

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 13, 2023 6:30pm
REGULAR MEETING
Alpenglow Elementary School
MEETING MINUTES – Approved January 10, 2024

Call to order by Julie Jessen at 6:30pm. Quorum was established.

Webpage: Federation of Community Councils

Meeting documents are here: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/viewfolder?id=4549>

Approve Minutes: Motion to approve October 11, 2023 meeting minutes by Tom Freeman; seconded by Tom Roth.
Approved by unanimous vote.

Representatives' Reports

AK Senator Kelly Merrick – No report

AK Representative Jamie Allard – No report

School Board Report – Carl Jacobs – No report

Anchorage Assembly Report – Kevin Cross

- 2024 municipal budget passed. For our area, key items include:
 - \$200,000 has been allotted for 2024 for Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan update. An additional \$200,000 will be requested for 2025, and likely approved depending upon the progress made in 2024.
 - \$150,000 approved for annual recurring maintenance at Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center.
 - \$80,000 approved for Chugiak EMS.
- Priorities for district 24 include Starner Bridge work, local road rehab and ER emergency water fill station.
- Artillery Rd interchange was excluded from state DOT priorities even though Eagle River has been requesting this for many years. Number of public comments are used to prioritize DOT list and though many CER residents have commented in past years, it fell short this year. Resolution drafted to re-add this to Anchorage's list for DOT.
- Resolution to allow muni-wide bond to support cemetery development. All of Anchorage will help pay for it but a CER cemetery will be controlled locally. Need \$1.5M upfront for cemetery and remainder later.

Questions included:

- Will individual cemetery lots be sold to public? Advisory board is still being formed. Bond would be restricted for use on cemeteries. Jamie Allard is also working on funding at the state level.

New Business:

Haley Johnston, Trails Initiative Manager

Alaska Trails, haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org | 907.444.5766

- Project to re-establish legal access to Ram Valley, located in Chugach State Park in upper Eagle River Valley.
- Three (3) grants have been received for AK Long Trail development. Two are in our area: Eklutna Lake Trail and Ram Valley access.
- Ms. Johnston displayed maps and showed 5 potential access points to Ram Valley that are under investigation. Parking and respect for private property are high priorities. Discussion was held about each access point.
- Next step - public meetings will be held in early 2024 to present options.

Homelessness Task Force Update - Ken McCarty – no report

Emergency Preparedness

Dean Cox

- Pursued questions raised at October meeting. Is there an emergency access location established for Eagle River? No response received from muni.
- Ms. Jessen will assist sending email regarding community emergency response team (CERT) to ~20 individuals who expressed interest in the past.

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- Mr. Cox reached out to other community councils in our area regarding ‘train the trainer’ classes for CERT but didn’t receive responses.
- Art Skoog shared idea of placing fire detection equipment on top of cellular towers.
- Wildfire Protection Plan is out of date and requires updates.

Eagle River Valley Community Council Elections

- Julie Jessen – Reappointment to Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board. Motion by Pete Panarese, seconded by Tom Roth for Ms. Jessen to continue in this role. Passed unanimously.
- Pete Panarese – will pursue seat on Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Committee.

ERVCC Meeting Location Change

- Ms. Webb shared that the gym adjoining our meeting space will be occupied by sports teams for remainder of year. Noise was an issue when this occurred last year.
- School library may be a possibility for our meetings instead. Ms. Webb will discuss with ASD Facilities.
- We will continue in multi-purpose room for now.

Old Business:

Eagle River Community Patrol - Cliff Cook

- Patrols were conducted 34 hours, covering 171 miles.
- Mail theft is big issue, with cluster boxes being pried open with crow bar. Track your packages.
- We are seeing more vandalism in the area. Storefront windows smashed near Mike’s Meat Market. Break-in and theft at local tree trimming company.
- School bus routes were reviewed by ASD and some (Rt 92-Loop Rd) have been modified.
- Report all crime to APD on 311 (or 911 if emergency).

Committee Reports:

Platting - Pete Panarese

- Reviewed one time extension request for Eagle River Bluff Estates near ERHS. Not in our council area.

Chugiak/Eagle River Parks and Rec Board - Mark Littlefield

- Discussions being held on maintenance budget and list of projects for 2024.
- Ms. Armstrong’s and Mr. Littlefield’s appointments to CER Park & Rec Board still need Assembly approval.
- Beach Lake Trail Phase 1 has been approved.

Question – Eagle River Park has several pieces of equipment damaged or removed. When will these be repaired/replaced? Park equipment maintenance is part of the discussions being held.

Federation of Community Councils – Joy Webb (alt)

October 18 FCC meeting topics included upcoming housing summit, municipal budget planning & process.

- UAA Speaker from Center for Economic Development discussed Anchorage housing issues.
- Naloxone training conducted – See AK Dept of Health, Project Hope. Works for opioids overdose only. Can carry naloxone after training.

November 15 FCC meeting topics included Anchorage snow removal status map available on muni.org site, budget.

- Housing Action Week was held. Plan drafted with public feedback opportunity thru Dec 4.
- Margo Bellamy (ASD School Board) reported that remote learning days experience requires improvement. Middle school and high school students have computers, but elementary students do not. Participation is very low. Parents asked to provide input on remote learning vs. snow days (which must be made up).
- Workforce trend presentation by Kevin Barry.
- FCC officers discussed changes to FCC budget request and plans to upgrade part time FCC manager role to full-time director level. Kevin Cross reported this request was approved in municipal budget.

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Education - Tom Roth

- School board's bond proposal is \$62M for 6 projects; two are in ER. \$4.6M for improvements to Alpenglow Elementary and \$16M for roof and structural improvements to Chugiak High School. These cost estimates are not based on engineering designs and are subject to change. Bond cost is \$12.69/\$100K assessed value. Next step-bond must be approved by Assembly in January to be included on April ballot.

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board - Julie Jessen – no meetings held.

CBERRRSA (Road Board) – Crystal Kennedy

- Per Tony Winzer, we are “on track” per contracts in our area.
- If there is an issue with street maintenance in our area, citizens may call Streets & Maintenance directly (907) 343-1510.
- Our local streets are cleared quickly but state roads have not been. Mayor ‘took over’ 22 state roads during recent heavy snowfalls. Can CBERRRSA (through mayor) take similar action to clear ER Road and other state roads more quickly? Road board plans to develop criteria to do this and establish how to be reimbursed.
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for our area still open to citizen input. Call CBERRRSA or Ms. Kennedy before February.
- Muni. is to develop a long-range transportation plan to supplement AMATS. High level plan for entire municipality is needed including a high-level transportation framework. Advisory committee work underway with public meetings to begin in February.

Adjourned 8:10pm.

Next Meeting January 10, 6:30pm at Alpenglow Elementary School, 19201 Driftwood Bay Dr, Eagle River.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: Julie Jessen (2024); Vice President: Tom Roth(2024); Education: Tom Roth(2024); Parks & Rec: Ruth Armstrong(2026)/Mark Littlefield(2026); C/ER Advisory Board: Julie Jessen (2024)/Jared Goecker-Alt(2025); Platting: Pete Panarese (2024); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Tom Freeman (2024)/ Alt-Joy Webb-proposed (2025); Road Board: Crystal Kennedy (2025)/Arlene Rasic–Alt (2024); Secretary/Treasurer: Joy Webb (2024)