

UACC MEETING MINUTES

March 3, 2021

- 1. Opening and Welcome and Introductions** - The meeting, via Zoom, was called to order by President Paul Stang at 7:00 pm. Al Milspaugh acted as host for the Zoom meeting. Al Milspaugh announced that the meeting will be recorded. These will be available via Zoom and Facebook apps, and as such no privacy should be expected. Al noted he will be moderating to prevent people from “bombing” the meeting. Paul said that the normal introductions would be suspended. There were 35 people present during portions of the meeting (Attachment 1).
- 2. Approval of Prior Months Minutes:** Al Milspaugh, with Marguerite Iverson seconding, moved to approve the February 3, 2021 minutes. The minutes were approved by vote.10/0/0.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda:** Paul Stang introduced tonight’s agenda. Mary Lu Harle moved to approve to the agenda, with Al Milspaugh seconding. The agenda was passed by vote of 14/0/0.

4. Informational Reports

A. Reports From Public Servants and Elected Officials

- 1. State Senator Bill Wielechowski:-** Bill discussed this year’s upcoming budget. He indicated that the Governor’s budget is essentially flat, with some cuts; particularly the cuts to the UA operating budget coming into effect. He indicated he will try to get these cuts rescinded. The States \$100 million Capital; budget will probably be passed, as it leverages over \$1 B in federal funds. He discussed the governor’s proposal to divide the Health and Social Services Department. He noted that the 106 page executive order would take effect in 60 days unless the legislature rejects the proposal.

Marguerite Iverson questioned what it would take to restore the States COVID-19 emergency order. Bill indicated that a bill to reintroduce the EO is stalled in the Senate and the Governor does not appear to support declaring an extension of the EO. Bill said this may lead to losing significant benefits, such as \$8M in SNAP funds. Al Milspaugh had a question about why car dealers appear to have access to personal information through State DMV sources. Bill said that he does not know the answer to that question and will get back to Al.

- 2. State Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson-** For details on Elvi Gray-Jackson’s remark’s please refer to her written report to UACC included in Attachment 2.

- 3. State Representative Andy Josephson:-** Andy indicated that the House is finally organized, and it is with a most narrow majority. He said he is working on a bill to impose 8 cents per gallon gasoline tax. It would go toward transportation infrastructure and spill prevention response. He discussed the possibility of a House bill supporting imposition of a new emergency order that would focus just on the health issues and no look at fiscal matters. Andy indicated the Governor isn't helping, first saying he needed a bill for an Emergency Order then saying that it isn't needed.
- 4. Rose Foley for Representative Ivy Sponholz:-** Rose noted that Ivy is Chair of the Special Committee on Ways and Means and they are looking at new revenue sources and well as efficiencies in State government as ways to meet the current budget shortfalls. She also said that Ivy is working with the Social Services Subcommittee to craft a bill that would allow for the continuance of the emergency declaration.
- 5. Assembly Chair Felix Rivera-** Felix said that the Assembly is considering an ordinance that codifies that the Assembly is the legislative body of the Municipal government. Currently, the assembly is now just a department of the municipal government. The city charter would be changed to reflect that the Assembly is the legislative branch and the mayor is the head of the administrative branch. He indicated that next Monday there will be a joint Assembly and Anchorage School Board (ASD) meeting to discuss the ASD budget. He also indicated that there may be a new round of COVID-19 stimulus funds, and the Assembly will need to make a deliberation on expenditures of these funds.

Marguerite Iverson commented that since many people in Anchorage have been vaccinated the Muni COVID-19 ordinance should allow for a higher capacity percentage limit while still keeping the mask requirement in place.
- 6. Assembly Member Pete Peterson-** Pete noted that due to retirement both the Anchorage Police and Fire Chief positions will be open. He also said that the municipal elections will also be by mail this year and that overseas ballots were mailed out last week. Other residents will receive theirs starting March 15th. To have a robust tourist season he felt that the Muni should stay with most of the current COVID-19 protocols. He also noted that middle and high school students would be back to in school learning after the spring break.
- 7. Assembly Member Meg Zaletel-** Meg is in travel status and was not able to attend the meeting.
- 8. Assembly Member Forrest Dunbar-** Forrest said the Emergency

Declaration runs to mid-April. He indicated that the attendant Emergency Order may be changed to reflect for allowing for a lessening of the capacity restriction for businesses, such as restaurants, while still retaining the mask and social distancing requirements. Another ordinance being considered would be one that shifts the power for emergency orders from the Mayor to the Assembly. He also said the plastic bag moratorium ordinance has been extended to August 31st, to allow for retailers to use up their inventory. He said there is \$35 M available for grants for rental relief, and if Muni gets second round of funds then they may be able to provide mortgage relief grants.

