

**Hillside Community Council Meeting**  
**Minutes for Monday, February 21, 2022, 7:00 pm**  
**Draft**  
**Location: Held via Zoom**

**Board Roll Call:** Present: Carmela Warfield, Zac Johnson, Robert Redlinger, Bruce Vergason, Dr. Helena Wisniewski, Todd Brownson

1. **Board President Warfield opened the meeting at 7:02 pm.**
  - Pledge of Allegiance.
  - Call to order & welcoming remarks.
  - Membership & voting requirements.
2. **Consent Agenda:**
  - President Warfield requested a motion to table approval of the January meeting minutes until a later meeting:
    - Moved: Zac Johnson, Seconded: Robert Redlinger.
    - Motion carried.
3. **Business Updates:**
  - FCC Delegate Johnson:
    - Anchorage has a new service for tracking an individual's ballot in local elections, called BallotTrax.
    - There is a public hearing draft available for review regarding proposed changes to Title 21 Parking and Site Access.
    - Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) is currently in comment period for proposed changes to performance measures for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
  - President Warfield:
    - Update on the safe pedestrian crossing initiative at Rockridge Dr and O'Malley Rd.
      - We are in Phase 2 of the O'Malley Rd improvements.
      - HCC is working with Sen. Revak, Rep. Kaufman, Mayor Bronson, Assemblyman Weddleton and the Anchorage Planning Department on the issue.
      - Current improvement plan would require children to cross at Birch Rd to get to O'Malley Elementary from north side of street.
      - The MOA Traffic Engineering Department has commissioned a study to determine suitable options.
        - The HCC has asked that a comparable school zone be considered to take into account the conditions when the Phase 2 improvements are completed.
        - The study is expected to be completed around end of March.

- Assemblyman Weddleton helped to identify a potential funding source for the study; this is being reviewed by Traffic.
- HCC, worked with Senator Revak's and Rep. Kaufman's offices to include five projects into State of AK CAPSIS as priorities the area:
  - Birch Rd repair and upgrades.
  - Safe pedestrian crossing for O'Malley Elementary.
  - Safe pedestrian crossing for Service High & Trailside Elementary.
  - Install a traffic signal at Hillside Dr and Upper Huffman Rd.
  - Repair and resurface upper De Armoun Rd and Canyon Rd.
  - A sixth item, fire hazard mitigation, including clearing spruce beetle kill, and signage for exit routes, was also included by all Community Councils on the Hillside.
- Reapportionment – President Warfield advised that on 2/14/22, the Reapportionment Committee approved four maps to introduce to the Assembly for consideration. One map included moving roughly 12,000 residents of Hillside into the Eagle River District 2; another reapportioned several thousand Hillsiders into D2. These maps were introduced to the Assembly on 2/15/22.
- Warfield said the HCC Board had written the Assembly to oppose the reapportionment of portions of the Hillside into District 2, and to request an extension of the public review period of the maps, since the proposed map approval date of 3/1/22 only allowed for two weeks of public review.
  - President Warfield advised that she suggested an extension to March 15th from March 1st, since the final maps were just introduced to the Body on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Warfield said the Reapportionment needed to be completed by May 23<sup>rd</sup> to comply with the Charter.
  - The Assembly stated they will decide whether to extend the timeline after the next two public hearings, which will be held in a 7 day period following the introduction of the maps to the Assembly.
- HALO Delegate Redlinger:
  - The annual Firewise event will be taking place at Hilltop Ski Area on April 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - HALO will be hosting its annual local election candidate forum on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm at the O'Malley Zoo.
    - The event will be held in person and broadcast live on Facebook.
    - HCC gave \$50 to HALO to support the event and offset expenses, and three Board members (Warfield, Johnson and Redlinger) have volunteered for the event as well.

#### 4. **Reports from Elected Officials and Community Representatives:**

- Representative James Kaufman:
  - There will be a constituent event at Fox Hollow Golf Course on Sunday, from 2-5 pm. The event is co-hosted by Sen. Revak and Rep. Shaw.
  - Rep. Kaufman's bill, HB187 (Efficiency Bill), aimed at reducing unnecessary printings, passed the House unanimously, and is with the Senate now.

