

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 11, 2024 6:30pm
REGULAR MEETING
Alpenglow Elementary School
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Call to order by Julie Jessen at 6:30pm. Quorum was established.

Webpage: Federation of Community Councils

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

Approve Minutes: Motion by Dean Cox, seconded by Tom Roth to approve May 8 meeting minutes. Approved by unanimous vote.

Anchorage Fire Dept: Ryan Statin, Captain at Station 11 reported.

- The FD secured a grant for a wildland position, brush trucks, and static infrared cameras for detecting wildfire, directly linked to dispatch. He was unsure if there are any in Eagle River Valley. The sensors can be applied to any high-power line.
- Winter operations:
 - Make sure fire responders can see your address.
 - Clean chimneys.
 - Have working smoke detectors.
 - Be careful with secondary means of heat.
 - Police Department and Anchorage Search Team have drone for search and rescue.
 - The Wildland Urban interface plan meeting happened a couple years ago to discuss staging areas in the valley in case of wildfire.

Representatives' Reports

AK Senator Kelly Merrick

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- Budget balanced with no new taxes. Original budget from Dunleavy was 1 billion over.
- PFD about \$1700 not including energy rebate.
- 4 million for homeless shelter in Anchorage was budgeted.
- Crime legislation increasing penalties for fentanyl dealers and closing loop holes for catch and release.
- One time funding or education system.
- Willow project approved.
- Passed Critical Mineral bill.
- Natural gas availability is of concern.

AK Representative Jamie Allard

- Eugene attended on behalf of Jamie who is not feeling well.

Long range transportation strategy: Daniel Mckenna-Foster, MOA Planning Department

- Muni is working on long range transportation plan for priorities for individual communities.
- The goal is to create a locally adopted plan.
- Muni funded survey. Not AMATS funded.
- Survey will be open for one month.
- Anchorage Bowl, Girdwood, Eagle River/Chugiak all seem to have different goals, so they are being surveyed separately.
- For types of projects, not specific projects.
- There isn't a plan for how often it will be updated.
- Julie inquired about the Eagle River/Chugiak comprehensive plan which needs to be funded and updated.

- Julie requested survey information to be sent through FCC distribution list.

Anchorage Assembly Report: Mark Littlefield

- New Municipal Manager, Becky Windt Pearson
- Approved body worn cameras for Anchorage Police Department.
- Housing allocation plan needs to be approved by HUD.
- Required short term rentals to report specific data (VRBO, AirBNB, etc)
- Scrap metal dealers must inspect and record catalytic convertors.
- One-time free access to get stuff out of impounded vehicles is going to be allowed.
- Before and after school program for at risk youth, admin to formulate a plan.
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- Economic housing update dashboard. Anchorage residential permits dashboard.
- \$4 mil grant from state use on housing and homelessness.
- Vacant properties grant through HUD to dismantle properties and return to tax base.
- Chugiak senior center has a 3 year wait list. May propose a bond to develop 40 housing unit out there, estimated at \$10 mil. They have 7.2 acres, so they won't have to buy the land.
- Need volunteers for boards and commissions.
- Mountain View Drive tent city plan. If the camp exceeds 25 people, the Police Department will remove the people and belongings.
- ROW/Code enforcement person is not always stationed in Eagle River, but we have a person assigned to this area.

Alaskans for Fair Courts: Matt Peterson

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- 19 judges will be on election ballot statewide, for retention vote. All 19 were approved by the AK Judicial Council this year.
- Judges have a non-partisan election.
- AK Constitution calls for merit selection of judges. AK Judicial Council screens, selects, and recommends judges to Governor.
- All the data is available at www.ajc.state.ak.us
- Lt. Governor prints the ballot information booklet, including data on judges.
- Judges' mandatory retirement age is 70 years old.

School Board Report: Andy Holleman, Holleman_Andy@asdk12.org, 907-742-1101 Extension 1

- Fully staffed on bus drivers. Some activity transportation has been possible.
- Short 3 cafeteria managers. Serving shelf stable food in their absence.
- Four whooping cough cases identified in Anchorage School District.
- Looking at school consolidations. Steady decrease at all levels. Reasonable use of tax dollars for running building efficiently. Revenue impact due to foundation formula. Will be townhall meetings regarding consolidations.
- Balanced budget for this school year.
- Large class sizes, over 40 in high school classes, and over 30 in elementary school.
- Deficit predicted for next year just to run everything the same way as this year.
- Until BSA formula is updated the budget will continue to be at risk.
- Bartlett Pool and Chugiak Pool upgrades were discussed. They are in separate building from the schools and entirely controlled by Parks and Rec.
- State-specific standardized tests are unique and not comparable to other states.

- Kids that arrive in pre-K and kinder in ASD are lower than national average for pre-reading skills. By 3rd grade they are showing dramatic growth.
- There are fewer electives offered due to lack of funds.
- Teacher retention was discussed. Alaska's retirement system is a 401K, no social security. There is some incentive to stay for 5 years.