- 9. Margo Bellamy-Anchorage School Board (ASB)-** Margo said that the ASB will meet virtually tomorrow with the Assembly to present the Anchorage School District (ASD) budget. There will be a work governance and communication session on March 9th from 3:30 to 5:00 PM to discuss policies on racism and equity. There will be a couple of town hall meetings in the future to vet the policies developed. She noted that all staff will be fully vaccinated soon, with most having their first dose and many with their second dose. She noted that all students would be back in school on March 15th. She also said that travel guidelines for students returning from trips out of state require a 72 hour negative COVID-19 test, or they need to quarantine for 10 days before returning to school. She mentioned that ASD COVID-19 testing sites are free and open to the public. She indicated that the ASD will be hosting Women’s Month Activities this March. Finally, she hoped that people should support the ASD bonds on the April ballot. They deal mostly with the 2018 earthquake repair required at the Eagle River and Gruening Schools.

Marguerite Iverson questioned why the School Board is still meeting virtually, since all students and teachers will be back to in person learning after the school break. Margo replied that the school board meetings are a hybrid system, and it depends on the circumstances whether school board members attend in person or virtually. School Board members may attend ASB meetings virtually if they get approval of the School Board president.

- 10. UAA Representative Ryan Buchholdt-** Ryan indicated that the Board of Regents has extended the timeline for the Gymnastics and Hockey teams to come up with funds to support their teams. The Hockey team has until August to secure funding for their two years operation. Regardless, even if they secure the funding will not play this year. The gymnastics team has until June to secure 1 years funding. The University is also updating its mission statement to reflect the Dena’ina peoples and cultures whose an-

cestral land the University is situated on. He said that the University residential area is located on the banks of Chanshtnu (Chester Creek). He finally noted that the South Central Foundation is hosting a vaccine clinic for people 40 and older, both native and non-native individual may get an appointment.

B. UACC Board Reports

1. **Parks and Rec Committee- Steve Callaghan, Chair-** Steve reported on Title 17 issues, with dogs on lease on trails, parks, and sidewalks pretty much status quo. Parks department say they cannot enforce Title 17. As they have no authority, money, or personnel to do so. APD and Animal Control do not have staff to put significant enforcement effort into enforcement work, as there are other more high priority issues to deal with. Steve also attempted unsuccessfully to get answers from the Parks Department on problems with snow removal in Folker Park (snow berms blocking access to trails) and whether the new LED lights in Folker Park can be adjusted to cast light down rather than sideways into the homes of adjacent residences.

2. **Planning and Zoning Committee-Krista Scott- Chair:-** Krista discussed the opportunity for grant development for sustainable development. Such as grants for upgrading diesel buses to new technology. She is the point of contact for grant development with the UACC. Al Milspaugh noted that grants need to be run through the FCC.

3. **Safety Committee-Al Milspaugh:-** Al Milspaugh reported that NIXLE is the main gateway where one may find out activities that are occurring in the our area. He emphasized one should report suspicious activity within the neighborhood to the Anchorage Police Department.

C. FCC Representative -Al Milspaugh:- Al said that the “green” cards, for Municipality property taxes, will be coming out soon. They include instructions on how to contest the assessed value done by the Municipality. Al said that he is the FCC Zoom outreach representative. He will host training sessions on Zoom dealing with moderator and host responsibilities.

5. Old Business- UACC Comments (AMATS non-Motorized Plan):- Steven Callaghan

Steve presented the summary of comments from the University Area Community Council regarding the AMATS non-Motorized Transportation Plan. He highlighted the question of what funding mechanisms would be used to fund this ambitious effort. He also emphasized the UACC priority of the Pedestrian Safety Improvement in Tudor Road and Piper Street area. The also said the

comments focus on the question about how conflict between various types of non-motorized users can be minimized. DOT needs to look at other areas outside Anchorage for examples of how to minimized potential conflicts.

