

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting  
Wednesday, November 11, 2020 6:30pm  
REGULAR MEETING  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
MEETING MINUTES – Approved December 9, 2020

Call to order at 6:34pm by David W. Schade.  
Quorum was established.

**Introductions and Announcements:** None

**Meeting Minutes Approval:** Draft meeting minutes from October 14, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by Paul Forward; seconded by Julie Jessen. Approved by a vote of 13 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain.

**Treasurers Report:** Ruth Armstrong – No report

**New Business:**

**Community issue - Randi Baker**

Ms. Baker is experiencing a community issue in her neighborhood. Two cul-de-sacs in front of home along with mailboxes. Too many people turning around for mailboxes, creating unsafe situation for children in the area. This is a municipal street. Messages were left with Public Safety and Streets Departments, but no responses have been received.

- Mr. Schade (president) will work with Ms. Baker to request a safety study.
- Recommend an email be sent to the municipal ombudsman to request assistance.
- See MOA policy to request a traffic analysis of the area.

**EagExit – Dan Kendall**

[kendall.eaglexit@gmail.com](mailto:kendall.eaglexit@gmail.com)

Mr. Kendall introduced himself and provided background. He has held a number of government positions representing Chugiak and is active in EagExit. Mr. Kendall provided the following information:

- Please see “Other ERVCC Documents” on our Community Council website to view documents listed below:  
<http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/viewfolder?id=4549>
  - 2020.11 – Eaglexit Phase 1 Revenue Analysis Memo Rev 2020-09-28.pdf
  - 2020.11 – Phase 2a Expenditures Analysis Rev 2020-09-28.pdf
  - 2020.11 – Stump Speech 2A.pdf
- Area impacted by EagExit would be Assembly District 2.
- A budget has been built from the ground up.
- The Phase II study indicates we can support our own city.
- Phase III – Lawyers will present the case. This is a \$300,000 project of which we have collected \$86,000 to date. The local Boundary Commission will be petitioned and if approved, the residents of District 2 will have an opportunity to vote on it.
- See EagExit.com for more information.

Questions to Mr. Kendall included the follow:

- Would we go back to old boundaries or just define the new city as Assembly District 2?
  - If approved by the Boundary Commission and voters, then negotiations would begin on utilities, etc. to develop agreements separate from the current municipal agreements.
- What form of government would be used?
  - After voters approve, a charter commission will develop a draft charter to go forward.
- What is the expected timeline for Phase III?
  - If we had \$300,000 to execute phase III, we could present to the Boundary Commission in April. Since we are still fundraising to move forward, a two-year timeline is likely.

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- We need our own emergency services (i.e. small hospital with an emergency room). It is unlikely we'd be approved currently because we are part of the municipality of Anchorage.
  - We would have better chance of being approved for our own small hospital if we were separate from the municipality of Anchorage.

### Eagle River Valley Community Council Elections

Positions available:

- Federation of Community Councils: Tom Freeman (incumbent). Mr. Freeman agreed to continue in this position. Motion by Joy Webb, seconded by Paul Forward to elect Mr. Freeman to represent Eagle River Valley on the Federation of Community Councils. Approved by a vote of 13 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain.
- Chugiak/Eagle River Consortium: Julie Jessen volunteered to fill the position on the C/ER Consortium. Motion by Joy Webb, seconded by Ruth Armstrong to elect Ms. Jessen as Eagle River Valley's C/ER Consortium representative. Approved by a vote of 13 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain.
- Education: Open. This position will remain open until there is a nomination to fill it.

### Old Business:

#### Crystal Kennedy - Anchorage Assembly

Ms. Kennedy provided the following update:

- Regarding AO 2020-85, building code revisions, Chugiak-Eagle River would have significant difficulty complying with proposed water availability requirements. Assembly voted to exempt single and two-family homes from new sprinkler system requirements. It came as a surprise that AO 2020-85 was approved as 'effective immediately.' Trying to change effective date to January 1, 2021, so impacted parties have some time to plan for changes.
- Budget - \$548 M proposed budget is for municipality only. This does not include the school district budget. Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Allard offered to conduct informational sessions on budget. Zoom meeting information will be distributed to Community Council email distribution lists. A summary of the budget is also available on MoA website. <https://www.muni.org/Departments/budget/Pages/default.aspx>
- CARES Act funding – some areas are out of cash. Looking at ways to reallocate and loosen restrictions so more people can take advantage of funds available.
- New mayor will be chosen at regular April election along with three (3) school board positions. Terms will begin in July.
- Discussion on extension of the emergency declaration for COVID. Must allow public testimony on this. A special meeting will be held November 16 to discussion extension and what businesses, etc. should be impacted.

Questions from meeting participants included:

- Why aren't we having a special election for mayor?
  - There is a difference of opinion on interpretation of municipal code. Others said it should be delayed.
- What if the state doesn't continue its emergency declaration for COVID?
  - The municipality can declare an emergency separately.
- How was the acting mayor chosen (i.e. how Assembly members voted)? How can this be changed?
  - No transparency. This is a secret ballot for mayor only. Intention is to be less political and reduce hard feelings amongst Assembly members. Takes 6 votes to pass.
  - Assembly could change this process or could have a citizen initiative on the ballot to change it. To initiate the citizen initiative, start with the Clerk's office for required paperwork. Have until January to petition and submit.

