

OLD SEWARD/OCEANVIEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Draft Minutes from the May 10, 2024, meeting

Officers: President-Joan Henry, Vice President-Kevin Skiba, Secretary-Vacant, Acting Secretary-Peggy Kircher, Treasurer-John Henry, FCC Delegate-Gary Meaders, FCC Alternate-Gloria Lyons

1. Established a Quorum and Call to Order at 6:30 pm with review of the Zoom Meeting Protocol and explanation of Community Council Members vs. Guests. Around 8:30 pm, a motion was made to extend the meeting to 9 pm by Kevin S, seconded by Stan M.
2. Approval of the May 10, 2024, Agenda with the Minutes from March 8, 2024, edited for clarification and approval at the July 12, 2024, meeting.
3. **Officer's Report:**
 - a. Treasurer – \$1,560.88 in checking includes a \$20.00 donation and \$.13 interest for Mar & Apr 2024.
 - b. FCC Delegates – Gary out of town & Gloria did not attend the meeting so nothing to report.
4. **Representatives/Community Reports**
 - a. **AFD** – Not present
 - b. **APD** – Not present
 - c. **Assembly Member Randy Sulte (RS):** contact randy.sulte@anchorageak.gov and meet in-person on Saturdays from 8-10 am at Huffman Kaladi Brothers.
 - The Capital project is live and online now. The Assembly passed their budget for the first quarter 2024 and rezoned the National Archive site. The Assembly is looking for a Wildland Fire Coordinator who will update Community Councils on the wildfire dangers in Anchorage. Bianca Cross is the temporary Chief of Police, and the Mayoral election is going on now. Eagle River will be the new Woodlot Site.
 - Homeless Shelters run by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have rules and are looking into buying “Cubes” to house the homeless, which the MOA will not be funding. We still need a year-round shelter. An Anchorage Ordinance (AO) will say where camping will not be allowed as the homeless are citizens too. Anchorage has around 3,000 homeless, some are staying with family and friends, while 300-800 are on the streets.
 - d. **Assembly Member Zac Johnson (ZJ):** contact zac.johnson@anchorageak.gov.
 - Zac filled us in on the National Archives site being sold through the MOA's Heritage Land Bank, Property tax exemption of \$10K for volunteer firefighters, Potter Watershed Park at Potters Marsh area, Wildland AFD grant to hire a candidate with issues, ask for a wildfire representative to perform a risk assessment especially for South Anchorage, there are 1,800 buildings in High risk areas, the camp abatement policy from the Mayor didn't pass due to limiting the size to 25 ppl and other restrictions; APD Mike retired as chief, Anchorage childcare and early education funding with the

marijuana use taxes starts in 2025 & how-to use \$5 mil in funds, the next meeting 2024-25 Title 21 code changes process to zoning code,