New Business:

ProjectAnchorage.com was unable to attend.

- They are proposing a 3% sales tax initiative.
 - 2% for property tax relief.
 - 1% for community projects.

Community Council Boundaries 10-Year Review

- Public comment thru November
- No changes anticipated for ERVCC

Housing and Community Development Annual Action Plan Substantial Amendments FCC

- Muni is developing an annual housing and development action plan.
- Proposes how federal HUD funding will be used.
- 30-day public comment period in September.
- ahdcsdplans@anchorage.com

FCC

- New policy and guidelines to accept grants and donations.
- Assembly to launch the Capitol Improvement Survey early this year in the fall. Responses due by the end of the year. They will be sending link for capital improvements ideas. Roads, drainage, and trails in Muni ROW.

Acknowledged Joy Webb's 5 years of service to the ERVCC board.

Resolution in Recognition of Tom Freeman's more than 30 years of Service on the Federation of Community Councils

- Motion by Paul, Dean second.

Old Business:

Ram Valley Access project: Julie Jessen reported.

Haley Johnston, Deputy Director, haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org | 907.444.5766

- Haley plans to attend in November.
- No immediate action.
- No budget for anything past study phase.
- Julie offered to forward messages from members to Haley and Gus.
- Gus, Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board & Ram Valley Committee
 - Last meeting was in June.

Eagle River Community Patrol - Cliff Cook

- Summer break, no report

Platting – Pete Panarese

- State parks contracted with company to improve Crow Pass trail.
- Eagle crossing east variance request.

- Tony Windsor is the new director of street maintenance.

Emergency Preparedness - Dean Cox

- A one-day training will be offered for the community response team.

Education - Tom Roth– no report

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board - Julie Jessen – no report

CBERRRSA (Road Board) – Crystal Kennedy

- Fall sweep started.
- Storm drains cleaned.
- Highland interchange concept, info gathering stage, no public meetings yet.
- Road board mill rate, 2.1 mil rate = 1.1 operations, 1.0 capitol. Cap has never been changed. Fund balanced suffered due to heavy snow fall over last two years. Plow max is 32-inch, then a blower is needed. Maintenance cost for maintaining snow dump. Road board requested assembly to put on ballot for 2.4 mils (strictly for operations). New contract for clearing snow 24% more now this year than last year. Fund balance around 0.5 mil. Cutbacks will probably start with snow hauling and slower response times.
- Revenue is generated from snow dump, offset 140K last year.

Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Alex Jorgensen

- New website and new logo
- Meeting next week 9/23 on community councils training on resolutions, running meetings, etc. Will be on YouTube.
- Delegate training session on 9/17.

Chugiak/Eagle River Parks and Rec Board – Ruth Armstrong

- Parks and Rec Board of Supervisors is being overruled by Muni staff.
- \$2 mil out of undesignated funds was reapportioned to projects not approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- Eagle River is without a loader. Muni staff have been trying to work with municipal fleet services to replace the loader. There was an insurance payout prior on this loader.
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- Projects this summer:
 - Loretta French Park – 4 score boards & in the process of providing batting cages.
 - Mushing parking lot upgraded.
 - Mirror Lake master plan to be reviewed tomorrow by public at the Beach Lake chalet.
- Upcoming
 - Peters Creek dog park.
 - Mt. Baldy trail head concrete barriers to delineate parking.
 - Schroder Park
 - A survey was sent out to assess usage desires.
 - Schroder will be all pickle ball courts.
 - Fire Lane to be all tennis courts.
- Jeffery Urbanus was commended and is getting a lot of work done.
- \$4.5 million for Chugiak HS pool repairs.
- A resolution by the community council was discussed, to require staff to fully inform the board of supervisors on changes to the budget. Julie Jessen to prepare a resolution expressing concern relating to the management and

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authority of Parks and Rec Board of Supervisors. Motion approved to draft resolution for a vote at next month's meeting.

- o Bylaws and muni code are in place.
- John Rotta (P&R member) reported that the Parks and Rec Board is not being advised or informed and believes Anchorage Parks and Rec administration is imposing on our community.

Adjourned 8:33pm. Motion by Crystal Kennedy, Second by Tom Roth, unanimous approval.

Next Meeting October 9th, 6:30pm at Alpenglow Elementary School, 19201 Driftwood Bay Dr, Eagle River.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: Julie Jessen (2025); Vice President: Tom Roth(2025); Secretary/Treasurer: Sarah Davenport (2025); CBERRRSA (Road Board): Crystal Kennedy (2025)/Arlene Rasic-Alt (2024); C/ER Advisory Board: Julie Jessen (2024)/Jared Goecker-Alt(2025); CER Parks & Rec: Ruth Armstrong(2026)/Jared Goecker-Alt(2026); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Alex Jorgensen / Joy Webb-Alt; Education: Tom Roth(2025); Emergency Preparedness: M. Dean Cox (2025); Platting: Pete Panarese (2025)