Krista Scott, with Steve Zemke seconding, moved to approve the comments as written. UACC approved the comments on vote of 15 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.

6. New Business and Public Comment

A. Pedestrian Crossing: Tudor Rd & Wright St Options:- Scott Thomas, AK DOT-Central Region Traffic & Safety Engineer and Zak Hartmann, Designer, Lighting Project

Scott and Zak were here to discuss the DOT plans for improvement of the vehicle/pedestrian situation in the East Tudor Road corridor from Piper Street to Lake Otis Pkwy. Paul Stang noted Tudor Road has long been on UACC's list as a problem that needs to be addressed. There have been over 5 pedestrian fatalities in the last 20 years in the area, as well as many more accidents. Scott discussed the project proposals to address these issues that are being developed by the AMATS Technical Committee to be brought forward into the AMATS Plan. Tudor Road Pedestrian safety was listed in the 2007 AMATS Plan, but the newer project proposals will be brought forward for the new plan. As a comparison, Scott noted that the Bragaw crossing of the Glenn Highway had a similar fatality rate as the Tudor Road, even though there was a pedestrian bridge over the highway. It was not until the new interchange was created, with an underpass under the Glenn and sidewalks on the large Bragaw overpass did fatalities drop.

There are about \$28 million in DOT and \$2 M for pedestrian related projects available area wide in the next 5 years, so some funding may be available to help ameliorate the Tudor problem. Scott went over some of the types of projects considered that might enhance to the safety of pedestrian crossings in the Tudor corridor.

The first was to reduce the overall traffic number on Tudor through the connection of through traffic on Elmore Road. The second is better lighting of the Tudor Road corridor. This project is scheduled to be completed this year. It primarily is the replacement of the current high pressure sodium lighting with LED fixtures along Tudor, from Piper to Lake Otis. There will be two LED fixtures per pole with better focus of the lighting on the road and sidewalks. This will result in twice the light and will save money on maintenance and operation costs. Al Milspaugh noted that increased lighting may lead to an increase in driver speed during winter months. He also had a question about whether this lighting will make the roadway and possibly pedestrians within the roadway more visible.

Another alternative to be considered would provide median infill with some type of pedestrian crossing. This would have impact on traffic flow, and could constrict access to commercial facilities. Also, if a signal was used for pedestrian crossings, then the signals might be too close together, and significantly restrict traffic flow.

Another proposal could be a pedestrian bridge. Francis Seater, who has lived many years in the area, felt that this might be a viable option to get pedestrians safely across Tudor in the area of Wright Street. This has problems associated with getting people to use the bridge, long term maintenance problems, and may require taking out streets or businesses to fit.

There was also a proposal that would create an Urban Safety Zone where there would be double fines for traffic infractions. This may lead to better adherence to the speed limit in the area. Ryan Buchholdt noted that there needs to be some pedestrian present warning signs in the neighborhood of Piper Street. Along with more stringent enforcement of regulations might lead to better traffic calming. Mary Lu Harle felt that the 45 mph limit west of Piper is too high and should be reduced to 35 or 40 mph. There was considerable discussion about the need to lower the speed limit on Tudor from the Tudor/Muldoon curve. It was felt that the 50 mph speed from Patterson to Elmore, and then 45 from Elmore to Lake Otis may lead to excessive speed (not safe for traffic conditions) on Tudor west of Piper Street which creates a situation which is not conducive for pedestrians to cross safely. Scott Stansbury noted that impairment with pedestrians and/or drivers frequently leads to the fatal accidents. Excessive speed exacerbates this situation.

The next up might be a complete rebuild of Tudor Road using urban traffic calming features, such as chicanes, limiting left turns, and establishing multiple pedestrian crossings. This would require at least ten years to plan and complete and would be very expensive.

Another option would be to change land use patterns, so similar businesses would be located on the same side of the street to minimize the need for pedestrians to cross. Pedestrians would be focused to cross at established crossing areas and fencing might be required. Krista Scott noted that the DOT should work with the Municipality on design requirements for permits if the changes to B3 land use zones to allow for homeless facilities are allowed. This might lessen the problem with unrestricted pedestrian access in these potentially high use developments.

