

# GOVERNMENT HILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

c/o Community Councils Center • 1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Jody Sola, President

Stephanie Kesler, Vice President

Peter Partnow, Secretary

Melinda Gant, Treasurer

Bob French, FCC Representative

Donna Rymut, Greg Miller, Ron Clark, At-Large Board Members



## **GHCC Meeting Minutes April 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes Submitted by Peter Partnow**

### **President Jody Sola, Presiding**

Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m.

#### **1. Introductions of meeting attendees**

See attached sign in sheet.

- 2. Corrections/Approval of Agenda:** President Sola noted School Board Member Deena Mitchell will make a report on behalf of the school board. Eric Booton will make a presentation re Save Bristol Bay. Steve Gerlek will present a resolution regarding use of bond funds to pay for water service to the Commons. Further, there may be no legislative or assembly reports if the various officials do not call in or are unable to attend.

Motion to Approve Agenda as amended: Stephanie Kesler. Second by Bob French.

**Agenda as amended unanimously approved.**

#### **3. Approval of Minutes of March 21, 2019,**

**Moved** Stephanie Kesler

**Second** Tom Brennan

Minutes of March 21, 2019 meeting **unanimously approved.**

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4. **Treasure's Report Melinda Gant** reports GHCC's account has been switched to Credit Union 1, downtown branch. Account balance is \$3057.80. Temporary hold on funds due to the transfer.
  
5. **JBER REPORT: Curt Beach** reports on various gate closures in the coming months. Lane closures will perhaps double time to check through. Muldoon Gate will be closed July, August and September. No current plans to add closures to the Government Hill gate. Does not believe the other closures will significantly impact traffic at the Government Hill gate. Note government can change its plans and suggests checking the JBER Facebook page to get up to date closure information.
  

Stephanie Kesler inquired regarding 1 Sportsman Passes. Application can be done online. Cost of pass is \$10.

  
6. **FCC UPDATE: Bob French** notes that studded tires are to be off by end of April. Noted questions have been raised regarding whether the community councils are covered by the Municipality's insurance. May not be the case. Various options may exist both for the current year and for future years.
  
7. **SCHOOL BOARD REPORT: Deena Mitchell** noted the school bond issue passed at the April election and will allow, among other things, for various safety systems to be put in place. Noted that forward funding under HB 287 pulled back by the Governor but legislature attempting to restore. Indicated there will be no cuts in classroom staff and the class sizes will remain about the same. Addressed concern regarding governor's effort to eliminate bond debt reimbursement for already issued bonds, indicating it will cost the ASD 42 million dollars in 2020 and 300 million dollars over time. Noted that the legislature may be taking efforts to restore this reimbursement. Discussed a new budget question and answer session held by the school board and indicated the board will do another one at the start of the budgeting process in the fall. Noted a lot of student activities going on at the end of the school year and that May 7 is teacher appreciation day. Deena will try to attend GHCC May meeting, but unclear who will be the board member responsible for reporting to GHCC for 2019-2020.
  
8. **ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES: Sara Fechtelkotter** reported she works under a grant that does not have income restrictions. In her program, she can assist members of victim groups such as campus assault victims, hate crime victims, fraud and identity theft victims and immigrants subject to fraud. She can do outreach to such groups and several attendees provided recommendations of groups that could benefit from her services.
  
9. **BUSINESS UPDATES: Alaska Railroad—Tim Sullivan** reminded that passenger service starts May 11. Work widening Christiansen Drive near the depot is progressing and is to be completed before the passenger service starts so that buses can have access. Also noted that the "gravel season" has started and warned folks of potential delays at the C street crossing.

**Port of Alaska—Jim Jager** on behalf of Sharen Walsh, indicated nothing new to report.

10. **COMMITTEE UPDATES: AMATS—Bob French** reports nothing new. Indicated nothing mentioned regarding Knik Crossing project.

**Parks—Bob French** will bring list of priorities to be considered at the May meeting. **Steve Gerlek** reported on the status of the trail on the West Side of the Hill. It was available for snow shoeing during the winter. The first two weeks of June, youth corps group will do work on the trail to make it closer to the standards currently below Harvard Avenue to make the trail walkable and bikeable. Work has been done and will continue to be done cleaning and hauling. No more tree cutting anticipated.

