

Birchwood Community Council

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AGENDA

Wednesday, September 9, 2020, 7-9 PM

Via Zoom: link to be sent day of meeting

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes -tabled until Oct

3. Announcements

- a) Zoom meeting procedures.
- b) Annual Muni notice of anticipated liquor license renewals: Liquor Locker, Pilot's Grill and Bear's Den were the ones listed in Birchwood.
- c) Planning case 2020-0122, routed to all councils, is a request to amend Title 21 to allow fence height of 10' around electrical substations. Planner is Collin Hodges. P&Z hearing date October 5; Council comments due Monday, Sep 14.
Debbie is absent for a bit –CERAB has issues coming up – someone will need to step in

4. Reports

- a) FCC Report: Matt Cruickshank: The board met today, and will be asking assembly to approve this coming year's budget. Insurance money for Community Councils is still included. They met last month, but there were no issues that haven't been in the news.
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report. There has been no meeting for the last couple of months. CIP resolution needs to be passed to them (from our June meeting). The new Glenn Highway bridge is now open. The State is considering at whether they are moving forward with Artillery road interchange, and should announce in a month or two.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report: <http://www.muni.org/Departments/ERparks/> No report.
- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board potential for sprinkler requirements – Patty Friend offers to go to the meeting on this. Crystal chimes in – it is a pretty big deal, affecting Chugiak, Eagle River Valley, potentially Girdwood and Hillside. Any home more than 600' from a fire hydrant would be required to have a sprinkler system. This can be very expensive. They may try to make it retroactive for small joint residences.
- e) Treasurer's report no report
- f) Tim Benningfield – CVFD - August: 91 responses. 727 for the year. Run volumes have been a bit lower than usual. People don't want to be in hospitals. They are using social distancing, screening when they come on duty. There are 112 members on roster; contributing 5526 hrs in July, about \$150,000 in savings to the community Introduces us to Dmitri Trahub?, Firefighter, EMT, long history of public service in family.
- g) Birchwood Patrol Report - no report. Gretchen recommends the facebook page as having good local info on not just crime but bears, etc.
- h) Legislative / Assembly reports
Deena Mitchell, is our council's Anchorage School District Board liaison. She will try to attend meetings, will send us their updates and her contact info. They are in the third week of school; they had planned on a hybrid model, but with numbers trending up, they are

2019-2020 board: Debbie Ossiander, Chair & CERAB rep; Gretchen Wehmhoff, Vice Chair and Secretary for Publicity; Lexi Hill, Secretary & Parks and Rec rep; Matt Cruickshank, FCC and Road Board rep; Patty Friend, Member at large; Val Jokela, Treasurer

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virtual only. The virtual/in-person decision is based on 14-day rolling average of new cases. They had hoped to go back to in-person school in September, but now numbers are going up again. Most students are doing virtual classroom. Especially for the youngest, it's really unfortunate. She's heard from parents that it's going 'well'. As soon as numbers start trending downward, her hope is that they can soon move into hybrid model. They are also worried about legislative funding as they are 4,000 students down and could face a \$26 million shortfall, while needing more, not fewer, resources to deal with covid. Crystal has one question – what are they thinking about the budget process for next year? Deena has not heard of any radically different approaches to budgeting. One request would be to base FY21 funding on last year's count, or the spring count. Buddy has a question for Deena – can they gain students in that count period (October). Deena feels that would be great, and would like to be optimistic, but it's really unknown. Some of the people registered their children out of ASD for the full year. Or until school is back to regular attendance. Buddy feels they should be looking at how to get the students back. – ask the 4,000 who have left. Especially ask those who haven't asked for records transfer.

Crystal: Community Patrol – recently there has been significant activity in ER/Chugiak – how do we balance public need to know with police tactical withholding of information?. Birchwood CP was aware, and stayed in a state of heightened awareness. Covid relief fund was approved by assembly; best place for answers is the muni website. There's a testing site in Eagle River now. Title 23 AO2020-85 updates pretty much the entire title. She's glad CERAB is involved, but wants to note they haven't always been able to advise as intended. For example., Carrol Creek development was rezoned into Assisted Living, but CERAB was left out at the end. Community Development Director will need to be reminded. The Public Safety committee is trying to be responsive to questions on police policy / racism. APD keeps a running list of issues and potential policy changes. She doesn't see the need for changes, but appreciates the transparency. Crystal's phone # is 351-1430. Matt asks Crystal about 4th patrol officer for Chugiak – what's the current staffing? She's been told that 'most of the time' we've got 2 in Chugiak, 2 in ER, but sometimes they have to pull one – usually from Chugiak.

