

Mid-Town Community Council (MTCC) General Meeting Minutes
Meeting will be located at 3000 C Street –First Floor Conference Room
Wednesday; September 13, 2023
12:00 Noon to 1:30 PM

Sign in and Call to Order – Kris Stoechner President – All MTCC businesses, residents, landowners and guests are welcome to participate and bring ideas forward to this meeting.

Kris Stoechner called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

MTCC Officers and Directors attending:

Kris Stoechner, President
Ric Davidge, Vice President
Megan Debenham, Secretary
Greg McDonald, Board Member
Al Tamagni, Board Member
Rosemary Borchardt, Board Member
Bill Borchardt, Board Member

Approval of Minutes: 1 Minute to include minutes of July Emergency Town Hall

Ric moved and Al seconded that the minutes from June 14, 2023 and July 27, 2023 be approved. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Treasurer’s Report – Kirk Hastain - Treasurer - **Excused**

Approval of Agenda: 1 Minute

Ric moved and Rosemary seconded that the agenda be approved. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Assemblywoman – Meg Zaletel – AMATS – 3 Minutes

- 2050 MTP can be found at AMATS2050.com
 1. Draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan contains complete project list
 - a. Should review appendices, recommended projects list (detailed)
 - b. Comments on the MTP should be copied to Meg, Felix, and Daniel
 - c. Comments due October 9
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are projects in motion
 1. Muni.org/departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS (Google AMATS TIP)
 - a. NL/Benson may be pushed back because of understaffing

Committees:

Marijuana and Alcohol – Aqua Vitae - Brian Swartzentruber & Rosemary Borchardt – **1 minute**

Rosemary- Nothing to report

Kris- Aqua Vitae license is for sale. MTCC is opposing extension of license.

New Retail Marijuana Store – Jill Williams owner – **3 Minutes**

- Started first business in 1984 in Kodiak. Owns The Look and Bailey’s Rent-All.
- Store will offer cannabis for medical and recreational use

- Plans are in place to operate the business safely, will follow all guidelines and laws
- No outside financing
- Question from Gabriel Gonzales- MTCC will have an MOU with this licensee?
- Kris- MOUs have been received well in the past

Other – Elections in October – Kris – 3 Minutes -As per the MTCC Bylaws:

There shall be an Executive Board of **NINE (9)** members. The Executive Board shall be comprised of its Officers and **FIVE (5)** members elected at large. The Officers shall be president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer. The Executive Board shall be responsible for carrying out the business of the Council between regular monthly meetings.....

.....Each year at the October meeting, an election of the Executive Board shall be held. The term of each board member shall be for one year. The offices of President and Vice-President shall be limited to three (3) consecutive one (1) year terms. Individuals who have served three (3) consecutive one (1) year terms as President or Vice-President can seek reelection to those specific offices after a minimum of one (1) year term has transpired. There shall be no term limits for the offices of **Secretary, Treasurer** and Members- At- Large.

Members will submit their names for election at the September meeting with the actual vote for their position to be held the October meeting. A nominating committee of at least two Council members may be appointed by the President at the September meeting. The slate of candidates shall be published in the October meeting notices. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the September and October meetings. Proof of eligibility is required.

Council members must have attended two of the previous six general membership meetings in order to be eligible as a board member. Council members shall disclose any felony conviction in order to be eligible as a board member.

The election for officers shall be by ballot unless there is only one (1) nominee for an office.

- All current board members plan to run again
- Nominees that aren't already on the board:
 1. Mike Mason, FNB Alaska
 2. Jason Bergerson- reviewing AMATS for us, representative for transit center
 3. No nominations from the floor
- Al- point of order, Rosemary and Bill are co-members
- Ric- intends to be more involved as vice president

Presenters:

Mayor's Office – Trista Espe or Michelle Hodel - 5 Minutes

- Aug 31 housing crisis meeting, ask for more equitable federal funding for homelessness and affordable housing
- APD partnering with Cops for Community to sponsor mentorship program
- Port update- funding Tifia loan next step, \$280 million since taken office
- Grand opening Alaska veterans' business outreach center
- Mayor supports investigation into using former SWS transfer station admin building as emergency cold weather shelter as proposed by the Assembly
- Cold weather shelter plan- October 15 deadline