**Steve Gerlek** also reported on his personal effort (not a GHCC endeavor) to address spruce bark beetle issues. After walking the West side with two horticulturalists, diseased trees were identified. Steve was able to get a bid for a licensed entity, Greatland, to provide a reduced rate to provide service and a number of homeowners signed up. After clearing up confusion as to whether this had been an official GHCC effort, Steve made clear that others who had not known of this issue could contact Greatland to see if they could be included at the same rate. **Bob French** indicated he would bring the potential spruce bark beetle problem to the attention of the FCC.

11. **Community Thoughts: Port of Alaska Modernization Update—Scott Wharton**, who works for HDR, **Tanner Vetsch and Eris D of JMJV**, provided update of activities scheduled for this summer. Dredging in front of the cement dome will commence in May and run through August. This work will occur around the clock, six days a week. Riprap will be placed along the shoreline starting in June and running through the end of September. Timing of work will be dependant on tides. The South Floating Dock used by the Coast Guard will be relocated, involving the driving of 12 piles. This work will occur during daylight hours, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. and will last for two weeks toward the end of the summer.

Equipment for this work should be showing up at the start of May. All the work is south of the area used by the cruise ships so should not disrupt. Trucking in of the riprap material has already commenced and will increase during the summer. The only part of this work that should create noise will be the pile driving for the limited period noted. Given the location of all the work to be performed, there should be limited if any impact on residents of the Hill.

**Save Bristol Bay—Eric Booton** of Trout Unlimited, part of the Save Bristol Bay Coalition, made a presentation regarding the risks to Bristol Bay and the salmon habitat created by the proposed Pebble project. Eric discussed the value of the Bristol Bay fisheries and the risks to that fishery created by the Pebble project. He noted the permitting process is underway. Asserted that the review by the Army Corps of Engineers has not been vigorous, and that there is a short timeline for the review process. Claimed the EIS was inadequate, that the statements made to Alaska as to the scope of the project was different from information being provided to interests in the Lower Forty-Eight. Noted that 9 public hearings had just been completed and that 76% of those testifying opposed the project. Noted that the comment period is open until May 30 and that information regarding this issue can be found at [pebbleprojecteis.com](http://pebbleprojecteis.com) or [savebristolbay.org/take-action](http://savebristolbay.org/take-action).

**Resolution for water service to the Commons—Steve Gerlek** circulated a draft resolution by which GHCC would request that a portion of the bond funds approved for Government Hill Parks at the April 2019 election be used to pay for installation of water service to the Government Hill Common. **Stephanie Kesler** moved for approval. **Tom Brennan** seconded. Discussion regarding the need for the water service and that the commons can pay for the operation, but that it does not have the funds to pay for the installation of water service. **Peter Partnow** questioned whether the resolution should include language indicating GHCC support was based on the understanding and belief that the cost of installation of the service would be reasonable. **Stephanie Kesler** amended the proposed resolution to include language to indicate that the cost of installing water service would need to be presented to and approved by the GHCC executive committee. **Tom Brennan** seconded. **The resolution as amended approved by a 10 to 0 vote.**

**Mayor's Office Report—Catherine Kemp**, special assistant to the Mayor's Office, noted there will be free dump days on April 27 and May 4. Bike to workday will be May 17. Kids Day is this coming Saturday. Memorial Day Anchorage Remembers ceremony on the Park Strip. Mentioned the curbside composting that has been started by Solid Waste Services. Questions raised as to the nature of this new program and how it would work on Government Hill in light of bear issues. Request made to have someone from SWS as well as someone from Fish and Game to present regarding these issues at the May 2019 meeting. Bob French raised question regarding the announced community-policing program. It was requested that someone from APD, perhaps the person assigned to Government Hill, make presentation at the May 2019 meeting.

**Peter Partnow** questioned if there was interest in preparing and presenting a certificate of appreciation to Chris, who has been mailman for much of the Hill for a number of years.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

