

EAGLE RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
at Alpenglow Elementary School Library
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2024, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

- Call to Order: (Quorum - 10 voting members of the Council)
- Approval of Minutes: October 9, 2024, meeting. Motion to approve by Tom Roth, second by Pete Panarese, approved.

Public Safety Reports:

- AFD: Ryan Staten & Chief Schrage
 - 2025 budget update, taking over MCT team.
 - Bond proposals passed, which includes two new ambulances.
 - FD has a mental health crisis team that runs 24 hours a day, 3 days a week.
 - FD obtained a wildfire manager through grants.
 - Chugach Electric is putting up Gridwire Fire-spy systems. There are 30 currently in use. They detect wildfires and notify the FD immediately.
 - The FD provides Firewise Inspections to help residents assess their property and give recommendations on how to be more protected during a wildfire.
 - In the summer the FD has bike helmets for kids that need them.
 - Smoke detectors are available at the fire stations and on the trucks.
 - Lithium batteries are not to be placed in the regular garbage that goes to the dump. In 2020 a lithium battery fire damaged the liner of the Eagle River dump, which is contributing to the odor near Hiland.
 - The dump has a separate designated area to dispose of lithium-ion batteries.
 - Roof collapses for flat roof with wood trusses and gang plates. Flat rooves need to be shoveled and ice dams should be removed.
 - The FD got two new truck companies this year Truck #3 and Truck #5.
 - Anchorage and Eagle River has a 57.4% cardiac arrest survival rate. Really high nationwide. Last year 42 people survived.
 - PulsePoint has dispatch notes of all 911 calls. If you are CPR trained, you can sign up on PulsePoint to be notified of cardiac calls in your neighborhood.
 - <https://www.muni.org/departments/fire/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Gridwire wildfire maps.
 - Strategic plan

Elected Officials Reports:

- Alaska State Legislature: Senator Kelly Merrick
 - Kelly is out of town, but she sent a message for Julie to read.
 - Nov. 30th is the target date for election certification.
 - Town hall event to be scheduled in January.
- Anchorage Assembly Report: Mark Littlefield
 - Several mayoral appointees were approved including a Chief Medical Officer, which is new.
 - Waived procurement requirements for Senior Center so they can get water damage fixed.
 - AO: Free parking for vehicles with handicap tags and increased fines for illegal parking in handicap spaces.
 - AO: 3% sales tax, \$1000 cap. 2% to property tax relief, 1% to capital improvements.
 - AO: Required mandatory ID check for sales of alcohol in restaurants.
 - \$200,000 set aside for Chugiak/Eagle River Comprehensive Plan (2012) and Long-Range Transportation Plan.
 - Split rail fence on Old Glenn, belongs to the State, it needs to be fixed, replaced, or removed.
 - Plow website was rolled out for Anchorage area, doesn't really apply to Eagle River area.
 - New housing dashboard features 13 years of historical data.
 - Working on request for Chugiak Fire Department funding.
 - November 19th is the next assembly meeting.

Officers:

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- School Board Report: ASD Board Member, Pat Higgins 2008-2017, 2020-present (907.952.5871)
 - Big changes: Start times, 6th grade in middle school, number of high school courses per day.
 - School closures:
 - Three closures are being proposed this year: Bear Valley, Tudor Elementary, Lake Hood.
 - Four more closures are being proposed over the next two years.
 - Directly related to state funding issue. Over \$200 million behind. This year the school district received “one time” funding. Funding for next year is unknown.
 - Teacher recruitment and retention issues: ASD salary is 20% lower than nationwide, no defined benefit program.
 - Building maintenance is backlogged.
 - 1:15 ratio (K-3) in lower 48, Anchorage is 1:30 (3rd grade).
 - Academies are introducing high schoolers to options for future careers.
 - Reading proficiency question led to discussion of score improvements.
 - 50% of kids entering kindergarten in Anchorage are not ready for kindergarten.
 - By 4th grade ASD students have reading scores that are higher than national average.
 - Question regarding the Fire Lake elementary school building led to discussion of building safety. Charter schools are part of Anchorage School District yet may be located in a strip mall.
 - <https://www.asdk12.org/>

New Business:

