

OLD SEWARD/OCEANVIEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Final Minutes from the July 12, 2024, meeting

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

1. Established a Quorum 14 members/6 guests. Call to Order at 6:30 pm with a 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 John H. and seconded by Kevin S.
2. Approval of the July 12, 2024, Agenda with the Minutes from March 8, 2024, edited for clarification and approval at the May 10, 2024, minutes: Motion by John H. Second by Gerald F.
3. **Officer's Report:**
 - a. Treasurer – \$1,561.01 in checking includes \$.13 interest for May & June 2024.
 - b. FCC Delegates – Gary M. – New office administrators at the FCC.
4. **Representatives/Community Reports**
 - a. **AFD** – Jason Kohler presented the “Ready, Set, Go” program and how our Community is protected.
 - Since March 2024, Jason has worked to help stand up the Wildland Fire Office, but he is not the wildfire coordinator. He’s there to reinstate the office.
 - The “**Ready, Set, Go**” program informs the public to be ready for wildland fire season that runs from April 1, through the end of August. **Ready** means to be actively prepared between April 1 and the end of August. **Set** means pack-up and be alert for public safety instructions, and **Go** means the fire is bigger than can be managed, know where household members are, and evacuate per the emergency personnel instructions; most likely to schools or larger designated facilities.
 - This summer Alaska had 331 fires across the state, burning up 590,000 acres. How does that affect us? It’s a strain on AFD’s infrastructure and resources available to respond in the MOA if we have an incident. The stats this year for Anchorage are: 48 starts with only 5 acres burned. The 10-year average is 175 acres with 19 acres burned every year. Oceanview, Hillside, and Eagle River are critical due to the population size and number of structures.
 - “Ready, Set, Go” is a statewide and nationwide program. So, if you visit another state, you will understand what it means.
 - Senator Murkowski got funding for two brand new brush trucks and a mobile mapping for Div of Forestry and AFD so they can communicate via telephone apps.
 - AFD is partnering with other agencies like Parks & Rec to use equipment, like woodchippers, for future fuel mitigation.
 - AFD has worked with Chugach Electric by adding sensors on their poles to watch for power surges, trees on wires for more rapid feedback.
 - The Materials Recovery Facility at the old Solid Waste Facility now replaces the South Anchorage Woodlot on C Street for wood and recyclables check the day and hours online.
 - For OSOVCC, know that paths, grasslands, the train tracks are potentials for fires in our area. If you see smoke call AFD, don’t think someone else is calling it in.

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- 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.
- Randy will remain on the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation.
 - Randy and Cameron Perez-Vedilla will be chairs of the Anchorage Housing & Homeless Committee.
 - The Chugach Electric bill includes a 2% fee to put utilities underground, but other utilities don't have the funds, like telecom and others so they are still above ground. Since that may change in the future, it may become a nonissue.
 - Alaska Regional ER is looking to get the Certificate of Need from the State of Alaska to build their ER in the Huffman Business Park. (The OSOV CC has not been contacted by Hank Grinold, the VP of Operations, as he stated in the online article – Joan). Contact Clare Boersma at Alaska Regional for information.
 - There's a Central Woodlot at the Central Transfer Station, open on Thursdays and Saturdays.
 - The assembly is looking for feedback through their online survey for Public Restrooms <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MOAPublicRestrooms>
 - Project Anchorage is modeled after Oklahoma City, which set up a sales tax to fund municipal area projects to revitalize the community. Go online to see their projects. Project Anchorage will be a 3% sales tax with 2% going to Property Tax Relief and 1% going to projects. The goal is to tax tourists and those coming from the valley. For example, a \$400K home would get around a \$1,200 reduction in property taxes. Project Anchorage will be run by a citizen oversight group including the public and contractors, crowdsourcing funds to help pay for projects, and citizens can submit projects. Check it out online: Project Anchorage.
 - Mayoral Transition with Confirmations of the Municipal Attorney and Chief John Case for AFD, replacing Bianca Cross.
 - At the July 16, meeting the Assembly is adopting the Homeless Strategic Plan AR 2024-207 which is the plan that the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness should be following to manage their response to the city and what the Housing and Homelessness Committee will use as a metric.
 - AR 2024-210 Body Cam demanding transparency and accountability related to all shootings. Chief Case wrote the recent policy with a goal to release footage after 45 days.
 - AO 2024-69 Amending code to add body cameras to surveillance technology and limiting some surveillance and how it can be used.
 - AO 2024-46 Decoupling AWWU and Municipal water access from the 1991 Fish & Wildlife Agreement.
 - AO 2024-64 states clearly the Assembly's authority to waive review, report, and recommendations and text amendments to Title 21, giving the assembly the ability to ignore the experts in Title 21, even though they are not experts.
 - There were flooding and drainage issues in some of the OSOVCC areas. Code enforcement and Planning and Zoning got involved and are recommending some trenching by the community to allow proper drainage around the area, so people's houses aren't flooded.
- d. **Assembly Member Zac Johnson (ZJ)**: Not Present - contact zac.johnson@anchorageak.gov.
- e. **Alaska State Senator Cathy Giessel (CG)**: Not present

f. **Representative Craig Johnson**

- Bills for 170 million plus for schools, balancing the budget, the 2024 PFD may be around \$1,700, funded broadband for rural communities according to the Federal rules, funding for home and charter schools, increase in the base student allocations, school improvements,
- MOA property tax exemptions for contractors who build homes.
- A bill was introduced to sell the AK Railroad to a private entity.
- If someone sells Fentanyl and someone dies, the seller can be held for second degree murder.
- Through an affidavit, victims do not have to attend the Grand Jury trial and relive the event repeatedly.
- A bill to keep a person in custody for evaluation whether they could stand trial for committing a crime.

g. **ASD School Board Member Kelly Lessons – Service High School District**

- Fall registration is open see the schools of choice at asd.org site: charter, optional, language immersion, fall lottery open till July 19 at asdk12.org/lottery.
- The governor’s budget decision includes approval one time \$50 increase in transportation per person will help mitigate the shortfall for the 2025/2026 school year, which will be a \$80 million dollar deficit. The school district budget is due to the Assembly in March
- The “Right Sizing Plan” regarding closing schools is coming this fall to improve services delivered at each school. Classes of third graders rather than 3 and 4 combos, Special Ed service providers at schools rather than at 1 school or another school.

