
TURNAGAIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Council Meeting | April 2, 2015 | 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Turnagain Elementary School Library, 3500 W. Northern Lights Blvd.

Chaired by Jonathan Tarrant, TCC Vice President & Acting Chair

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. 20 people were initially in attendance; later in the evening approximately 14 more people arrived.
- The agenda was amended by Cathy Gleason to include a few minutes from Beth Nordlund, executive director of the Anchorage Park Foundation, to speak to the park bond on the April 7 ballot; and by Jonathan Tarrant to remove Legislative Report if representatives are not available to speak.
 - **Motion by Steve Strait to accept the agenda as amended; second by another member.**
 - **Vote: all yes; none opposed, none abstain. Motion Passes.**
- The March meeting minutes were reviewed; Cathy Gleason had submitted amendments to the minutes for the council's review, which Anna incorporated, not seeing substantive changes requiring further discussion.
 - Cathy proposed additional amendments (last page): under the Park Dedication section. Change first "support" to "approve"; add phrase "did not include Point Woronzof Park" (typo); on same page, second bullet: remove phrase "the City may take action citywide" as they are only working on certain areas.
 - **Motion by Steve Strait to approve March minutes; second by Joan McKinnon.**
 - **Vote: all in favor, none opposed, none abstain. Minutes approved.**
- Announcements:
 - *See Attachments flyer available as a handout in the meeting and on the TCC website.*
 - Jonathan Tarrant noted that there will be a municipal election on Tuesday, April 7. Mayoral candidates are vying to achieve at least 45% to become mayor, otherwise a run-off election will be triggered; 6 candidates are running for 3 school board positions.
 - Cathy Gleason shared four announcements:
 - Next week there will be a public hearing regarding a process for the possible sale of the Muni's Solid Waste Services.
 - May 14: Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission will hold a public hearing for their 2016 5-year management plan draft; she suggests including this on the agenda for the May 7 meeting for TCC to approve any positions to be taken on the draft plan.
 - May 30: deadline for submittal by community councils for the 2016 Capital Improvement Program list. Cathy suggests that since this list was reviewed recently by the CIP and Safe Routes to Schools committees, approved by the Council in February, and re-submitted, it may not need further revision from TCC. She plans to review the 2016 list for any new projects.
 - THANK YOU to everyone who attended the West Anchorage Candidates Forum last Wednesday – there were more people there than at any other previous forum, and they had great turnout of candidates as well. Thanks also to the planning team who pulled the event together.
 - Pat Redmond shared that if you did not receive it in the mail, you can download the League of Women Voters' write-up about each candidate and issue to be informed about the election. Copies were also available at the meeting.

AIRPORT REPORT | JOHN JOHANSEN

- *See airport updates on the handout provided at the meeting or online at: www.anchorageairport.com*

- **Lake Hood Seaplane Base Master Plan:** Check out updates at www.lhdmasterplan.com. The next advisory committee meeting will be on May 13 in the Airport Badge Office in the North Terminal. The consultant team is working to put together a facility needs plan. The meeting is open to the public.
- **The Great Alaska Aviation Gathering** is happening May 2-3 (first weekend of May) at the Fed Ex Hangar on Postmark Drive.
- **Airport Cleanup:** The annual cleanup will be Friday, May 1 beginning at 10 a.m., meet at the Old Field Maintenance Facility on Aircraft Drive. Show up, do some cleaning and pick-up, and join the group for a barbeque lunch.
- **Airport Stakeholders Meeting:** The next meeting of stakeholders (businesses, residents, others interested) will be April 22. This meeting is open to the public.
- **Summer Construction:** There are several construction projects coming up (*see Airport Report in the Handouts for more information*). They will include 7L/25R construction (that runway will be shut down), widening the Y and K taxi ways, rehabilitation of General Aviation's parking areas, and some upgrades at Kulis, including on water and sewer utilities in order for AWWU to take on ownership and maintenance of the infrastructure.
- Questions and comments
 - *Pat Redmond asked whether the construction happening at the end of Postmark Drive at Northern Lights is on airport property?* John shared that they have completed most of the work last season for that stormwater outfall project after it had collapsed, but will be removing the coastal trail re-route, restoring the original route and re-planting 20 spruce trees.
 - *Dan Gleason asked about specifics of the parking at General Aviation?* John explained that there will be digging out of the underlying soil to solidify underneath the pavement; add lighting; and some other upgrades.
 - *Steve Strait asked about possible impacts from cuts in state funding to the Airport?* John shared that they are funded through a decades-old enterprise fund, and are fee-based so that they are generally self-sufficient and do not get General Fund money. Their budget is approved by the Legislature, but they are part of a separate funding stream so he does not anticipate significant impacts from other budget cuts. The main pressure tends to be from airlines pushing to reduce operating costs.