Mike Robbins – will talk about Street Façade Loan Program – 5 Minutes

- Anchorage Community Development Authority- municipal corporation not using tax dollars (ACDA.net)
- Great Streets Façade program came from a recommendation by Roger Brooks to make Anchorage a more friendly place for residents and tourists:
 1. Attractive
 2. Revitalize local businesses
 3. Focus on certain areas of city
- Partnership with Northrim Bank and the UAA Small Business Development Center
- Also now available to MT businesses, in addition to downtown and Muldoon
- 1 million available for loans at 5% interest- easy to apply at ACDA.net
 1. \$15000 businesses
 2. \$25000 owners
- Mike and Melinda brought flyers that will be attached to the minutes

School Board – – 5 Minutes – Kelly Lessens

- Chronic absenteeism- missing 17 days or more, K and 12 have worst attendance.
 - Fully staffed for transportation, increased wages and offered summer
 - New K-3 LA curriculum with grant from DEED, next year grades 4-5 from ASD funds
 - Strategic planning for 6th graders moving to MS
 - Academy program
 - Resource alignment
 - [Lessens kelly@asdk12.org](mailto:kelly@asdk12.org)
 - Ric recommended reading *How the Other Half Learns*
 - Rosemary-
 - 1. Disappointed about Dr. Carson
 - 2. Concerned about lack of reading skills. Going through program after program that doesn't work. School board should be very concerned about that. She would like reports.
- Kelly- Board's focus is reading, math, and college/career readiness. Waiting for state definition of proficiency. Always reports available.

If in attendance – Senator Gray-Jackson, House Representative Alyse Galvin & Andy Josephson 3 Minutes each

- Senator Gray-Jackson presented her notes (to be attached to the minutes)
- Next meeting she will present bills over Zoom
- Andy Josephson- talked about his responsibilities:
 1. Fact finding- Dutch Harbor, Pogo Mine, Bradley Lake Dam, UAA campus, JBER when President Biden was there
 2. Reviewing legislation-
 3. Legislation- additional misdemeanor for assault in front of child
 4. Budget and Audit committee

- Tasha Hotch from Alyse Galvin's office- focus on housing, education, resource development
- Town hall this Saturday 1-5 at the Loussac Library, both reps and Senator Gray-Jackson

New Business – Assemblyman Daniel Volland – Questions asked/answered on Muni Cold Weather Shelter Plan – **Balance of meeting**

Note on the minutes: Questions/Comments are bulleted. Daniel Volland's answers are numbered.

- Kris Stoechner- there has been \$ 1.5-2 million damage in MT. She doesn't want to see a navigation center at the old transfer site. How to mitigate damage?
 1. There is a cost, both monetary and societal, of not having housing. DV is also a downtown business owner. Assembly appropriated \$220,000 for mitigation, cleaning, APD patrols (4 officers rotating between camps)
 2. When Sullivan was being used, \$400,000 appropriated for APD and PR Healthy Spaces Team. Not all the money was spent. Assembly allocates money and creates policy, doesn't implement.
 3. Emergency winter shelter- Health Dept is leading, non-congregate (hotels- positive interest), Covenant House increase 25 teenagers, also searching for a small congregate space
 4. Permanent low-barrier housing plans (clean slate strategy) are paused
 5. Tudor/Elmore was denied by Assembly- cost (\$20 mil), snow load, fire safety, size (Assembly believes smaller is better, don't have an operator who can handle large numbers of people)
 6. Mayor, Assembly, HD interested in evaluating central transfer station admin building.

