

**Fairview Community Council  
General Membership Meeting  
via Zoom due to weather  
November 9, 2023  
7:00-9:00**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm. Attending were: Allen Kemplen, Sharon Chamard, James Thornton, Karen Gonne-Harrel, Kelly Ittenbach, Michael Braniff, Cliff Groh, Loki Tobin, Walker, Suzi Pearson (AWAKE), Jamieann Bell (Anchorage Community Land Trust), Bryan Hawkins, Taylor Keegan, Carl Jacobs ( School Board), Maria Crawford, SJ Klein.

Council has a new secretary: Kelly Ittenbach. Council will divvy up prior monthly meetings and do minutes. Will roll out minutes as they come available.

**Elected Officials:**

Senator Loki Tobin:

Several site visits: Shiloh Community House to see what needs are. Governor's child care task force reviewed initial recommendations for 30 day comment period. Attended child care summit hosted by Thread: economics of child care, impacts, lack of access to high quality child care. Attended Pride foundation board retreat to advocate for every person to be who they are, where they are. Went to Bethel as part of the Alaska mental Health Trust to see how trust beneficiaries are handled in the area. Excited about work being done around Merrill Field: happy to see a pause looking for community feedback. If you have free time, Fairview Elementary and Government Hill elementary need cross guards. Please slow down!

Representative Cliff Groh:

Been taking School tours: schools in worse shape than thought. Met with Central Principal. Principal taught Spanish the first two weeks of school, because there was no teacher available. He has never taught it before. Not unusual. Hard finding substitute teachers due to lack of funding.

I worked on housing summit at UAA last Friday. Disturbed by: house prices, housing supply decline, and high rents. I'm looking at the state getting more involved in financing multi-family housing.

I met with the DOT commissioner about roads: we talked about ways to improve transportation in Anchorage, including the possibility of the municipality taking over 5th and 6th Aves. which might improve development of downtown and Fairview.

With oil prices dropping, this is a useful reminder that Alaska needs to expand it's revenue sources. The PFD has some close calls and unusual bumps in investment strategy.

Tomorrow is observed Veteran's day. Want to recognize contributions of veterans in our lives and history of America.

Allen: Thank you for your service and that of all veterans. Talk about housing and role of the state: I encourage you to engage Alaska Housing Finance Corp. in a conversation. I remember when they were able to offer low interest loans for certain population segments. Legislature pulling their funding for use for other things?

Cliff: I completely agree. I met with executives of AHFC personnel. Will continue to explore for housing crunch.

**Anchorage School Board Member:**

Carl Jacobs:

Took a first look at budget deficit for next year which will be roughly \$95 million. Will know more later. The size deficit will continue to increase each year due to staffing costs, support staff for special education especially, as well as bus drivers. The budget needs to be increased so we can retain folks. Due to flat funding, the district will continue to have budget deficits until we can increase statutory funding.

We have been focused on data related to our 3rd goal: college career life readiness and dive into the graduation rate data. Our next meeting is on 22nd: How we can reach our goal of 90%. It's at 81% now.

Bond proposition for April 2024 municipal election: total bond is \$62,32,000. Many projects: more secure entrances to security threats, several seismic upgrades as well as other projects.

Due to HB 106, there has been no school bond reimburse on annual basis. That moratorium set to expire 2025, so we are excited to have regular state buy-in.

I'm working on a policy change to incorporate school board's communication committee to the PTA create stronger uplink and dpwnlink for information to be shared.

I'm also working on updating the ASD tobacco and vape policy in line with the American Lung Association.

**Anchorage Assembly Members:**

no Assembly members present. As part of the mayor's emergency declaration, Chris Constant cannot attend.

**Presentations:**

Taylor Keegan (Parks and Rec.):

Eastchester Park master plan: I posted links in chat with invitation December 6th from 6-8pm. Looking for more input to plan. Contact information is in chatroom.

Fairview Recreation Center strategic plan: trying to gain approval for strategic plan: worked with advisory group and staff to come up with a plan. After approval, prioritized fostering community and a modern facility. Several improvements made in 2023. Wi-Fi should be done by end of year.