ASSEMBLY REPORT | IRA PERMAN, REPRESENTATIVE FOR ERNIE HALL

- Ernie is currently out of town, enjoying the cherry blossoms in D.C.; Tim Steele had a conflict. Ernie's wife is doing well after a recent knee replacement.
- There has been a relatively quiet couple of months for the Assembly, but the municipal election is coming up! There will likely be a great deal of activity once the election is over, before summer.
 - Early voting is available at the Loussac Library (including on Sunday) and at City Hall downtown on week days, except on election day. The University of Alaska and the Airport will also have voting locations for those who cannot get to their polling place.
 - Ira shared that there are many mayoral candidates, school board candidates and bonds: there is a lot on the ballot! He voted early and shared some of the ballot items.
- **School Board budget:** The Assembly passed the School Board budget at the last meeting.
- **Police Department budget:** Next meeting, the Assembly will review this budget; it has been approved by the "rank and file" and there has been a lot of discussion. The Fire Department budget will be reviewed after the Police budget is complete.
- **Proposal to sell Solid Waste Services:** The Mayor has proposed a study of whether to sell Solid Waste Services to become a private service. On April 28 the Assembly will consider whether this is beneficial to the Muni, potential costs for rate payers, and other aspects of the decision.
- **Proposal to reorganize Community Development and Planning Department and Building Services** and to streamline the permitting process. The reorganization is in process.
- **Chugach State Park Access Plan:** this plan has been approved by the Muni after much deliberation.

- **Marijuana Regulation Committee:** Ernie is chair of the Marijuana Regulation Committee; Honeman, Demboski, and Peterson are also on the committee. Members Traini and Gray-Jackson regularly attend the monthly meetings as well. There are many issues to discuss, and there will be community meetings as well to gather input. Ira shared some current concerns, such as local licensing.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT | REP. MATT CLAMAN AND WESTON EILER, AIDE TO SEN. COSTELLO

- Rep. Claman
 - Nearing the end of session; all have been very busy, with long discussions particularly about the budget. Both houses have been discussing how and where to cut, and how to not cut so far as to damage the economy or hurt opportunities to grow the state's revenue.
 - Medicaid Expansion is a priority of the Governor and being considered by the Legislature as well; there is also a reform bill for Medicaid to address some current issues. Regarding Medicaid Expansion, the federal government would provide a 100% funding for those receiving Medicaid under this expansion, switching to a 90-10 federal-state match after that, similar to transportation funding.
 - The school bond state-match reimbursement bill will create a 5-year moratorium on state matching funds for local school bonds; the Effective Date amendment would make this take effect in May after the current election cycle, which would exempt Anchorage bonds currently up for vote from this moratorium, but taking effect for future bonds.
 - Matt also shared that the \$4.4 million previously allocated to indoor tennis courts at Dempsey has been reallocated to upgrades to Northwood in the Raspberry Rd. area, Turnagain Blvd. between McRae and Spenard, and several local road rehab projects.
- Sen. Mia Costello (via staffer)
 - The Senate finance committee finished consideration of the operating budget and has sent it to the full Senate floor. Mia thanks everyone who called in or testified on aspects of the budget, there were several hours of public testimony. Some items which were marked for cutting have been saved by the committee: e.g. funding for WWAMI (medical program) and Best Beginnings (early child education).
 - The Senate Labor and Commerce Committee is considering a variety of issues. Mia was also chair of the committee overseeing appointments to boards and commissions, several individuals were vetted and appointed to various positions.
- Questions and Comments
 - *Cathy Gleason asked about SB1 to implement a statewide smokefree workplace bill?* Rep. Claman shared that he supports this bill to make indoor public places and workplaces smokefree statewide; it is similar to what Anchorage passed in 2007 and would cover all places statewide. He has not heard from anyone opposing that bill.
 - *Cathy also shared that the Turnagain Boulevard upgrade is Turnagain CC's #1 priority on the CIP list regarding road projects; Turnagain Street (near Northern Lights) is #2.*

MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES' MOMENT

- Starr Marsett, running for Seat G of the Anchorage School Board, spoke briefly about her qualifications.
- Questions and Comments
 - *Phil Isley asked if there is discussion about re-aligning school board seats to be district-represented instead of at-large? He is concerned about disparities in representation between East and West side.* Starr agreed that there are issues of disparities, and she is concerned about making sure all students have equal opportunity. She would not support re-districting because she found that on the ASD Capital Improvement Committee, having a geographic representation just meant that people advocated for their own projects, with no consensus.
 - *Steve Strait asked about whether it is true, based on a report he'd heard about, that money voted on for certain bonds with a cap specified in the bond measure can get "moved around"*

or increased above and beyond the original bond amount? Starr noted that the Committee reviews each school depending on life expectancy, needed future maintenance, etc. and that there is another portion of the total budget as contingency to cover emergencies or damage. The School Board gives direction on how to allocate the funds, and tend to try to stay within the general bond allocation.

- *Jerry Trainor asked about how to increase opportunities for vocational tech to keep more jobs with Alaskans instead of out-of-state workers?* Starr answered that she sees vocational tech as important, and would like to have more career fairs and apprenticeship programs in place of the lack of career counselors currently in the district.

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BONDS | BETTYE DAVIS, BOARD MEMBER

- Bettye shared information about the school bonds: there is a \$59.3 million school bond for 8 schools, put before the voters to decide. When this bonds was developed, it was a given that the state will provide 60 to 70% in matching funds for the bond. She shared that the action in the Legislature to make the moratorium (see above) effective to January 1 did not have sufficient votes to pass; it required 27. If the state does not provide this reimbursement, property owners would see an increase of \$14 per 100,000 on their property taxes. The amendment may pass, but as of now it seems less likely that it would be in effect January 1, than that it would go into effect 90 days after it being signed. She urges voters to consider the advantages of voting for the bond this year.
- Questions and comments:
 - *Steve Strait asked whether the School District has any unsold bonds, waiting on the market?* Bettye was not aware of any current bonds in this position; all the school district bonds are active. Pat Redmond added that the Muni may have other unreleased bonds if they are not ready to begin the project and spend the funds at the time the bond is passed, but there are no unreleased school bonds at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Bylaws Committee:** Chair Bill Wortman shared that the committee meets twice a month on Thursdays (next meetings are on April 9 and 16, 5:30 p.m.). The goal is to have a draft completed for review at the May council meeting. Anna Brawley added that while there is no document presented to the Council for official review at this time, all committee drafts are posted on the TCC website and available for review at any time. Drafts indicate the progress made through the document and has any changes marked. The committee plans to bring the draft new bylaws to the Council in May to be voted on (hopefully approved) in June.
- **Ad Hoc Didlika Park Fund Donation Committee:** Per a motion from the March meeting regarding dedication of TCC's Didlika Park Fund, the group needs to form an ad hoc committee to discuss options for these funds when submitting them as a donation to the Anchorage Park Foundation.
 - **Motion by Steve Strait for the Board to appoint members to the ad hoc committee, as well as anyone interested in signing up; second by Pat Redmond.**
 - **Vote: all yes; none opposed, none abstain. Motion Passes.**
 - Members signed up to be part of an ad hoc Didlika Park committee meeting to discuss how best to recommend use of the Didlika Park funds raised by TCC (\$1,720), which the Council voted in March to donate to the Anchorage Park Foundation. The group will meet to discuss and bring a recommendation back to the Council in May.
 - Individuals who signed up: Cathy Gleason, Gloria Manni, Sandy Rabinowitch, Chris Habicht, Shawn Silverthorn, Kristin Sholtan, Chad Stolp, Bill Wortman.

