

Minutes
BIRCHWOOD Community Council
Wednesday, November 10, 2021, 7-9 PM

1. Call to Order 7:03

2. Approval of previous Minutes - approved

3. Announcements

- a) Three Bears is applying to change their liquor license.
- b) UAA is beginning an update to the Campus Facilities Master Plan and would like your participation. Community Information Forum on November 15th, 5:30-7pm
- c) Notice of Draft Title 17 Changes to Adoption Exceptions and Requirements

4. Reports

- a) FCC Report: Matt Cruickshank – Matt will step down and needs a replacement
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report – Gretchen reports on her conversation with CHS principal. Traffic issues for them got much less when ERHS opened and CHS enrollment declined – they are at 870 kids. They had not heard our specific issues about seminar kids crossing Birchwood (this year only 60 – 15 each in periods 1,2,5,6). She would like a crosswalk with a button, but not right at the highway; a separate entrance into the student parking area. She noted that when the people visited her, they said they were doing a traffic study but did not mention the problems that we had raised. Continued communication could be helpful so that we can understand each other's issues and work on solutions. PTS is the firm that did Eagle River traffic mitigation study about 10 years ago. They were never able to make the linkage to downtown Eagle River – now there will be a new study. There is about \$3 million out of the \$8 million originally there, and they will focus on Centerfield. Once they figure that out, they can work on Artillery and then everything else.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report (Barbara Trost) Karen Richards is back; because the ongoing issues were a personnel matter, that is all we know. Eklutna has a proposed easement route from the inbound Mirror Lake exit west across Edmonds/Mirror Lake Park to access Eklutna land nearer the inlet. When the Municipality traded for land to create the Mt. Baldy trailhead, we promised an easement. This route seems reasonable, but Parks and Rec will continue to discuss.
- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board no report
- e) Treasurer's report \$277. We have not used our \$70/yr. from FCC yet; it could be used for this year's PO Box fee
- f) Tim Benningfield – CVFD Currently they have 115 volunteer members, and 49,035 hours volunteered this year. New estimates of the value of volunteer hours are \$30.30/hr., so CVFRD saves the community about \$1.8 million this year. There have been 961 calls in 2021 as of Nov 10th. They are replacing their training coordinator, as the current one is retiring. They will have two sharing duties, and those will also help with daytime EMS response. Chris Wilkins has been the only training coordinator for 7 years; he is stepping down at end of year, but will become one of the two part time coordinators, and they will hire a second – each will work 2 days/week.

- g) Birchwood Patrol Report - none
- h) Birchwood Airport Master Plan – Public Meeting #2 was October 27, 2021. Ken McCarty joined the meeting and brought up the same points he discussed with us last month - he did a great job presenting. Next Steps – spring or early summer – there will be a draft plan, presented at a third public meeting and put out for public comment. There are still questions about where the money is coming from / going. They are still talking about shortening / narrowing the runway; or they may use a different process to keep the current configuration. Gretchen asks about shortening the runway – is that still in play? That’s where the modification of standards came in – no one wanted a shorter runway and that may help to avoid that outcome.
- i) Legislative / Assembly reports: Pat Higgins ASD: Deena Bishop will retire this June. The board will be working on selecting a new Superintendent this year. They will reach out with an opinion survey. They will hire a search firm. They are also working on a bond; it looks like they will keep it near the amount that’s being retired. Deferred Maintenance is a challenge, there is a lot. Labor Negotiations are also a challenge. State base student allocation has been flat since 2017; the municipal contribution is indexed to that, so has also been flat. Staffing is a problem – bus drivers and everything else. He was asked how bus drivers are paid – the district has support from federal and state governments. Not knowing when they would be open made retention of bus drivers especially problematic. Debbie asks if Pat heard Gretchen’s report of her conversation with the CHS principal. She fills him in, and notes that the principal reports people aren’t talking to her. We recommend Pat talk to Gretchen before talking to the principal. Shelly Hughes was at Butte CC, now here. She knows there’s frustration with the Legislature not getting things moved forward. Their committee structure lets just a few people keep things from moving forward. So, the fiscal plan with support of 50 of 60 legislators couldn’t move forward. She is as frustrated as we are. She doesn’t think things will move forward in the next session either, and single primary / ranked choice voting will also debut next year. And it will be a gubernatorial election. Also, every 10 years people are asked if there should be a state constitutional convention. This might get more support than usual this year. Redistricting – the new district boundaries (takes effect in 2023) would not include the Chugiak Peters Creek Birchwood Eklutna area in her district. Debbie has heard the redistricting will likely go to court – can Shelly comment on that. The Census was 8 months behind schedule, which makes injunctions over the lines harder to get, because of deadlines. Lawsuits may keep the redistricting from happening in 2022; but it will likely be settled by 2024. Matt asks about an injunction around the senate pairing of house districts. She thinks the pairings for Eagle River are odd - they split the two adjacent house seats. Another challenge will come from Valdez, who is paired differently. Also, she notes that the deviation from average population (2.5%) was more on the high side for fast growing areas and low side for slow-growing areas – the opposite of what you’d expect. Gretchen asks, who makes the redistricting challenges? Individual citizens can; the city of Valdez may; many different individuals or groups.

5. Appearances:

- a) Alexandra Peters - AK Child & Family – speaks on Foster Parenting
Alaska Child and Family has a couple of residential care facilities; one of her roles is trying to place children coming out of residential care into foster homes. There are many children

and way too few homes. Gretchen asks if kids are in residential care just because they are waiting for homes or because they are recovering from their circumstances. Some of both. Placements can last from a few weeks to several years. For more information, go to www.akchild.org or call 907-792-4128 for Fannie Richardson

Joy Boston – JBER – asks us to thank a veteran tomorrow. The JBER historian has created a JBER history app at <https://www.jber.jb.mil/Info/History/> or link to the Historian's page from the JBER Connect app <http://apps.appmachine.com/jberconnect...>

For any Tricare beneficiaries – there will be a pharmacy change on Dec 15 – Walmart will no longer be in the Tricare family, but CVS will be in. CVS has no stand-alone pharmacies here, but they are in Target. The Air Force recruiting service will have an AIM High flight academy this summer for students aged 16-23. It is fully funded – transportation, room, board and 15 hours of flight instruction. The deadline for applications is Dec 15. Also, their finance and budget office will have two internship opportunities next summer for student in bachelor's or master's programs.

6. Old Business

a) HALO motion – Debbie Ossiander

Debbie gives background – we discuss whether we should share this with other CC's. We could; Debbie thinks we should go on record with this. Debbie moves we adopt the resolution. Val seconds. No objections – resolution is approved. Debbie will send it out.

7. New Business

a) Resignation of Matt Cruickshank as FCC Delegate (covered in FCC). We need to replace him – it's not an election position like Chair or Secretary – we can just select someone.

b) Recruitment of BCC Officers: Gretchen notes that Patty drafted a good email; we all like it and should send it out. Gretchen will put it on Facebook. Matt will send out the email, and he asks if it was posted on NextDoor (yes). Patty is happy to be a POC on this. Gretchen notes that Craigslist has a volunteer job section. Patty will look into it.

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

Hunkie Lee (US Senate Candidate) – independent - introduces himself. He spent 4 years in Army, then moved here from Ann Arbor 6 years ago after law school; he has been a lawyer here for 3 years.

9. Adjournment- 8:25