- A member asked Zac about funds collected by the alcohol tax which was supposed to be used to get the inebriates off the streets and why the money is diverted. Zac said the tax is under tax cap, so it includes the homeless, child abuse, a needed strategic framework but nothing has been decided for 2025. RS: There is a link for the Alcohol Tax work session on muni.org.
 - Another member asked a few questions about Title 21 zoning changes as they don't want duplexes next door, why the Assembly is holding meetings in mid-May to the end of June when people are out of town, and is concerned about Air B&Bs as they don't want unknown people going in and out of neighbors homes. Is it because of an Administration change and trying to get things in by June 30, 2024, and so the Assembly is rushing it through? Zac said the Short-Term Rentals passed 7/5, but the mayor vetoed it, so it did not go into effect.
 - Members questioned why the Port of Anchorage has not moved forward. ZJ: A grant received from the Federal Government needed an environmental assessment, so it fell through. Anchorage needs matching funds of \$60 million either from a bond or a grant.
 - Robert R asked about the closure of the Solid Waste Services shelter and if rent is still being paid for it. ZJ: SWS plans for some creative project in 2026. They hope to keep it operational for summer, but there is no money. They housed 100-250 people.
 - Bruce A. asked about the area for Lowes camp on Tudor Road. ZJ: The Assembly is looking to find space to house the homeless since Cuddy Park was a disaster. The Parks & Recreation department is cleaning the area with heavy equipment. Other members voiced concern with people moving into the Chester Creek area because it is filthy now, the bike trail is filled with tarps and tents, the homeless are cutting trees right on the trail & creek, and bikers must ride under overpasses with people doing drugs and defecating on the trails. ZJ: Public safety is a big need, and a 20% wage increase is a possibility in the future.
 - Lori P. asked about the Defined Benefit Plan. ZJ: Encouraged to join the State of Alaska Defined Benefit Plan.
- e. **Alaska State Senator Cathy Giessel (CG):** Provided an overview of the \$6.25 Billion operating budget:
- Including Department of Transportation, Public Safety, Education, Health, Childcare, and Resources. Senate/House Conference committee has six people working on it. The Capital Budget is small – 2024 \$360 million for deferred maintenance at UAA's schools, CAPSIS – 6.9 mil for Districts 9/10 is \$2.2 million, 100th & Victor is \$500K for upgrades, Girdwood Child care center is \$500K, Campbell Airstrip upgrade & Rabbit Lake Road is \$1.7 million, the Blood Bank of Alaska is \$500 thousand, Flattop safety project \$500 thousand, Chugach access is \$450 thousand, and the PFD has \$881.5 million because oil is up slightly with \$143 million added with \$1.25 million is the cost of the PFD.
 - The Oil & Gas Carbon Storage Bill by the Governor is an offer to pump carbon into depleted oil and gas reservoirs. Gas storage by Enstar was used for this last cold snap. MEA & CEA are also looking for places to store natural gas and the Carbon Storage bill addresses the storage.
 - The Corporate tax is 9.4% for BP, Phillips, & Santos. Hillcorp is an S Corporation, so it is exempt from State income tax.
 - Robert Meyers submitted a request to audit the Alaska Railroad Corporation, so she is hoping to move this bill.

- f. **Representative Craig Johnson** – not present but emailed an update from Juneau.
- I have ensured that \$50,000 in funding for Ocean View Elementary School is included in the capital budget. There is also significant funding in the operating budget for education; \$174.6 million to be exact. This funding will be invested in K-12 education assistance, career, technical education initiatives, and Head Start. This is equivalent to a \$680 Base Student Allocation increase.
 - Additionally, a lot of the work that the House Judiciary Committee and I have been working on rolled into House Bill 66. This is the omnibus crime bill that includes numerous important criminal law changes relating to fentanyl and opioid use, abuse and distribution; enacts critical victims’ rights amendments, and court rule changes; expands victim restitution and compensation; eliminates a dangerous a loophole regarding sex offender registration; strengthens civil commitment proceedings and victims’ rights during civil commitment proceedings; strengthens penalties relating to assault in the presence of a child; and various other important changes to strengthen criminal justice.
 - I have also passed a bill of mine out of the house this session, House Bill 316, also known as The Kelsey Smith Act. HB 316 requires telecommunications companies to promptly provide law enforcement with location information during ongoing emergencies involving the risk of death or serious physical harm. HB316 is all about helping victims and saving lives. If one life can be saved, or one child returned safely to their loved ones, then this Act will have served Alaskans well.
- g. **ASD School Board Member Pat Higgins** -- not present.