- DOT&PF Glenn Highway and Hiland Road Interchange Improvements: DOT&PF Project Manager Galen Jones and DOWL Project Manager Kelly Kilpatrick
 - Galen Jones
 - Enhance highway merging on southbound ramp.
 - Fix bridge; do maintenance to prolong life of the bridge.
 - Kelly Kilpatrick, Dowl Engineering
 - 7am-9am is peak use time.
 - Bridge is 50 years old, with 75-year design life.
 - Five alternatives are being proposed to the public.
 - Public meeting in January.
 - <https://www.glenn-hiland.com/>
- Ram Valley Update: Haley Johnston, Deputy Director of Alaska Trails
 - Chugach State Park has 1.5 million visitors per year.
 - Previous access to Ram Valley was granted by private landowner. In 2019 this access was revoked.
 - A 2024 grant from the State to Alaska Trails (non-profit) is for five-years of funding to create a **feasibility study** for access to the valley. The timeline does not include actual construction.
 - Gus and Joe, both from Eagle River Valley, are on the advisory board.
 - The Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board is a 15-person committee.
 - Study is looking in to trail design and parking areas.
 - ADF&G was consulted on dall sheep population.
 - 5 possible alignments are being analyzed and scored by committee. The park will have final say over any action on the feasibility study when it’s finished.
 - A public feedback opportunity is going to be available.
 - <https://www.alaska-trails.org/ram-valley> (maps will be up later this month)
 - “Community Support” was suggested as one on the scoring rubric criteria.
 - A separate stand-alone meeting was suggested for those that don’t attend community council meetings.
 - The 5 options do not cross private property. They all originate on a publicly platted road and the trail is on land that is owned or administered by the DNR/State Park. Recreational Easements currently exist on some private parcels.
 - Road safety is being considered when selecting parking areas.

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- The 9 scoring criteria will be on the webpage, along with a map with 5 alignment options.
- ADN mistakenly reported that the Nature Center was working in conjunction with Alaska Trails. Do not contact the Nature Center for Ram Valley information.

Informational Reports:

- AKDOT&PF - Two proposed projects: Glenn Highway Airport Heights to Parks Highway Rehabilitation and the Glenn Highway Incident Management Traffic Accommodations. <https://dot.alaska.gov/creg/glenn/>
 - A public meeting is scheduled for November 20th from 4:00pm - 6:30pm in the Community Room at the Chugiak/Eagle River Library.
- Community Council Boundaries 10-Year Review. <https://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/Projects/Pages/CommunityCouncilBoundariesReview.aspx>
 - Requested resolution from ERVCC, due by February.
 - Recommending no change to boundary
 - 3 parcels that belong to the Heritage Land Bank and BLM, recommend incorporating in to mapped area.
- Long Range Chugiak Eagle River Transportation Plan
 - Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board

Committee Reports:

- Eagle River Community Patrol: Cliff Cook
 - Community Patrol logged 14 hours, and 79 miles last month.
 - Lexus Nexxus, APD website shows where crimes are happening in your area.
 - 233 reported crimes and non-crime events that APD assisted on.
 - 85 were more serious, assault and vehicle theft.
 - 15 events in Eagle River Valley, near Eaglewood area and Alpenglow area.
 - 3 patrols in the Chugiak/Eagle River area.
 - Volunteering for thanksgiving blessing, give out full meals to families in need. November 25th sponsored by Food Bank of Alaska.
- Platting: Pete Panarese
 - No report.
- Parks & Rec: Ruth Armstrong/Jared Goecker (Alt)
 - There will be an in person Recreational Trails Plan Public Meeting at Beach Lake Chalet on November 20th from 6:30pm - 9:30pm.
 - 17300 S. Birchwood Loop Rd.
 - Hosted by AMATS and Anchorage Parks and Rec.
 - The plan has not been updated since 1997.
 - <https://publicinput.com/rectrails>
- Federation Community Councils: Alex Jorgensen/Joy Webb (Alt)
 - Absent.
- Emergency Preparedness: (Marvin) Dean Cox mdcox@msn.com 703.209.1532
 - CERT assists first responders with local emergencies like earthquakes and landslides.
 - Online certification and training is available to anyone that wants to participate.
 - 8-10 people are required to bring an in-person training to the area.
- Education: Tom Roth
 - Funding comes from the State per student. Does not fund infrastructure. ASD lost 1000 students this year. Projecting losing another 1000 students next year.

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- Fire Lake is at 40% of potential capacity. Students would be relocated to other locations that are prepared to receive the students.
- Eagle Academy is a charter school that is currently in a non-school building.
- An Education-Only council meeting will be planned to allow time for more questions and discussion.
- Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board: Julie Jessen/Jared Goecker (Alt)
 - No report
- CBERRRSA: Crystal Kennedy/Arlene Rasic (Alt)
 - Need to replace alternate now.
 - Need to replace Crystal's seat in February 2025.
- Comments from Eagle River Community Council Membership/Guests (3 minutes each)

Upcoming Events:

- Next ERVCC meeting will be held on December 11th 6:30 – 8:30pm at Alpenglow Elementary School Library.
- Parks and Rec Board of Supervisors monthly meeting November 18th 6:30 – 8:30pm.
- FCC Meeting November 20th 6:00-8:00pm.
- CBERRRSA Board of Supervisors meeting: November 25th 6:30 – 8:30pm.

Adjournment at 8:23pm

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