BOARD REPORT

- **Treasurer's Report:** *none, other than Didlika Park committee above.*

- **President's Report:** Jonathan attended the March Federation of Community Councils meeting in place of Danielle, who was out of town. He did not have any specific updates but shared that it was interesting and helpful to get perspective on what other councils are currently concerned about.

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION | BETH NORDLUND, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Beth explained that the Anchorage Park Foundation is a non-profit partner that raises and spends money on park projects within the Municipality of Anchorage. They work with the Muni but are not affiliated with the Muni. The Park Foundation is also participating in the Live Work Play Trails Committee, including advocating for funding to fix the already-broken bridge at Westchester Lagoon and to replace the other 5 bridges on the Coastal Trail with the same design flaw which could fail. There are a total of 37 bridges in the trail system and all are aging, built about 30 years ago.
- The parks bond, Proposition 4, is for \$1.5 million for bridge replacement; \$700,000 for resurfacing and other trail improvements; \$750,000 for the Chester Creek Sports Complex site. The Chester Creek complex is also on Proposition 3.
- Questions and comments:
 - *Pat Redmond asked for clarification about the Anchorage Golf Course funding?* Beth was not sure of the specifics, but shared that O'Malley on the Green at Rabbit Creek is a municipally owned course and is managed via lease by a private entity. She does not know what the specifics of the bond are regarding the golf course.
 - *Cathy Gleason asked if the \$1.5m cost of the bridge replacement is the total cost, and if it is a priority in the funding?* Beth shared that it is a priority, and in addition to the bond, there is a \$1.5 million capital request to the Legislature which would be contingent on the bond passing.
 - *Jerry Trainor commented that it would be smart to have the University of Alaska Anchorage engineering students develop a design (via a contest or class or workshop) to complete a new bridge, at much lower cost for design work.* Beth agreed this would be an interesting idea!

ANCHORAGE WEST LITTLE LEAGUE (AWLL) | JOHN OPINSKY AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

- John Opinsky shared that the Little League just received a 25th anniversary certificate; he also shared that recently he has been thinking back to the "old days" of Anchorage when Muktuk Marston and others used what is now part of Lyn Ary Park for baseball. He estimates approximately 5,000 kids have passed through the program in the last 25 years.
- For several years, Little Leagues have been required to do maintenance on their own fields: they have used students/teenagers, have raised funds to have equipment and do maintenance, and take care of the fields in the absence of municipal maintenance. In addition, there is more competition from other divisions to enroll kids. Banners in the park advertise donors, primarily doctors, many of whom grew up in West Anchorage or are otherwise connected to the league.
- In 2010, the Park Foundation granted \$10,000 to AWLL to rotate two fields. They were not able to fit two properly-sized fields, one of the fields is in memory of Bob Durst. On his death, Durst's family requested that funds be donated to the AWLL; they have placed the funds in a savings account and have not used it on a project yet but are considering the following:
- The AWLL would like to expand their existing Durst Field to support an extension of the field, extend the fences to accommodate the field, and install some other items such as two new benches and higher fencing. This would allow them to meet the requirements for an older-kids division which is lacking now. They would preserve space for an improved trail included in the Lyn Ary Park Master Plan and also make some improvements to some of the rougher grass to make it part of the field. Fences would be installed higher for safety and to protect trail users along the hill.
- The AWLL is seeking support from Turnagain Community Council for this project.
- Questions and comments
 - *Dan Gleason asked how much the improvements will cost?* AWLL has limited funds and may need to phase the improvements, depending on the outcome of the Park Foundation

application for funds. They do not have a total cost at this time; the fence would be approximately \$25,000 and the benches \$5,000.

