

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 11, 2019 6:30pm
REGULAR MEETING
Ravenwood Elementary School

MEETING MINUTES – Approved February 12, 2020

Call to order at 6:35pm by David W. Schade.
Quorum was established.

Introductions and Announcements: None

Meeting Minutes Approval:

- November 13, 2019 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion by Pete Panarese to approve; Julie Jessen seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

Treasurers Report: None

New Business:

Eagle Exit

Michael Tavoriero, Chairman, 907-230-1992, Michael.Eaglexit@gmail.com

Mr. Tavoriero presented materials about Eaglexit. The following highlights were noted:

- Idea for Eagle River to exit from Anchorage borough has been around since 1970s.
- Assembly District 2 includes 50,000+ people, 900 sq. miles and 9 tax districts.
- We lack a complete meets & bounds description. In 2019, \$57.5M taxes paid on \$3.7B assessed value.
- Committee is looking at estimates to cover school, fire, police and administrative costs. Administration could either be an elected mayor or a hired "City Manager."
- To date, \$40,000 has been raised to investigate feasibility of separating from Anchorage.
- In 2007, Northern Economics conducted a study that was narrow in scope.
- Doing another study now in two phases. What are existing and potential sources of revenue? Phase 2 covers what services the government would provide. Does phase 1 revenue pay for phase 2 desired services?
- The committee is looking for additional volunteers for the board and for donations to fund the study.

Questions raised included:

- What is process after feasibility study? Northern Economics is independent entity conducting the study.
 - Is separation a fiscal possibility? If no, stop.
 - If yes, then community must decide on government activities desired.
 - Legal brief prepared.
 - Polling of community.
 - Socio-economic studies.

Chugiak-Eagle River Library Update

Nancy Clark, Librarian

Ms. Clark provided the following update:

- An automated materials handling system was included in a 2018 bond which covered part of the cost and is now operational. Materials are fed onto a conveyor, checked in and sorted. Biggest savings realized is reduction of staff repetitive stress injuries. Materials may be input from both inside and outside the library. Please feed one item at a time.
- Large items and non-Chugiak-Eagle River Library materials (i.e. Juneau and Fairbanks materials) are accepted at desk.
- Ms. Clark is happy to give tours. You can also watch the new system through glass.
- Earthquake damage including cracked drywall and damaged ceiling tiles remain. Waiting on FEMA for funding and it may take a few years to receive the funding.

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- From a staff of 8, Nancy is the only person still at CER Library. The new staff is very friendly and a great team. Come and meet them!

Matanuska Electric Association, Inc. Update

Jennifer Castro, 907-761-9317

MEA, 163 E Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645

Ms. Castro provided the following update:

- This is MEA's annual visit to area community councils.
- MEA includes 52,000 members.
- Since April, over 8000 trees have been cleared. The trees are hazardous to the MEA system.
- If you have trees on your property that could fall on MEA lines or equipment, complete and submit a Danger Tree Repair Form. MEA will assess the situation and if approved, remove the tree at no cost to homeowner.
- The brush clearing plan for MEA equipment/easements repeats on a seven-year cycle. Eagle River Valley's next cycle will be in 2021.
- Everyone is invited to the annual meeting on April 21, 2020. Wasilla and Susitna board seats are open.
- By-law changes are expected to be provided in March. Residents will have opportunity to vote online.
- Trending issue is fourth quarter rate increase. The Swan Lake fire contributed to this due to increase of \$12,000/day in fuel cost purchases.
- There was a \$1.3 million capital credit retirement. If a member in 1987, you will receive the capital credit.
- Electric vehicles are in beginning stage in our area. Volkswagen settlement will help create electric vehicle infrastructure. Need to determine where charging stations will be placed.
- An Innovation Committee will start meeting in late January to help determine charging station infrastructure. Membership is open to MEA members.
- There is a Christmas lights contest. Take picture of your decorated house and submit to Facebook page. Use LED lights to reduce energy costs.

Questions from members included:

- When clearing easements, will property owners be notified? Property owners will receive phone call two weeks prior to work and trees to be removed will be flagged. If tree is on property (rather than on easement), owner will be contacted.
- Compliments to MEA crews. They've been very responsive in outages.

Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility – Site Purchase Update

Paul Hatcher, Real Estate Coordinator/Engineering Tech III

907-564-2721 Paul.Hatcher@awwu.biz

Mr. Hatcher provided the following update:

- One year ago acreage was purchased off Lucas Dr. for a one million gallon reservoir.
- A new booster station is required off Stewart Dr. due to considerable earthquake damage to current station.
- Survey of parcel has been completed. Geotech soil is good/gravelly.
- Conditional use permit activities will start in March. CU permit is required because area is zoned residential.
- Design work is still underway but expect design to be close to preliminary design.
- Another update will be provided when path has been decided.

