessen – nothing to report.

School Board Report – Pat Higgins, Anchorage School Board

Higgins_Pat@asdk12.org, 907-952-5871

Mr. Higgins provided the following update:

- Final candidate for our new superintendent has been chosen. Since candidate is not from Alaska, DPI will review and confirm candidate's certification. Must wait until this process is completed.
- School board spent nine (9) hours looking at final candidates.
- We must be heavily focused on improving academic outcome for children. We need strong student focus including curriculum and improved communications.
- School bond was not approved. After September 2024, current federal funds cannot be carried forward. State funding continues to decrease for schools. Study was done 8-10 years ago showing we had very inadequate funding for schools.
- Our classroom sizes are large. Kindergarten-3rd grade recommendation is 15 children/class. We have 25.
- Mr. Higgins expressed appreciation for his reception at our community council meetings. Next fall, school board members will be re-assigned to visit the community councils.

Questions from attendees included:

- Our superintendent experience requirements include 3 years of teaching instruction. Final candidate has only two years. Why was this candidate chosen? Candidate has additional teaching experience not included in resume. We relied on our consultant to vet candidate per our requirements. We are cautiously optimistic this will work out. Department of Education will make final decision on certification.
- Did candidate discuss strategies to improve student outcomes? Yes, this was discussed extensively. Candidate in Forbes "Top 3" in Education. Discussed efforts and approaches that are much more aggressive; has strong sense of urgency to improve student outcomes.
- What was feedback from administration and teachers on the final candidate? Some were positive (we need to do something very different than we've been doing) and some were negative (we need someone who already knows us)

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- Will school bond be reintroduced in the fall? Unlikely, probably reintroduced next spring. We have \$0.5B in deferred maintenance. We are still exploring options.

Education: Open position – See School Board report.

Federation of Community Councils – Tom Freeman

Mr. Freeman provided the following update:

- Status of the budget was provided by Tom Begich. \$4B coming to the state and \$0.5B from the American Recovery Act.
- First quarter budget revisions underway by Bronson administration.

Chugiak/Eagle River Parks and Rec Board: Pete Panarese (Chair)/Ruth Armstrong (Alt) – no report.

Platting: Pete Panarese – nothing to report.

Motion to adjourn at 8:30pm.

Next meeting is on September 14, 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)