6. Committee Reports

- a. **Community Patrol** - Jeff Childs reported that no major issues are on the radar; through April 2024 there were 95.5 hours of patrol of the Community versus April 2023 with 199 hours of patrolling. Please contact Jeff if you have a problem. His immediate need is more help patrolling.
- Member concerns are Oceanview Park and the need for more parking in the park rather than on neighborhood streets.
 - If you see people creating mischief in a park, contact APD and Parks and Recreation to report it.
- b. **Eldon Subdivision WDID and LID** – Joe thanked Senator Cathy Giesel for helping get supplemental funding for water and fire protection safety issues in the subdivision. It has been approved in the house and is pending in the Senate. Zac J. says he is there to help, and it sounds like AWWU is helping.
- 2023 CAPSIS-TPS 67878_MOA Eldon Subdivision Water Access Project_8FEB2023.pdf
 - **John’s Road and Division Street alleyway**- nothing to report

7. Old Business

- a. **Alaska Railroad Trail on the Easement** – John Pletcher along with Chuck Kopp and Cherie Curry of WINfluence provided a DRAFT Resolution Opposing Public Recreation Trails in Alaska Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW),_see the map of BLM’s Alaska Long Trail, Fish Creek Trail, Railroaded Alaska
- Cherie Curry, from WINfluence, introduced a draft Resolution Opposing Public Recreation Trails in Alaska Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW). WINfluence is working with communities from Seward to

Fairbanks, Whittier and with people all along the tracks. The resolution is simply objecting to use of the ROW easement for anything other than Railroad use: Railroad, telegraph, and telephone.

- WINfluence introduced the draft resolution, starting with the OSOVCC, and is working up and down the tracks to bring attention to the use of the ARRC ROW for a recreational trail.
- Because Flying Crown Homeowners Association (FCHA), is a HOA in the OSOVCC, we are knowledgeable on the issue. FCHA is fighting a lawsuit currently in the U.S. Supreme Court. Other WINfluence clients have joined the suit filed by ARRC for Quiet Title ownership of FCHA's patented land. The RR did agree to a land use agreement in perpetuity for use of the Runway and its fifty homeowners.
- The Flying Crown HOA, the Ashlocks, Renfro's, and Trail Lakes are a few concerned clients that own land adjacent to the RR ROW. Members voiced concerns that this could be a double-edged sword since there is a runway adjacent to the tracks (the RR signed an agreement in perpetuity with the HOA), neighborhood parks, and the Oceanview Bluff Park sledding slope is in the ROW. So connecting the Fish Creek Trail would be a stepping stone to and the [BLM's Alaska Long Trail](#), which they may try to connect through Oceanview.
- A woman was killed on the tracks just prior to this week and the RR stated, "They want to remind people there's a 100-foot ROW on either side of the tracks and it is not open to the public." ARRC said they do not really want a path in the ROW, but it is political with the MOA.
- A member said she dreamed of a bike path but now with the homeless issue it is not a good idea. It is not safe. So now she is against it.
- A National nonprofit "Operation Life Saver" Public service message is "Remember Rails and Recreation do not mix."
- A member requested specifically how the trail would affect the OSOVCC vs other community councils in the Northern Lights area. The tracks run through many neighborhoods and affect many private property owners. Cherie agreed to focus on OSOVCC landowners regarding the resolution.
- A member was concerned about the trail running along the runway. Cherie noted how the BLM's Alaska Long Trail is not connected through Anchorage yet, and they are not looking to use the runway. It is about connecting the trails around Anchorage.
- A member has family in Iowa, the RR gave them the land for trails. John P. mentioned that it is part of the "Rails for Trails" program due to abandonment of the tracks by the railroad and is not like the ARRC issue.
- Member Jon B. said that when a person buys a home, they may have a ROW or easement, and you know how that ROW or Easement affects your property. The RR can do what they want in the ROW, including tearing down fences, but it is a taking when they change the use of ROW, which was for operations, telephone, and telegraph.
- John P. said that with the Fish Creek Trail they are projecting 350,000 people using the trail each year, so how is that going to affect Oceanview Park. Most people park their vehicles up and down the street because there is no space in the park itself.
- Doug S. said the community went through this with the trail on the bluff and then they were going to move it to the flats and cut the trail through Bayshore. This sounds like it is being repurposed.