Questions from attendees included:

- What will tank look like? On Loop Rd, there are 3-5 million gallon tank and ½ million gallon tank. Tank will be concrete or steel, 80 ft in diameter and 30 ft tall, placed 100 ft. from all property lines. Expect 10 ft. to be visible from top of slope. A seven-acre lot was purchased to reduce visibility from nearby homes. Tank could also be hidden with landscaping.
- Is project subject to 1% rule? No, total cost is below threshold.
- What is estimated cost? \$800,000 to purchase property. Multi-million dollar project. Pipe must be run.

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- Will homes in area that are serviced by a well have option to connect? Some wells were impacted by the November earthquake. Lucas Dr. homes will be able to connect. Not sure where pipes will go yet, so others may also have option. If a neighborhood wants to connect, people can enter a water improvement district.

Lora Reinbold, Senator

Alaska State Legislature

Ms. Reinbold provided the following update:

- Still working on the fiscal situation in the state. Operating budget is ~\$10B.
- Feels the law must be changed on PFD before the amount can be changed.
- Serves as chair of Labor & Commerce Committee and member of Joint Armed Services Committee.
- Come to Open House on January 14 or in Chugiak on Feb. 29.

Kelly Merrick, Representative

Alaska State Legislature

- Please come to Open House on January 14.

ERVCC Board Open Seats

- 2 Seats remain open:
Vice President: Vacant
Education: Vacant

Old Business:

Crystal Kennedy

Anchorage Assembly Report

Ms. Kennedy provided the following update;

- The 2020 Census is coming. Be sure to participate.
- Boundary redrawing may occur in Anchorage. We may have another Assembly member. Currently downtown has 1 representative while all other areas have two.
- Fire Service – Part of our council is not included in city fire service (out ER Rd.). If you live in this area, you will be charged by the hour for equipment used in case of a fire. EMS services is covered throughout our area.
- The Assembly is working on the following:
 - Federal funding projects to connect roads for fire and safety purposes. This is mostly in Chugiak area.
 - \$40,000 was committed for a cemetery study in Eagle River.
 - Alcohol tax will be on ballot again. Earmarked to fund substance abuse services.
 - Emergency Shelter designations for Anchorage School District vs. for the municipality.
 - ASD – all buildings must have some emergency sheltering capabilities. Gruening Middle School was Eagle River's school shelter. The schools have water, emergency food supplies, search & rescue, blankets, etc. These are inventoried every two years.
 - Municipality of Anchorage – works through Red Cross and may designate specific locations as emergency shelter site on as needed basis.
 - Community emergency services – managed by Homeland Security.
 - Three Assembly members want a 'government to government' conversation w/Eklutna Village. The Village wants to put in a casino.
 - Guidelines and recommendations for contract negotiations, particularly regarding health care costs.
 - Electric vehicles – there is opposition to unmanned vehicles.
- There is a town hall meeting on Monday for Mirror Lake, about keeping two high schools (ER, Chugiak).
- Anchorage School District bond for \$83M. \$40M of which is for Gruening Middle School. The ad hoc committee to Board recommended \$24M for Gruening.

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Elisa Vikalis

School Board

Ms. Vikalis provided the following updates from recent ASD School Board activities:

- Discussion on combining Eagle River and Chugiak High Schools. Our high schools haven't grown as anticipated. UAA and Middle College could use available space in Chugiak HS.
- January 8 is next joint meeting between ASD and Assembly.
- ASD has a \$19.5M budget deficit.
- ASD survey is open until end of year. Please provide your input on skills graduates should have. Our graduation rate is trending upward.

Eagle River Community Patrol – Cliff Cook

- Patrols were conducted for total of 26.75 hours, 264.5 miles last month.
- Beware of 'porch pirates' taking packages.
- In local business buildings, if you see strangers lingering, you can call APD on 311 to report trespassing.
- Report all crimes/suspicious activities to APD so we can justify more patrol cars assigned to Eagle River area.

Committee Reports:

CBERRRSA (Road Board): James McCurtain – No report.

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board - Steve Skipper – No report.

Education: No report.

Federation of Community Councils – Tom Freeman – No report.

Parks and Rec: Pete Panarese

Mr. Panarese provided the following update:

- Josh Duran is the new director of the ER Board of Supervisors.
- Mac Center has some new community chairs and is offering home-school programs.
- JBER is looking at conservation easements.

Platting and Zoning: Pete Panarese

Mr. Panarese provided the following update:

- There will be a community meeting on a new Powder Ridge Track.

Adjourned at 8:17pm.

Next meeting is on January 8, 6:30pm, at Ravenwood Elementary School Library.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: David Schade (2021); Vice President: Vacant; Treasurer: Ruth Armstrong (2022); Education: Vacant (2021); Parks & Rec: Pete Panarese (2021); CER Advisory Board: Steve Skipper (2023); Platting & Zoning: Pete Panarese (2021); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Tom Freeman (2020); CBERRRSA Board: James McCurtain (2023)/Arlene Rasic – Alt (2023); Secretary: Joy Webb (2021)