Went over June events to promote recreation center. Able to provide training for 12 new vendors. Several Programs using rec. center. We have a new facility manager. Have several open positions and have hired new positions as well. Rec. staff working at different locations to make sure staffing is filled.

New 2024 improvements: parking lot improvements, signage inside and outside. New celebration room that can be rented.

Loki: vegetative island: will snow removal happen?

Taylor: will happen in corridors so that we can manage.

Allen: Have you considered partnerships? I encourage an advisory board of some sort. Any downside to having an advisory board?

Taylor: good idea. Commission already acting as that body. Parks and rec. commission has lacked a rec. division. Always looking for folks for parks and rec. commission.

Allen: I would consider being on commission. See advisory board for both rec. centers

Taylor: would love to hear of other cities that have advisory boards. Might be steep learning curve to model.

Michael Braniff: To form advisory board is to really formalize something. It takes staff time and we're short of staff. Want to remain available. Want to come to meetings, implement good suggestions, but it takes resources to formalize.

Allen: Will research how structured in other places. Thanks to you and your staff for coming to meetings. Applaud you and staff on work for rec. center. Resulting in real improvements to facility. Use is reflected and generating money to cover costs. Not sure about signage on the north side of the building. Would encourage at least one more sign.

Taylor: I hear you - need more money.

Allen: could always phase things. Celebration room: LOVE the color, love the image. Kudos! We do have this effort underway for civic heroes. The walkway to the other building, we wanted to create a wall of civic heroes. Have already id'd three. Will be introducing resolution for a new civic hero. Lastly, in the main entry area...think about light. It's so dark; it's got to be tough for staff. Well documented that natural light is important for physiological effects on people.

Taylor: Have you noticed lights are just off? Last Staff wanted lights off- it was too bright. New staff wants lights on. Many felt not welcomed, so lights are now on and it feels more welcoming.

Karen: I am very sensitive to light and so the kind of light is important. Overhead fluorescents were awful - be mindful of lighting welcoming but not in-your-face fluorescents.

Taylor: I agree. Talking about this with project team. Future bonds will include cohesive lighting and flooring that are in harmony that can be done correctly at one time. Part of that was the Celebration room.

Karen: One idea: at my dentist office, they installed panels that have the sky and trees. Changed lighting and experience. Might be fun thing to do.

Allen: Include us in the lighting conversation. There may be issues with LED lights and how they effect people.

Karen: Can I light up new trees in Eastchester Park?

T: Yeah. Go for it.

Allen: It's a good start. Will get more in planter boxes next year.

### **Committee Reports:**

Homelessness (Karen):

I Introduced a resolution a couple of months ago born out of the frustration with businesses impacted around camps and shelters. The idea is that if we set up a shelter, it will impact local the area. Assembly to consider impact areas. How to monitor impact area? Ideas on how to patrol that area? Allen has come up with an idea: neighborhood guardians to interact with

people in off site areas. Trying to encourage people to move off destructive patterns. Henning was in attendance. Allen talked about the clean slate strategy.

Allen: Clean Slate strategy...led by the assembly and Felix Riviera. Moving forward with looking at what's needed in terms of additional facility for walk-in for homeless individuals. What characteristic should it have? Where should it be? We are developing criteria for that. Another meeting next week, then producing a short list after to apply criteria. In January, proposing to have a short list for public discussion and feedback. Two things: core assumption that a new facility not be greater than 150 individuals, and any future homeless shelters will not be in downtown corridor. Another action going on: awareness that councils need to act together. When the warm season hits, there is no way to deal with situation in a systematic way, so we have to have a year round approach. As a result, we had Sylvia, president of the downtown community council, organize a meeting of the seven council presidents. We came up with a call to action document. Will introduce new resolution tonight for review. Met yesterday with Assembly members Volland and Constant to go over the document and get feedback from them which we are incorporating in our cover letter accompanying the document.