- Stan M. asked if the objection is to the Alaska Long Trail or using a portion of the ROW for the Long Trail? Cherie says the resolution is an objection to using the 580 miles of RR easement for anything besides RR use: railroad, telegraph, and telephone. Anything new should be RR use, not public use.
 - Doug S. mention the “Bird to Gird” trail goes through RR property, and no public trail or paths go through private property in the Oceanview area. He objects to using the ROW for anything besides the railroad, telephone, and telegraph.
 - Jeff C. says that OSOVCC should state that this is a hypocritical position for the RR to take. On one hand they are telling us it is unsafe to recreate in the ROW, but on the other hand they are considering allowing recreation in the ROW.
 - Jon B. says to rewrite the resolution to capture the intent.
 - Doug S. stated the focus should be on property rights and land use, which is the main issue, not safety. We want the RR to abide by their existing laws.
 - Cherrie C. stated that this is a draft resolution, and that we have had a great discussion. We are not anti-trails; it is just that the trails need to be in the right place. Community Council members, send ideas and comments to Cherie at WINfluence: cherie@WINfluencestrategies.com
- b. **OSOVCC Resolution 2023-01 “10-Year Review of Community Council Boundaries”** update. Passed 13/0 December 8, 2023 & delivered to the MOA in Jan 2024. Nothing new to report. Pending approval by the home and business owners in the affected area with final approval by the Assembly.
- Stan M. worked on the boundary change and said that it is a process. There probably will not be any action until September or November.
- c. Municipality of Anchorage Housing & Homelessness Sites – Nothing new to report.
- d. Housing & Homelessness in OSOVCC – Nothing new to report.

8. **New Business**

- a. **Liquor & marijuana licenses up for renewal:** Sushi Garden was on the May 7, 2024, Agenda for approval. If you know of an infraction or disapprove the renewal of a license: call, write, and attend the assembly meeting, when it is on their agenda.
- b. **Capital Improvement Projects 2025** – For 2025, discussion to add the Alleyway between Division Street and Huffman Road, upgrades to 123rd Avenue, and upgrades to the Birch Knoll Trail.
- c. **Secretary Position** remains open, and a volunteer is needed.

9. Announcements / Current Issues of Note

- a. Volunteer(s) needed to report on the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), see the link to the [1st Quarter Newsletter](#), upcoming meetings, and how their planning will affect the OSOVCC. The 1Q2024 Newsletter is out with links to all the Committees and Projects like:
 - 2024 Protected Bike Lane Pilot Project: <https://anchoragepbl.com/>
 - [Resolution by the Community Advisory Council and the new Minnesota Traffic Barrier](#)

- b. [Community Garden](#) at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1612 Oceanview Dri. was presented by member Dan Gullickson. For the 2024 season 20 original vegetable beds planted in 2022, has grown to fifty-five (55) beds. They will build a pocket park this summer to include a huge area bordering the South & West side of the garden. They will cut trees, build concrete benches and tables, a contractor will build a walkway around the park, vegetation will be removed and replaced with perennial ground cover, they will plant memorial trees and plants, crushed rock on the trail, it will be handicap accessible and open to the public. There is an 8-foot chain link fence with a padlocked gate encircling the existing Memorial Community Garden. The cost: \$15.00 per plot for the year.

- c. The Mayoral Runoff Election was May 14, 2024, via mail-in ballot or vote in person.
- d. Chugach Electric Board Election – Online voting was due by May 17, 2024.
- e. South Anchorage Woodlot is at the Solid Waste Services.
- f. Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport Master Plan Update Final Public Meeting.

10. OSOV CC Members only - Open Mic, 3 minutes.

- Bruce A. from Brown Jug Huffman and Industry Way says if you ever have issues with that store to let him know.

11. Guests

12. Motion to Adjourn: 9 pm by Doug S. and second by Gloria L.