Criteria:

 - a. Zoned PLI or B3- can be waived for emergency (transfer station is **)
 - b. Unoccupied, in fair condition or better
 - c. ADA compliant
 - d. Capital costs required- not applicable to emergency shelter

Preferences:

 - a. Not lie within 500 feet of school, childcare, playground
 - b. Within .25 mile of public transportation
 - c. Visibility buffer
 - d. Closest residential 2100 feet except Alpine Apartments, which is across New Seward Hwy.
 - e. Has showers and lockers.
- What is Assembly doing to address root causes of homelessness?
 1. Providence crisis stabilization center opened
 2. 24/7 mobile crisis team
- Megan Debenham- What is the Assembly doing to increase housing?
 1. Zoning- addressing design standards

2. Housing summit soon
 3. Health Department grant opportunities
 4. ARPA appropriations to bring affordable housing online
 5. Every income level needed
- Eva Gardner (attorney Ashburn and Mason)- We are always in emergency situation. What are you doing now to plan for the future?
 1. CSS- town halls, committee meetings
 2. Permanent low-barrier location identified by November 1
 3. This administration hasn't had a long view, prior admin did. Feels that now the Assembly and Administration are working together.
 4. Working with secretary Fudge and Senator Sullivan- Houston, TX doing well with homelessness because of federal investment (\$45 mil vs \$4 mil). We have more homeless people per capita. MOA tax payers alone can't bear this burden.
 - Ron Alleva- can add another million to damage costs. Even in Rogers Park there are homeless and damage issues. Condense sheltering in one location.
 1. Concentration of homeless services is not what we hear from other downtown business owners.
 2. SWS admin building- Don't know if it's going to be used as a navigation center. Could be shelter or warming area. Warming area and congregate shelter cannot be one and the same.
 - Jim Renkert- family owns property at 3rd and Gambell, is a 3rd Ave radical. Refer to the camp as East 3rd or the old hospital site. Airport fire truck and two People Mover buses.
 1. Junk cars should not be allowed. City working on that.
 - Jill Williams- homeless people moving into MT from downtown. Have to have acceptance of people that are poverty-stricken. Everyone is doing as well as they can on both sides. We can't use insurance for damages.
 1. No one neighborhood should be overly burdened. MTCC mapped the services for homeless, should share with council.
 2. No place to go to bathroom- appropriation last night for porta-potties. There is a lack of public toilets in Anchorage.
 - Rosemary Borchardt- criminals, drunks, drug addicts. What is being done about them?
 1. Appreciate frustration. We must be able to enforce laws.
 - David Morgan (RPCC)- recommends establishing community watches. RP has 22 volunteers. The police need help. Best way to stop crime is to catch and prosecute. 16 break-ins on Standford in RP. Public housing is needed.

Ric moved and Al seconded that the meeting be extended 15 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

- Bill Borchardt- Anchorage has offered more carrot and less stick to criminal element in homeless population. We keep doing the same thing over and over again. Archive property now is a giant ghetto. What is the status on that?

1. Assembly gave permission for it to be used as an allowed camp, but admin didn't make it happen.
 2. The underlying issue is how to get sheltering capacity so we can move people out of camps.
 3. Doesn't know the status of the archive site, but will follow up.
 4. Kris- mayor told her that there is a balloon payment due that the city can't pay, so the property will be sold.
- Al Tamagni- We've spent 3.5 years or more on homelessness, and we still don't have a plan. Nothing has worked. \$171 million spent and some assembly members don't know. Suggests using money for neighborhood watches. Work with Salvation Army.
 - Ric Davidge- book on homelessness updated every year. There are cities that have solved the problem. 60% of homeless individuals have income. Need to focus on housing them. 9th circuit decision is significant problem.
 - Felix Rivera- appreciates conversation. Call 311 or 911 when you see something happen. Lot of work happening to focus on long term.
 - Kris- going to Cuddy every day. Invites anyone to come with her.

Ric moved and Al (and Greg) seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Present in the Meeting:

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson
 Bessie Odom-Virgil, Senator Gray-Jackson's staff
 Representative Andy Josephson
 Tasha Hotch, Representative Alyse Galvin's staff
 Daniel Volland, Assembly Member
 Felix Rivera, Assembly Member (arrived at 1:15 pm)
 Meg Zaletel, Assembly Member (on Zoom)
 Kelly Lessens, school board
 Gabriel Gonzales, AMCO
 Melinda Gant, ACDA
 Mike Robbins, ACDA
 Michelle Hodel, Mayor's Office
 Mike Mason, FNB Alaska and amazing tech guy
 David Morgan, Rogers Park CC
 Eva Gardner, Ashburn and Mason
 Jim Renkert
 Ron Alleva
 Chris Dabbs
 Kerry Lynch
 Jill Williams