### **Community Gardens:**

Karen: Cleared brush and picked up trash on Ingra and 14th. Ordered new signs which show designs for lots. On the other lot, someone dumped a load of pea gravel, so we will use it. Placed chain around and "no dumping" sign. Hope to fence first thing next year and grow next year.

### **Merrill Field:**

Two airport managers ago used some Cares money they had to develop IFR rules. Didn't have any outreach to the community council. At one of the meetings, we raised concerns about IFR and expansion of the runway protection zone to Merrill Field personnel. We were looking to have a special meeting to go over these procedures, but the current airport manager was fired. Hoping to illustrate need for greater conversation about the airport and Fairview neighborhood. Were going to have special meeting on this tonight, but canceled due to snow. Will reschedule meeting to have further conversation about better relationship and what's going to happen.

Karen: Was there of improvements to buildings on Orca.

Allen: Mixed messages. Cares money rushed to improve buildings on Orca. Ralph said he was going to do it. Got the impression they are focusing on interior improvements. Needs to be part of interface. Need better buffer. Need more information. Mentioned moving forward to reconstruct east/west runway. Will have to close runway for entire summer. Current notion is to move everyone to north/south runway. Patterns would change. Can impact the neighborhood negatively for a year. Start latter part of 2024, early 2025. Will have working group that I volunteered for.

Walker: You didn't mention that the instrument procedures don't change safety in any way. Will allow increased capacity. They are proposing more off ramps and proposing lower minimums in/out of Merrill Field. Will increase commercial traffic to airport.

Allen: In last months handout, they showed expansion of RPZ on east/west runway.

Walker: Ultimate goal it seems is to have either more or bigger aircraft going in and out of Merrill Field.

Karen: I Asked those questions at the last meeting. They kept reassuring me, it will not mean bigger aircraft... Merrill Field can only handle certain size. Only certain craft will be able to land IFR anyway. I'm still confused - only for hospital traffic, size of aircraft, how many aircraft?

Walker: I agree that instrument approach procedures are limited due to runway length and weight capacity restrictions. Lake and Penn Air and smaller commercial operators... more of those will be coming in. Would encourage community council to reach out to Medivac operators and find out who they have contractual obligations with.

Allen: It seems that it will increase helicopter traffic as flight schools offer training in IFR? How that is handled, Fairview community will be interested. Not necessarily aware of proper protocol.

**Grant Implementation:** finished.

**Challenge Grant:** finished also. Installed 5 trees and 2 log planter boxes. Come spring, will plant in planter boxes. It has a matching requirement: were able to meet requirement. Council will not take fiscal hit. Used volunteer labor.

**Reconnecting Communities Grant:** DOT in Washington asked us to tweak grant. We did, and re-submitted grant. Should be the last hurdle. Anticipate will be available by end of year. One item was working together with the museum and other city groups during design week. Have a steering committee scheduled for next week. Focusing on Hyder Street. Bringing attention to the corridor. Continue to meet with DOT's Seward project. Last meeting we encouraged them to change their schedule to sync with design week so they could use public input to and ideas to feed into PEL project.

### **Public Safety:**

Maria: nothing to report

Allen: One thing: neighborhood guardian idea come up several times. Constant notion they would be vigilantes. Not intended to be that. Guardians are about giving homeless to give back to the community. Peer led, formerly homeless folks who can communicate homelessness on a more personal level. Asked assembly to support pilot project.

### **Standing Reports:**

Allen: Don't forget December holiday party here at Fairview rec. center. "Push Back the Dark": good treatments. Some great participation.

### **Old Business:**

Civic heroes: Karen and I met with Ray Ward, son of Grady Ward, a long term resident of Fairview and dedicated to safety. Will introduce a resolution to nominate him for civic hero.

### **New Business:**

Winter Festival: talking about this during design week. Talked with municipal traffic engineer to close off Hyder Street to use it for civic events. If interested in getting involved, let me or Lindsey with Neighborworks Alaska know.

Introducing resolution about the call to action. Asking council to approve.

**Community Comments/Concerns:**

Karen: Bob had hard time with plow. Will freeze and become concrete. Move now while still soft.

Adjourned at 8:53 Karen, Sharon seconded.