Finally, Paul Stang inquired about when the UACC comments should be presented to the AMATS Committee. Scott felt that there's a couple of months to respond. The design will come in the next 6 to 10 months.

B. Virtual Mayoral Candidates Forum for East Anchorage Community Forum 3/8/21

President Paul Stang announced there would be a virtual forum to be held for east Anchorage mayoral candidates via Zoom on March 8th from 7 to 9 PM. The zoom link will be sent out to community council members via email.

7.Public Comments/Open Dialog- Candidates for School Board Seats

a. Carl Jacobs for School Board Seat G. Carl presented why his experience and program emphasis would be important as a member of the ASD School Board. More information go to:

<https://www.carl4anchorage.com/>

b. Sami Graham for School Board Seat E-. Sami presented why her experience and program emphasis would be important as a member of the ASD School Board. More information go to:

<https://www.samigraham.com/>

c. Dora Wilson for School Board Seat F:- Dora presented why her experience and program emphasis would be important as a member of the ASD School Board. More information go to:

<https://dorawilsonforschoolboard.com/>

d. Pat Higgins for School Board Seat F;- Pat presented why his experience and program emphasis would be important as a member of the ASD School Board. More information go to:

<https://www.pathigginsforschoolboard.com/>

e. Edgar Batchford for School Board Seat E: Edgar presented why his experience and program emphasis would be important as a member of the ASD School Board. More information go to:

Edgaredkids2021@gmail.com

8.Adjournment: Krista Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Joanie Nardini seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent around 9:00 pm.

Signed

Paul R. Stang, UACC President

Attachment 1- March 3, 2021 Attendance Log

Name	Affiliation
Al Milspaugh	Vice President
Steve Zemke	Secretary/Treasurer
Paul Stang	President
Steve Callaghan	P&R Chair
Joanie Nardini	Member at Large
Krista Scott	P&Z Chair
Assemblyman Felix Rivera	Visitor
Marguerite Iverson	Member
Ryan Buchholdt	Member
Kate Wedemeyer	Member
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson	Visitor
Representative Andy Josephson	Visitor
Senator Bill Wielechowski	Visitor
Barbara Garner	Member
Hannah Davis	Member
Annie Collie	P&Z member
Assemblyman Forrest Dunbar	Visitor
Mary Lu Harle	Member
Susan Klein	Member
Scott Stansbury	Visitor
Assemblyman Pete Peterson	Visitor
School Board Member Margo Bellamy	Visitor
Susan Share	Member
Dora Wilson	Visitor
Nathanial Grebman	Visitor
Bryon Silva	Member
Francis Seater	Member
Sami Graham	Visitor
Carl Jacobs for Ivy Sponholz	Visitor
Zak Hartmann	Visitor
David Walberg	Visitor
Scott Thomas	Visitor
Dustin Sherman	Visitor
Edgar Blatchford	Visitor

Attachment 2



**Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
University Area Community Council
March 3, 2021**

March is Women's History Month

- Women's History Month is an annual declared month that highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society, corresponding with International Women's Day on March 8th.

The theme for 2021 is: "A challenged world is an alert world. Individually, we are all responsible for our own thoughts and actions-all day, every day."

Committee Hearing

- Senate Bill 7, "An act requiring the Department of Public Safety to publish certain policies and procedures on the department's internet website" is scheduled to be heard in the State Affairs Committee on Thursday March 4th at 3:30. You can visit the AKleg.gov website or reach out to the Anchorage LIO Office at 269-0111 to receive information on testifying.

Capital Projects

- If there are any projects that the community council would like us to submit for entry into CAPSIS (Capital Project Submission & Information System), please let us. We have until the March 15th deadline.

How to Stay Informed

- During the session, you can tune into the Capitol happenings by watching Gavel to Gavel, my Senator Elvi Facebook and Twitter pages and, of course, by reviewing my monthly newsletters.

If you are not receiving my monthly newsletter, please let us know.

Session: 907-465-4930 // Email: Keith.Bauguess@akleg.gov or Besse.Odom@akleg.gov

**University Area Community Council
Sen. Gray- Jackson's Notes**