

EAGLE RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
at Alpenglow Elementary School Library
Regular Meeting Agenda
March 12, 2025, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

1. Call to Order: (Quorum Achieved - 10 voting members of the Council)
2. Meeting Minutes from February 12, 2025, meeting were approved.
3. Elected Officials Reports:
 - Alaska State Legislature: Senator Kelly Merrick
 - Julie received the attached email from Senator Merrick's office.
 - Anchorage Assembly Report: Mark Littlefield
 - Sales tax proposal has been narrowed down to one version. March 18th it will be decided if it goes to the public for a special election.
 - Increased grant to FCC. FCC hired an assistant.
 - Bill recently passed that an ID is required for all alcohol sales.
 - ASD proposed \$886 Million operating budget.
 - Kelli Toth Solid Waste Service Director was confirmed.
 - David Persinger General Manager of AWWU was confirmed.
 - Marjory Harrison Director of the Anchorage Public Library was confirmed.
 - Tuesday April 1st, 8pm is the deadline for ballots.
 - Bond Proposals:
 - Prop 12: CBERRRSA. Maintenance costs have gone up, last year was 24% increase. CBERRRSA is at the max of the mill rate. Proposal is for an increase from 2.1 mil rate to 2.4 rate.
 - Prop 4: Police Service Area Prop, \$3.4 Mil upgrade APD facilities. *Area-wide, ER will pay.*
 - Prop 6: Senior Center and Library Improvement Prop, \$2.8 Mil. *Area-wide, ER will pay.*
 - Prop 5: Area Wide Public Safety Prop, \$9.4 Mil. *Area-wide, ER will pay.*
 - Prop 1: Anchorage School District Capital Improvements, \$63.8 Mil. *Area-wide, ER will pay.*
 - Structural, mechanical, electrical, educational upgrades.
 - Springhill, Campbell Elementary, West HS, Bartlett HS, Scenic Park Elementary.
 - Security enhancements at Ravenwood Elementary, Scenic Park Elementary, Baxter.
 - Heavy equipment replacement.
 - Prop 11: Police Special Vehicle Tax Levy, Metropolitan Police Area, *includes Eagle River.*
 - \$3 Mil annually, no sunset.
 - Prop 10: ARDSA - Anchorage Road and Drainage Area Vehicles Tax. *Eagle River does not pay.*
 - \$3.5 Mil, no sunset.
 - Prop 2: ARDSA - Anchorage Roads and Drainage *Eagle River does not pay.*
 - Prop 9: Chugach State Park Access (Basher Rd trailhead parking), would be paid for by Hillside residents, *Eagle River does not pay.*
 - [Assembly newsletters available here.](#)
 - [Mayor's newsletter available here.](#)
 - School Board Report: ASD Board Member: Andy Holleman
 - Budget based on BSA only, represents a 20% cut to current operations.
 - A \$1000 BSA increase passed State House today. Increase would restore cuts and class sizes. Uncertain if it will be approved by Governor.
 - Would restore cuts and decrease class sizes.
 - School bond to include:
 - Adding single point of entry secure vestibules in elementary schools.

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V. President – Tom Roth (2025)
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- Some money in bond will be used to replace heavy equipment.
- Design and analysis of aging Chugiak HS is needed.
- AK Native Cultural Charter School to be moved to Lake Hood school building.
- Moving Aquarian Charter School to Nunaka Valley school building.
- Rilke Schule German Immersion Charter School may be moving to Abbott Loop building.

4. New Business:

- Capital Improvements Survey (due May 20th) – 6-year CIP List
 - Citation Rd update was previously included last year.
 - Discussion of fire breaks or wildfire mitigation.
 - Eagle River Road Pathway Extension proposed by Sarah Davenport.
 - CIP Presentation happening from FCC on March 18th at Noon on Youtube. Explaining formal process for submitting.
- Wildland Urban Interface Advisory Committee
 - Looking for reps from multiple community councils, to meet the 4th Monday of month on Zoom, for a community action team.
 - Art reported that the Rabbit Creek Community Council is leading wildfire preventions.
 - Second chipper has been purchased so both wood lots can be open. Hiland wood lot is free.
 - Muni has evacuation study underway, considered a fire drill.
 - Julie will reach out to Dean and see if he's interested in participating with this org.
 - BLM fire fighters are experiencing federal funding cuts and are not being trained right now.
- May 14th ERVCC Meeting is the annual meeting for elections:
 - 4 positions open on the Board. Do not need to be a committee leader to be on the board. Need to know by April 9th.
 - Tom Roth – Would like to continue on the Board as VP.
 - Ruth Armstrong– Would like to continue on the Board and as Parks & Rec Chair.
 - Arlene Rasic – Board Seat needs to be replaced.
 - Crystal Kennedy – Board Seat needs to be replaced.
 - Parks & Rec Alt – 3 people are interested (Mark Littlefield, John Rotta, and Dave Arthen)
 - CBERRRSA – Mark Littlefield would like to chair. He is done with Assembly April 22nd.
 - CBERRRSA Alt – Jacques Annandale and Sarah Davenport would like to be Alternate.
 - Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board Alt – Mark Littlefield would like to be Alternate.
 - Officers are elected on a yearly basis.
- [Glenn Highway & Hiland Road Interchange Improvements](#)
 - Divergabout: There has been a request from AKDOT for a letter of support from the community councils for the divergabout design.
 - [Information video](#)
 - Crystal motioned that we support it and write a resolution. It is also the most cost-effective option.
 - Comments section on the [website](#) at the bottom of the page is open until March 20th.