### School Board Report – Deena Mitchell, Anchorage School Board

[Mitchell deena@asdk12.org](mailto:deena@asdk12.org)

Ms. Mitchell provided the following update on ASD.

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- School board remains focused on bringing PreK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students back into school. Proposal to Assembly to take action to bring COVID case counts down.
- Have visited many schools. Per teachers, Zoom is working better for many students now. Some classes have better attendance than in-school.
- In preparation for restart of school in November, many families chose to continue remote learning rather than return to classroom.
- Seven (7) staff members have contracted COVID from outside sources.
- Metric to meet is 14 day rolling average of cases. Red zone is > 200. We're currently at over 1000 cases.
- Strategic planning for ASD is underway. There are two new board goals and feedback form. Happy to talk through 2020-2026 goals at a future meeting.
- Policy is clear on race issues.

Questions from meeting participants included:

- How are you addressing special needs students? Some schools have additional options for young special needs students. Individual was asked to email Ms. Mitchell directly to talk offline and coordinate with child's principal. See <http://asdk12.org/familyresources> for available resources.
- Valley schools were open, though some closed now due to COVID cases. Has Valley had youth suicides similar to Anchorage?
  - Anchorage School District actions are based on medical recommendation to keep Anchorage schools closed at this time. Valley schools are smaller and follow different guidelines than ASD. Valley started the school year with schools open; unlike ASD.
  - State epidemiologist reports that the suicide rate is actually lower this year (to date) than in the past. School district lacks adequate mental health resources.
- What is status of two Eagle River Schools being rebuilt?
  - On schedule and expected to be ready to re-open next fall.
- Reach out to anyone you know who is struggling with mental health issues. Reach out and connect to the following resources:
  - Suicide Prevention hotline 800-273-8255
  - NAMI- great mental health resources at <https://www.namianchorage.org/crisis-services>
  - Non-emergency assistance 211 – United Way offers broad community resources.

### **Kelly Merrick, Representative**

#### **Alaska State Legislature**

Representative Merrick provided the following update:

- Votes are still being counted for the House race. I will work with everyone in the Legislature on the budget.
- Eagle River had excellent voter turnout in November election.

### **Eagle River Community Patrol – Cliff Cook**

Mr. Cook provided the following update:

- In October, patrols were conducted for 36 hours covering 248 miles.
- Some petty crime continues in our area.
- There was an uptick in mail theft 2-3 weeks ago. If your mailbox isn't locked, consider getting a locked box. Be aware of packages delivered to porch and opportunity for theft.
- With winter's arrival, be sure to get a vehicle safety kit in your vehicle. Include flares, warm clothing, etc.
- Consider volunteering for the Thanksgiving Blessing at Joy Lutheran Church on November 23, 2:00-7:00pm. Volunteer on November 22 to pack boxes. This will be drive-through operation so plan to be outside. See <https://www.foodbankofalaska.org> for delivery and for more information.

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- There are 15 community patrols representing 8000 hours of work. The oldest is the Nunaka Patrol which is 25 years old. We recently received a state grant, \$100,000 for 5 years, to develop non-profit organization of community patrols. Our new website is <http://www.accpatrols.org/> Mr. Cook is the vice-president of the new board.
- Continue to report all crime to APD on 911, 311 or online.

**Committee Reports:**

**CBERRRSA (Road Board): James McCurtain**

Mr. McCurtain provided the following update:

- There was earthquake damage to 112 sites. Six million dollars in funding is committed for repairs. This funding is from the State of AK and FEMA. Work will begin next summer.
- Maintenance contracts are up this year. Contracts will go out for bid in January. Contracts will be 3-4 years.
- CIP projects list for 2021 – send your ideas for road projects to Mr. McCurtain.
- Funding was approved in case of heavy snowfall, for drain and sweeping overruns. The amount is \$300,000 in the \$1.4M budget.
- Be sure to request road improvements of the municipality because our tax dollars are collected to pay for these.

**Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board** – No report.

**Education:** See Ms. Mitchell's report from Anchorage School Board.

**Federation of Community Councils – Tom Freeman**

Mr. Freeman has been attending meetings. No issues of concern to us.

**Parks and Rec: Pete Panarese**

- Resolution 2020-02 Eagle River Nature Center Grant was prepared last month and submitted to the Nature Center in support of grant application to fund parking, trail and equipment improvements.

**Platting and Zoning: Pete Panarese** – No report.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Next meeting is on December 9, 6:30pm, Virtual using Zoom.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: David Schade (2021); Vice President: Julie Jessen(2022); Treasurer: Ruth Armstrong (2021); Education: open; Parks & Rec: Pete Panarese (2021); C/ER Advisory Board: Julie Jessen(2022); Platting & Zoning: Pete Panarese (2021); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Tom Freeman (2020); Road Board: James McCurtain(2022)/Arlene Rasic – Alt (2022); Secretary: Joy Webb (2021)