6. **Committee Reports**

a. **Community Patrol** - Jeff Childs, not present

b. **Eldon Subdivision WDID and LID –**

- Joe thanked Senator Lisa Murkowski, who worked with AWWU in discussions to get supplemental funding for a portion of the cost of \$2.75 million and through Senator Geisel’s newsletter found out that the State’s \$2.25 million in funding had been approved.
- The next government hurdle is the Municipality of Anchorage and AWWU because they handle the project and determine the individual assessment for the home and landowners.
- [2023 CAPSIS-TPS 67878 MOA Eldon Subdivision Water Access Project 8FEB2023.pdf](#)

c. **120th Avenue Upgrade** – still on hold pending the Eldon Subdivision WDID & LID improvements.

d. **John’s Road and Division Street alleyway**- nothing to report

7. **Old Business**

a. **Alaska Railroad Trail on the Easement**

- Chuck Kopp and Cherie Curry of WINfluence provided an update for the Old Seward/Oceanview Community Council. The fundamental question is, “Can the Railroad do anything they want in the Right-of-Way (ROW) even if it’s for a non-Railroad purpose”? If the answer is yes, they can build whatever they want behind your house. It went all the way to the Supreme Court, but they would not hear it. The courts have made it clear that it’s a State based solution.

- Chuck and Cherie have been in contact with the Governor’s office, DOT, and Marathon Oil, who all strongly object to the Railroad using the easement for anything other than rail, telegraph, and telephone.
 - That’s good news for the OSOVCC because the Alaska Long Trail project plans to co-use the ROW by adding an additional burden to the easement for a recreation path that may come through this area.
 - The draft resolution introduced at the May meeting is a nonissue at that time as we didn’t know Marathon Oil was going to object to the trail in the easement.
 - Chuck and Cherie informed the CC that the Governor’s office vetoed \$1 million dollars of the Trail money allocated to building the trail in the ARRC ROW.
- 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.
- c. **Report a Homeless Camp** at muni.org. Robert mentioned that the site shows stats regarding the total amount of time, 12,000 hours, spent cleaning-up camps.

8. New Business

- a. **Capital Improvement Projects 2025**
- Projects for 2025 were submitted to add the Alleyway between Division Street and Huffman Road, upgrades to 123rd Avenue, and upgrades to the Birch Knoll Trail.
- b. **Project Anchorage:**
- Bruce reported that Project Anchorage is proposing voters approve a 3% sales tax (also discussed by Randy above at item c.), but it’s in the planning stage and we still have time before it can go on the ballot in April.
 - The sales tax would exclude groceries, rent payments, and other items. Two thirds go to property tax reduction for homeowners and one third to beautification and new projects around town to make Anchorage a better place to live. So, they estimate \$180,000,000 dollars collected every year: \$60,000,000 to projects and \$120,000,000 to property tax relief. Big ticket items would be taxed on up to \$1,000.00. Kenai Peninsula caps it’s sales tax at \$500.00.
 - Go online to take the Project Anchorage survey. Our community only has a few parks but no Recreation center: <https://projectanchorage.com/>
- c. **Liquor & marijuana licenses up for renewal** --none to report.
- d. **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)** and how their planning will affect the OSOVCC.
- b. **2024 Protected Bike Lane Pilot Project:** <https://anchoragepbl.com/>
 - Everything is negative about the Bike Lanes. It's dangerous for bikers, they are on sidewalks; large trucks and buses need to make wide turns, so they must take two lanes to make the turn; go online and get your voice heard so that it is not back next year.
- c. **People Mover Route 86:** OSOVCC, schedule will not change in October.
- d. **Lemp Memorial Community Garden** at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1612 Oceanview Drive was presented by member Dan Gullickson. The garden is full, and they did receive the grant for the pocket park on their property.
- e. **Public Restrooms** – The Municipality has a program “When Nature Calls, Where Do You Go?” Take the public restroom survey and check out the map showing the places where people that have already taken the survey selected Porta Pottys:
<https://huddle.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=04d000bde2b94bec9c9c86808ab11772>
- f. **Central Woodlot at Eagle River** was projected to close on August 31.
- g. **Alaska Regional Hospital** is trying to put in a stand-alone Emergency Room in Huffman Business Park. The Anchorage Daily News reported that William (Hank) Grinold, VP of Operations, had talked to the Community Councils, but no one had contacted the OSOVCC Board members. I also contacted other CC board members to verify his statement, and they had not talked to him either. Currently, there is a Providence Hospital emergency care by Carr's at Huffman. Per Craig Johnson, they are still trying to get a Certificate of Need. Another member mentioned that if plasma is needed, the Blood Bank is on the other side of town, so you would have to go to the main hospital for a transfusion anyway.

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

- Bruce 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.