- Another bill from Rep. Kaufman, Rewrite of the Executive Budget Act: finished draft ahead of deadline, will be read at the floor session on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Would move the State to a performance budgeting model.
- Capital projects – Legislative Aide Matthew Harvey has been working to get projects put into CAPSIS, along with Sen. Revak and MOA planners.
- Penny Goodstein asked if the proposed new budget system was a zero-budgeting system?
  - No. Studied many state models. Goal is to make sure strategy is aligned with objectives.
- Noel Rea asked if Rep. Kaufman weighed in on the proposed split in DHSS?
  - No. The proposal has not come to committee yet. Plan does not seem very robust.
- President Warfield advised that Rep Kaufman initiated the new community project review, to prepare for and identify funding opportunities for capital improvement projects through local, state and federal funding streams. Rep Kaufman also initiated the kick-off meeting in December 2021, in conjunction with Senator Revak and Rep Shaw, which included representatives from the Mayor’s office, the Assembly, State officials and our Federal Delegation.
  - President Warfield recognized Robert Redlinger and Zac Johnson for their work with all LRSAs to identify local projects, and thanked Dr. Helena Wisniewski, who volunteered to be on the Grant Writing sub-committee.
- Assemblyman John Weddleton:
  - A hearing was recently held regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Mayor Bronson has proposed a ten year tax abatement for construction of ADUs. Assemblyman Weddleton is looking to see if data supports moving forward. The proposed tax abatement would not apply if you do not have an existing home on the property (i.e. would not apply with new primary home development).
  - Vertical curbs vs rolled curbs – working with home builders to make it easier to do rolled curbs. The MOA Planning Department said no, but still working on the issue.
  - Working on setting a cleanup standard for contaminated soils; there is currently no set standard for the MOA. Proposal would mirror state requirements.
  - AMATS can use transportation money to help make building more affordable, for example.
  - The ballot measure to require body cameras for APD passed. However, data storage is expensive and it will take some time to implement the plan. The police union will also have an opportunity to weigh in on the plan.
  - Reapportionment – Assemblyman Weddleton stated he was frustrated the public review period was not extended to March 15<sup>th</sup>. Assemblyman Weddleton said he wanted to make sure residents also have a chance to be heard.
    - Comments appear to be tilting in favor of Map 11, including comments from some from outside of South Anchorage.
    - Assemblyman Weddleton state he does not expect a map that puts Hillside in Eagle River to prevail.

- President Warfield thanked Assemblyman Weddleton for fighting for a time extension for public consideration and input.
- JBER Community Liaison Joy Boston:
  - The Arctic Thunder Open House will be next month
  - Will have update on upcoming military exercises at the March HCC meeting.

5. **Presentations:**

- MOA/Assembly Districts Reapportionment – Denny Wells:
  - Mr. Wells is a community member who put forward maps for consideration and also worked with Assemblyman Weddleton on proposed Map 11v2.
  - The downtown area (District 1) needs to approximately double in size due to the addition of a second Assembly seat. Thus, all other districts must shrink a bit.
  - Map 6 would move Independence Park out of District 6, but is otherwise pretty similar to the current map for South Anchorage.
  - Map 7 carves out part of the Hillside area and adds to Eagle River.
    - Eagle River (District 2) and Chugiak have a population of about 36,000. Need about 48,000 residents for a full district. JBER counts for about 11,000. The current map has JBER with Eagle River, along with a portion of Muldoon.
  - Penny Goodstein asked why we are artificially putting inconsistent groups of people together to reach a specific number?
    - There is a legal threshold for allowable deviation (less than 10%).
  - Joy Boston commented, via chat: From JBER perspective, leadership is agnostic regarding where reapportionment lines are drawn. Important to remember that while JBER residents are counted in the census, they are not necessarily Alaska-registered voters. Active duty members do not have to register whenever they relocate. So while JBER population count for census and reapportionment lines, they may not be Anchorage or Alaska voting constituents.
  - Map 11 would move area west of C St from District 6 to 3.
  - Assemblywoman Allard introduced map 12 at the recent Assembly meeting. Map 12 is still an active map for consideration, and is similar to map 11 for South Anchorage.
  - There are several opportunities for public input at meetings, or can be comments can be submitted online.
  - President Warfield thanked Mr. Wells for his presentation and involvement.
  - President Warfield brought forward an action item, a vote of HCC members present, regarding reapportionment of Hillside into Eagle River District.
  - Warfield summarized her earlier report on Reapportionment, the Board's opposition to the reapportionment of Hillside into D2 and the short timeline for public process.
    - Warfield advised that the Bylaws require HCC members to have attended at least one meeting in the preceding 12 months to be eligible to vote tonight. Warfield noted there were many HCC residents in attendance for the first time.

- Warfield said it was important for these residents' concerns to also be heard, and asked for a motion to tally and separately report the non-voting members' votes. Warfield noted these votes would not be included in the HCC's official approval/denial totals.
    - Moved: Bruce Vergason, Seconded: Todd Brownson.
    - Motion carried unanimously.
  - Warfield requested a vote to take the position of opposing reapportioning Hillside into Eagle River D2.
    - Vote amongst HCC voting members – unanimously in favor of opposing the reapportionment of Hillside residents into Eagle River D2.
    - Vote of non-voting members – also unanimously in favor.
  - The HCC Board will draft language and send a statement to the Reapportionment Committee and the Assembly.
  - President Warfield asked Assemblyman Weddleton if amendments may be made to maps?
    - Yes, but significant changes unlikely.
  - The HCC body agreed not to support a specific map since amendments were expected, but opposed Map 7.
- School Bond Presentation – ASD Board Member Kelly Lessens
  - ASD update:
    - The ASD Connect website contains a lot of useful information.
    - Schools will be mask-optional starting Feb 28<sup>th</sup>.
    - The Climate and Connectedness Survey is currently open.
    - The school lottery is open, and the deadline is March 17<sup>th</sup>.
    - The Career Technical Education (CTE) Department is launching a business school.
    - The search for a new Superintendent is underway; application deadline was today.
    - Tentative contract agreements with teachers have been reached.
    - The ASD budget will be on the agenda at Board meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Projecting a major deficit in 2025.
      - ASD is currently spending a considerable amount of federal relief funds to maintain teacher staffing levels.
  - President Warfield asked how Board Member Lessens intends to vote on the proposed mask-optional policy?
    - Would support an off-ramp plan. Curious about date and about if masks would still be required on buses. Support a shift away from masking in classrooms.
    - The vote is “sense of the board,” not an action item.
  - Proposed School Bond includes key security upgrades at some schools.
  - Estimated impact of \$13 per \$100K of property value in the MOA.
  - Aging schools and harsh winters have created a backlog of maintenance.

- Historically, school bonding has retired more debt than it has taken on for years.
  - The ASD Board approves a six year capital improvement plan annually.
  - President Warfield asked whether costs are based on estimates from contractors and construction professionals? Why not get bids in advance of bonding for firm numbers?
    - Bond includes costs for planning and design for future years.
    - Don't have a good answer regarding why not soliciting bids. Will get back to you.
  - President Warfield also noted mathematics scores, which were shared at the last Board meeting, appeared to go down between fall and winter. What is the plan?
    - Absenteeism may have been a factor.
  - Board Member Lessens stated she is very concerned about classroom staffing levels. PTR (people teacher ratio) would be worse without federal relief funds.
6. **Community Information:**
- MOA election on April 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - The FCC is working on a website revamp.
7. **Candidate Forum:**
- Randy Sulte – Candidate for Assembly District 6:
    - Tired of direction Anchorage has gone in.
    - Want to see an Assembly that works for the citizens of Anchorage.
      - Current Assembly is too partisan, too political.
    - Will be at Kaladi Brothers Coffee on Huffman Rd on Saturdays from 8-10 am.
  - James Kaufman – Candidate for State House
    - Running in new District 11; will be paired with Sen. Revak (Sen. Holland was redistricted to District 9).
8. **Announcements:**
- Information on the agenda.
  - Next HCC Meeting on will be on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm.
  - HCC is cosponsoring the upcoming Firewise Event.
9. **Open Discussion:**
- None.
10. **Adjournment:**
- President Warfield thanked all who attended the meeting.
  - President Warfield requested a motion to adjourn:
    - Moved: Todd Brownson, Seconded: Robert Redlinger.
  - Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.