

Russian Jack Community Council
Meeting Highlights
February 11, 2015

16 present, including presenters

Legislative Report

Sen. Bill Wielechowski:

- budget is obviously a big topic in Juneau right now. Will be extremely difficult to get any local projects on the budget. Must look for alternative funding.
- Marijuana is also a big topic – the initiative is attempting to regulate it like alcohol. On Feb 24 it will be legal to possess marijuana, but cannot be purchased or sold or transported.
- Board of fish and game and subsistence issues big topic too.
- 3.5 billion dollar deficit that the state is facing
- **Feb 28 will be in town for Anchorage Caucus meeting at Begich Middle School – all invited – Rep Gruenberg, Sen. Wielechowski and others will be present, 1pm-5pm – testify on different proposals and issues, ideas on cost saving initiatives, meet Legislators.**

Rep. Gruenberg:

- ANWR discussions ongoing
- Working on Conservatorship laws
- National Guard meetings
- Non Smoking laws issues across the state, including E cigarettes
- JBER and other military cut backs and closings
- Family law cases

Rep. Tarr:

- CIP list will likely not get funded
- U med road – 400 K spent of the 20 million, can be re-appropriated to other areas. This project will likely cost a lot more than 20 million anyway. People need to weigh in. To Governor Walker, Darwin Peterson (leg aide), Pat Pitney (OMB director), copy Rep. Tarr on email.
- Proposal to close many jails –people need to weigh in
- Erin’s Law – Gov called for passage of the bill in his state of the state address. Bill hearing Feb 12
- Medicaid expansion

APD Officer: APD has formed a street crimes operation and are asking members of the public to report violent gang, drug, weapons and violent crimes. Report to the non-emergency number at **786-8900 #0**. Stressed the importance of maintaining a landline at home so that if you call with an emergency your address will automatically populated on the screen at APD.

Assembly Report, Assemblyman Pete Peterson:

- Approved bond package, will be on ballot April 7 for voters to decide
- With state budget deficit, Muni will need to find alternative funding sources
- Sales tax on alcohol was proposed for Muni outside of the tax cap – would have been used to fund programs for substance abusers. This idea will likely not gain wings if no funding
- Approved a ban on smoking marijuana in public before Feb 24 when Alaskans can legally consume marijuana.
- Banning the use of butane to make hash oil – due to public safety issues
- Sales tax is not an option – has not been discussed much as AK is a “anti tax” state and due to the tax cap
- Exemptions for charter schools

School Board, Kathleen Plunkett: upcoming School Bonds 59 million, including some of the older schools in the district. Budget meeting on Feb 19; over 600 million in proposed budget. Traveled to Juneau with 3 HS students, great experience. District had a lot of seasoned teachers leave the state. Problems recruiting special ed. teachers and aides last year, recruiting heavily now.

State budget cuts -Requests that citizens come up with ways to reduce costs and share those items with the legislators
Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm