

MINUTES

South Fork Community Council
December 5, 2019

1. Call to Order: 7:01 by **Karl von Lurhte**, Chair, in Room D107 of the Eagle River High School. 17 people in attendance.
2. Brief introductions were made around the room: Several Eagle River High School students, **Tim Helvey**, **Cliff Cook**, as well as representatives from the Legislature, Assembly, School Board, and Eagle River Library.
3. The Agenda was approved without additions or amendments.
4. Minutes approved from October 3, 2019 without correction.
5. Guest Speakers
 - a. State Legislature (**Tiffany Lund**): Tree lighting celebration Dec 6th; Open Town Hall send-off for legislators on Jan 14th to share our priorities for the upcoming session.
 - b. Muni Assembly Rep. staffer **Kim Collins** (for **Crystal Kennedy**): The Assembly Passed Ordinance approving Bonding for emergency access roads (to address the lack of emergency access roads in the MOA); looking for a list of our priorities for funding for this community. Mirror Lake Middle School forum 6pm next Monday to discuss Gruening rebuilding or other education options (combining Chugiak and Eagle River at Chugiak and turning ERHS into a middle school), superintendent will be there, welcoming feedback. **Ms. Kennedy** is currently remaining neutral on this topic because the rebuild cost is so high and will be passed to tax payers – she would like to know what the community wants the most. **Kim Collins** offered to share any feedback to Kennedy from the community. Monday the 9th at 6:30pm, doors open at 6pm in the gym at Mirror Lake. 1,000 people anticipated to attend.
 - c. School Board: **Tim Helvey**, ERHS Principal, wanted to say hello and express his thanks and asked for our support for ERHS at the Mirror Lake meeting. Looking at a combination school being over capacity (108%) in one of the only areas in Anchorage that is growing. Point of clarification: there are more than the two options. Unfortunately, ERHS does not have the ability to take in the middle school kids (school is 87% capacity already). If the Bond doesn't pass, some may go to Mirror Lake and some to Clark. Chugiak may also become an 8-12 school. 172 kids are bussed here from Base who would be rezoned to Bartlett; this still would not allow for enough room to add a middle school to ERHS. Bartlett is also near capacity. ERHS is one of the top performing schools in the district. The money for Gruening would not only rebuild/repair the school, it would fix some of the deferred maintenance issues (boilers etc.) and make it earthquake safe at Level 6. Tim is advocating for rebuilding Gruening. Concern was expressed that Level 6 is not high enough. Concern that the School Board and Assembly had meetings at the same time, did not allow for enough discussion and community feedback – decisions have already been made, precluding community input. The Bond is a 2 year bond; in 2 years, \$6/\$100,000 - \$11/\$100,000 depending on how much other debt is retired. Concern that the Bond will not pass if so much money

goes to Eagle River instead of Anchorage; there have been several different schools all around the MOA wrapped into it in the hopes it will appeal to more people and pass.

Elisa Vakallis: School Board Rep – School Board is working to come up with a new goal (now that 2020 is nearly here). ASDK12 website has a survey link for providing input on what the school district goals should be. Comprehensive audit was just passed. State fiscal situation is a concern and our school district is looking at a shortfall again next year and will be asking for community feedback. Budget is usually passed at the first meeting in February. With the onset of darkness, please watch for kids; several kids have been struck by cars in Anchorage. Encourages as many of us as possible to attend the Town Hall ASD meeting for school decisions. The School Board passed the Bond package (\$82 million) narrowly, 4-3, to the Assembly. The Assembly can reject it or accept it and send it to the voters to decide. The Town Hall happening on Monday should have happened several months ago, before the Bond package was put together, but the Town Hall is still worth having. Alisa voted no on the Bond for several reasons, primarily for the high amount of the Bond and because the Charter school was included for a high amount. Eagle River Elementary is moving forward; elementary schools in Eagle River valley are full. **Joe Wright** noted that the Assembly continues to have a knee jerk reaction – putting forward solutions but not sending them to the Community Councils first. The law that was passed last week is a prime example: wanting to push the date for studs being legal to September 30th. Title 23 changes were just enacted by the Assembly as well. The Assembly needs to communicate more with Community Councils and provide opportunity for feedback.

- d. **Cliff Cook:** 69 hours, 681 miles logged by Community Patrol. He recommends a safety kit in vehicles (jumper cables, way to keep warm, tow rope). Watch out for Porch Pirates; track packages and be careful where you send them. Call Postmaster General (if it's sent by USPS) and report mail theft if it happens. If you call APD, they will tell you to report it to your delivery service (FedEx, UPS, USPS). **Joe Wright** recommends doorbell cameras. Birchwood Community Patrol got a grant for \$10,000 to purchase cameras and provided them to citizens who agree to share that footage with APD if a crime occurs. Community Patrol accepts donations to help cover the cost of fuel.
 - e. **Nancy,** ER Library: Automated materials handling now at Library, similar to Loussac. Indoor and outdoor slots for returns. APL items are automatically checked in and taken off of account. Tours available and they are happy to answer questions. Earthquake damage update: still cracks and ceiling tiles missing; may take several years before those are fixed due to FEMA timeline. A lot of retirements and staff changes since May 2019: 7 out of 8 have turned over since May 2019 and still have 2 more vacant staff positions before the library is fully staffed again. Part Time Library Assistant Position 22 hours/week; Youth Services Librarian, FTE, both with benefits. Contact the library for more information.
6. Old Business

- a. Eaglexit Update: **Darrel Parks** has given permission to proceed with the Consortium, delegates from each Community Council will come together to work on the issue and provide input to the process. Phase 1 of the feasibility study is moving forward Northern Economics is going it. Northern Compass Group is moving forward with polling and social engagement. Phase 2 will be all about: what kind of government and services will be provided – they are looking for input. Community Councils can provide valuable input to these decisions. **Andy Brewer** is working to build the Consortium. Eklutna Valley does not want to leave the MOA. Eaglexit is determined to move ahead and councils should be a part of the process. **Andy Brewer** is willing to be the SFCC representative; **Karl** asked him to approach other Community Councils to see what the interest is and if the Councils want to form up into a Consortium. Next meeting January 16th.
7. Committee Reports
 - a. Road Board: **Joe Wright** shared that the deadline on priority funding for emergency access bonds is soon and the Road Board is not meeting again until January and will not have the chance to comment officially. CBRRRSA is waiting for reimbursement from FEMA. A lot of projects on the list do not currently have right of ways, so they may not be worth putting forward. Artillery Road rebuilding study is starting soon but that project will not be able to move forward for at least 18-24 months. CBRRRSA is looking at the 5-year snow removal and maintenance contract coming up for bid: what services does the community want, any expansion needed? Current contractor is McKenna Brothers.
 - b. Parks & Rec: **Joshua Ream** not present. Some repairs at Goose Lake and the Mac Center is now revenue positive.
 - c. Treasurer: **Randy Beilfuss** reports \$201.73.
 8. New Business
 - a. Town Hall Meeting for ASD/Gruening Repair Bond Proposal (9 Dec 6:30pm): A lot of differing opinions on what should happen with the schools in Eagle River. **Karl** does not see any reason to mess with ERHS and the successes this school has seen in academic outcomes and high graduation rates and encourages everyone to show up to the meeting. He recommends that the Student Council start to gather support from students and encourage students to go to the meeting, arrange carpools etc. Students should show up en masse, early, to show strong support for keeping ERHS. Mirror Lake has intermittent cell coverage and there is not a lot of sitting room; plan accordingly. Note that the lack of sitting room is not friendly to disabled or elderly populations. **Karl** notes that it is unfortunate that these conversations weren't happening a year ago with a series of multiple meetings and feels that this upcoming Town Hall is set up for failure. Concerned citizen has yet to see a true Town Hall meeting where the host is hearing from the public instead of the public hearing a pitch. School Board should not hold the meetings on the Bond on the same night the Assembly is holding their meetings on the budget and citizens cannot attend both meetings to provide feedback. Note that **Crystal Kennedy** is trying to be neutral for her entire constituency; she is the one picking the speakers and she was a large part of why ERHS happened in the first place. Everyone who attends will receive **Crystal Kennedy's** contact information so that people can reach out with questions and provide feedback.

Students and faculty are concerned about what the result will be; nervous about the meeting on Monday and the behavior that will be modeled to our students. Please be patient and tolerant if you attend the meeting.

- b. Renaming Yosemite Drive Proposal: Want to rename it Wolf Den Drive because the ERHS mascot is a wolf. Yosemite Drive was so named because all of the streets in the near community are named after national parks. Students and staff (450) have signed a petition and written a letter to the Mayor to request an Executive Order to sign off on a street name change. He wanted to make sure the community is aware and in support of the change. The Assembly is in support of the change. **Joe** notes that **Jose**, who built this area, named the subdivision. According to Code, 51% of those who live on the street need to be in support of the change in order to make it happen. Several other high schools have done something similar. Wolf Den ties in with their stadium name. AMHTA and Heritage are in support. The MOA will cover the cost of changing the road signs if it is done by Executive Order.
 - c. Other: Sammy Sewell passed away (she and her husband built the Alaska Zoo starting with Annabelle, the elephant) at age 100.
9. Good of the Order: A concerned citizen discussed the November passage of the studded tires ordinance. He says that in a public meeting the side deals do not happen in the same way that they do when the meetings are held at City Hall. Would prefer the video/audio recordings to provide record for the public of what is happening and also notes that a lot of the public comment portions are at the end of the meetings, when people aren't there because it is too late and there is often no time left for comment. Merger of MLP and Chugiak Electric discussion is ongoing. Notices are being given out with too little notice about meetings. Also notes that the meeting minutes from Assembly are very behind (as much as a year).
 10. Meeting adjourned at 8:36p.m.; the next meeting will be held on January 9th, 2020 at 7:00p.m.

Janelle Wight
SFCC Secretary