- *Jerry Trainor asked what type of fencing will be installed?* The fencing would be metal due to wind factor. John talked with Mark Pfeffer, who recommended not having slats in the chain link fence because it would block visibility. They would be standard metal chain link.
- *Cathy Gleason thanked AWLL for mowing the grass near the memorial across from the ballfields, which TCC maintains. She also brought up the issue of banners in Lyn Ary Park, a recurring discussion in TCC; any signage, such as the banners, is intended to be approved by the Council, as stated in the Lyn Ary Park Master Plan. She would like to see more cooperation regarding those banners.*
- *Dan Gleason added that some residents on the hill have had visibility issues sight lines of the mountains beyond from the Coastal Trail.*
- *Pat Redmond added that the main issue with the banners is not so much that they are hung, but that they stayed up past the season. There was discussion about whether all signs are covered in the Master Plan. John shared that the Muni is now requiring signs (because of a different field's 40-foot sign) to face inward on the field, so that will change next year. He believes that if the signs are hung on the interior of the 12' fences closer to the trail, they would not be a visibility issue.*
- *Steve Strait thanks the AWLL for presenting the plan and for using Lyn Ary Park to help develop youth in Anchorage.*
- **Motion by Steve Strait for TCC to support the AWLL field improvements as presented; second by Dan Gleason.**
 - Discussion:
 - Dan suggested an amendment that the Didlika Park funds be considered for donation to this project; the group disagreed about whether this was important to include in the resolution itself. Dan withdrew the amendment and submitted the suggestion to the ad hoc park committee instead.
 - Cathy suggested that the Lyn Ary Park Master Plan be consulted before making such a resolution, to ensure that the park improvements are in line with the plan, which TCC worked closely with the Parks Department to complete.
 - John noted that he has been working with the Muni Parks & Rec and Planning Departments to develop the improvement plan, and that before approval by the Muni the project would be vetted by the Parks Commission, which follows the plan.
 - Phil Isley asked whether Little League teams use the fields along Arctic near the Moose Lodge and the ball field at Valley of the Moon Park. John shared that the Dimond League manages the Arctic fields, and the Valley of the Moon field is being converted to a dog park as it cannot safely be used as a ball field at this time.
 - Phil suggested that the AWLL also approach the local lodges in town: Moose, Elks, etc. as they have for many years supported teams like Little League. He believes that these lodges would be happy to donate some funds for this project if asked.
 - **Motion by Cathy Gleason to amend the resolution, “on the condition that it conforms to the Lyn Ary Park Master Plan.” Seconded by another member. Steve (holder of original motion) did not support the amendment.**
 - **Vote: 5 yes; 15 opposed, none abstain. Amendment fails.**
 - **Vote: 21 yes; none opposed, none abstain. Motion Passes.**
 - John Opinsky thanked the Council for their support. Jonathan urged AWLL to continue to work with TCC on the issue of the banners, and to come back to the May TCC meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- The group further discussed the Little League and the banners:

Turnagain Community Council

- Bill Wortman asked when the AWLL season typically starts? John answered that it usually starts first week of May, but may start sooner this year. After raking and prepping the field, games would start mid-May. Participation in national tournaments happens in July, with the season sending July 15. There are unofficial games and practices later.
- Bill requested that the group resolve issues with banners before the start of the season.
- An AWLL parent shared that revenue is always tight for the League, and that banners are an important part of that revenue. All other ball parks in town have significant sponsorship signs during the season.
- Gloria Manni shared that she supports the banners for the Little League, she would just like to see consensus about the size and placement of the banners generally, to avoid this in future.
- Cathy Gleason and another member/AWLL parent discussed sight line issues and vantage points regarding the signs, and issues it may cause for those using or living near the Coastal Trail. The AWLL parent would like to see a general agreement and consensus about what banners are acceptable, so that the AWLL has guidelines to work with.

CLOSING

- Jonathan Tarrant thanked everyone for attending, especially new members.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.
 - **Vote: all in favor, none opposed to adjournment.**
- Danielle Bailey is back in town and will be chairing the next meeting.
- The next meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2015, 7 p.m. at Turnagain Elementary School.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Secretary/Treasurer Anna Brawley on 4/7/15

Minutes amended by Anna with suggestions from member Cathy Gleason on 5/5/15

Minutes approved by the Council at its May meeting on 5/7/15