5. Committee Reports:

- Platting: Pete Panarese
 - Planning department letting us know that a person on Upper Kogru Drive has a request to build on a very steep lot.
- Parks & Rec: Ruth Armstrong/Jared Goecker (Alt)
 - BOS decided on 60 Operations/40 Capital Improvements split. Which equates to \$1.2 Mil for capital improvements. In past years there was an operations side fund excess.

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- ITB for pool going out this week. The pool is planned to be closed November 2025 through May/June 2026.
- Mike Braniff (Current Parks & Rec Director) is resigning April 4th. Jeff Urbanus is acting deputy director.
- Federation Community Councils: Alex Jorgensen/Joy Webb (Alt)
 - February meeting finalized financials.
 - Passed new document retention policy. Too many docs on the website. Saved for 20-years.
 - Mayor's office report, finalized on staff attending two community council meetings per year.
 - CIP Group Survey is out. March 18th at noon, overview on survey and CIP.
 - FCC can act as fiduciary for councils. Getting a booth for ERVCC at the Bear Paw festival was suggested. Brittany Olsen is the contact for Bear Paw.
 - Alex may investigate setting up social media for ERVCC.
- Emergency Preparedness: (Marvin) Dean Cox
 - 5 people have completed the online portion of the emergency response training.
- Education: Tom Roth
 - District briefing their annual budget to the assembly. District must get Assembly approval of the budget before State passes funding. May 15th is the deadline that the school board has to pink slip teachers.
 - Ignite and sports to be fully eliminated at current funding level.
 - PTR (Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio) expected to increase for next year. Estimates are:
 - Kinder from 22 students per teacher to 26.
 - 1st grade 23 to 27
 - 2nd grade 25 to 29
 - 4th & 5th: 27 to 31
 - Call your State Legislators.
- Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board: Julie Jessen/Jared Goecker (Alt)
 - This group is made up of Reps from each of the 6 community councils and deals with land use issues.
 - Birchwood CC is responding to Eklutna building a Gaming Casino.
 - Shortened public comment period did not allow for Birchwood CC to submit their opinion.
 - Concerned with heavier traffic on that road.
 - The casino is currently in a temporary structure. Eklutna is planning to construct a 58K square-foot gaming facility at that location.
 - Advisory Board met last Saturday. State AG was there talking about lawsuits and Native Allotment. BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) is involved. Native Village of Eklutna did not attend.
 - Resolution was drafted to oppose the casino and the Mayor's letter of support. The Mayor did not consult the community council before sending the letter.
 - First resolution was written to support Community Councils being involved decisions.
 - Second resolution deals more specifically with the land use issues. This casino business is not appropriate for light-industrial zone that it is located in. Traffic, water wells, noise, and air pollution were all noted.
 - Motion to approve both resolutions: by Crystal K. and seconded by Tom R. – Motion Approved
 - Discussion on Muni Code vs. Comprehensive Plan
- CBERRRSA: Crystal Kennedy/Arlene Rasic (Alt)
 - Saved money on snow plowing for 2024-2025 winter.
 - Mt. Spurr on the likely to erupt schedule. During the volcano eruption of 1992, people ran out of water.
 - Is ash removal covered by road board?
 - AWWU is preparing emergency response plan. Preparing for water supply and having equipment on hand.
 - Stock up on N95 masks, and K&N car air filters (recommended by Tom).
 - Road board is conscientious of tax money and wants to provide services needed. A Mil increase will provide flexibility if we have a large snowfall year.
 - Meeting again March 29th at Noon at Community Center next to Chugiak/ER Library.

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6. Upcoming Events:

- Next ERVCC meeting will be held on April 9, 2025, 6:30pm at Alpenglow Elementary School Library.

7. Adjournment at 8:40pm.

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Eagle River Valley Community Council – High five from the State capital!

We are 51 days into the Legislative Session.

Senate Finance updates:

We have started the Senate Finance subcommittee process, where each Majority Finance member is assigned four Departments to extensively review their budgets. I am chairing the subcommittees for the Departments of Natural Resources, Labor and Workforce Development, Environmental Conservation, and Military and Veterans' Affairs. I held "Budget Overview" meetings for each of these Departments the last two weeks.

We are hearing a presentation on the Spring Revenue Forecast in Senate Finance tomorrow, March 13th. This information will give us a much better understanding of what we'll be able to afford as we continue to work on the budget.

There have been ongoing discussions between key Legislators and the Governor's office around public education funding and policy. Updates sound promising! Looking forward to reviewing their agreement.

Legislation updates:

SB 15, sponsored by yours truly, passed the Senate unanimously within the first 2 weeks of session, and was then sent to the House where the momentum and support continued through their process. SB 15 is currently sitting in House Rules awaiting to be calendared on the House Floor.

SB 15 allows young adults 18-20 years of age to serve alcohol in restaurants, breweries, distilleries, and on trains and boats, but not in bars. It's already in place in 47 other states and was requested by businesses in our community to help alleviate labor shortages and provide more job opportunities for our college-aged Alaskans.

With SB 15 mostly behind us, we've been able to look into my other bill, SB 26, eliminating daylight saving time. We're working on scheduling and information gathering, so stay tuned if you're interested in testifying.

Other Stuff:

Reminder: public comment for the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation and Improvement Program (STIP) is open for review and comment through March 20, 2025. I would really like to encourage everyone to participate in this process so that the needs of Chugiak – Eagle River are heard.

Mark your calendars, 12-2pm on March 15th – your Chugiak-Eagle River delegation will be hosting a Townhall at Pizza Man. Come get the scoop (card)!

Anchorage Delegation Townhall is scheduled on April 5th from 2-4pm at UA Lucy Cuddy Hall, 3400 Seawolf Drive.

I hope everyone is enjoying this mild winter. Sorry to those of you that invested in a snow blower last year!

As always, please let me know if I can be of assistance.

Kind Regards,
Kelly