Buddy Whitt for Sen. Hughes: The Legislature's priorities are budget and education. Budgeting is complicated by the Alaska Supreme Ct decision on HB331, ruling that bonding to pay oil tax credits is unconstitutional. So that adds to the budget challenge. He is here mostly to listen and take things back to his boss.

Sharon Jackson: There is a new company in Eagle River – Beechtree diagnostics - which is a toxicology lab that also does Covid testing. They will be hiring 50-150 local people. She hopes that having more tests available will help with fear, with getting kids back into school and the economy rolling.

5. Appearances:

- a) Shelly Wade – Birchwood Airport Master Plan update
They area at the start of the process, updating a 2005 Master Plan. This process is will include the airport layout plan, aeronautical survey (features, obstructions, nav aids), etc. The team is led by HDL engineering; her role is stakeholder engagement – Community Councils, neighbors, airport users, etc. Hopefully the plan will identify priority issues, as well as assess current conditions and needs, and forecast what the area will look like in the future. They are looking also at the feasibility of a public-private partnership for public ownership / private management of the airport. DOT&PF is overseeing the whole effort.

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It's critical to use this the opportunity for public, stakeholders, agencies, to see the potential to help the airport meet their needs. She's meeting with Chugiak CC as well as us. They are building a stakeholder advisory group (major land owners, user groups, including the Alaska RR, Birchwood Airport Association, CAP, Birchwood Shooting Park, Eklutna, Inc., Native Village of Eklutna, and other user groups tbd) for on-going consultation and review. Throughout the process, the group will develop components of the plan; She has a project flyer into the DoT project manager for approval, and then she can share it with us. In early 2022, they plan to have draft released for comment, and plan to complete the plan in Summer 2022. There will be 3 public meetings; the first is tentatively scheduled for January. She is happy to have us share her contact info if folks have questions they don't think of here. She'd like to know what are seen as strengths, positive attributes, challenges, and how do we see the airport area moving forward. Crystal: will this project do anything to define roles, responsibilities of actors in the functioning of the airport – eg state, muni, CBERRRSA). She gets question all the time of why people are paying municipal taxes when the state owns the airport. Clarification of jurisdiction would be very helpful. Matt: The biggest thing he sees affecting Birchwood CC is flight patterns, and he would be really concerned if they changed. Also, he' recommend extending the buffer zone at the end of the airport. Gretchen: to clarify – Birchwood CC not considered a stakeholder, correct? Bcc is not. Also, does the flyer include overview, contacts, timeline? It does. Is CVFD a stakeholder? Yes, they are. Why isn't BCC a stakeholder? She can bring that back to DoT. Ken McCarty agrees that BCC should be a stakeholder, and on the advisory group.

6. Old Business

- a) Parks Substation – Rod, Dan wrote up a resolution in support of asking MEA to move the substation site to 21740 Tarika Avenue. Rod offers to read through the resolution. Does he need to read it, in order to offer it for a vote next month? Gretchen clarifies that we will need to send it out to a broader group before action. For the purpose of discussion, Matt makes a motion to support the resolution before us. Karen Perry seconds. Rod notes that P&Z usually pays attention to CC's, because they are close to the issues being discussed. They would be happy to take anyone on a walking tour to see the issues on the ground. Rod also wants to add that moving the substation would take a lot good for little else – it's very noisy between a transmission line and the highway – and using it for something needed; as opposed to using a lot valuable for residence and affecting neighbors. We will vote on this at the October meeting. Gretchen also clarifies with Rod that P&Z asked the neighbors and MEA to work towards a resolution.

7. New Business

- a) Birchwood Airport Master Plan – Shelly Wade see above.
- b) Elections next month: Chair, Vice Chair, and Member at Large. Lexi nominates Patty Friend to continue as member at large. Friend to
- c) CERAB rep for while Debbie is out – Patty Friend

8. Open Forum-floor opened to public, any issue

9. Adjournment-9pm 8:51