

**Birchwood Community Council**  
**P.O. Box 670984, Chugiak, AK 99567-0984**  
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(via Zoom link on Birchwood Council/FCC website)

**Minutes**

**BIRCHWOOD Community Council**  
Wednesday February 9, 2022, 7-9 PM

1. **Call to Order- 7:05**
2. **Approval of previous minutes- Motion to approve-Patty, Second-Gretchen**
3. **Announcements:**
  - a) Request from Eagle River Community Council re: possible variance for commercial business for sale of marijuana in downtown Eagle River.
  - b) JBER Range Activity Feb-March firing .50 cal on Grezelka range and it has an effect on Arctic Valley Road: Grezelka Hours: Feb 8-10 8AM-11PM, March 1 8AM-11PM, March 8-10 8AM-11PM, March 14-16 8AM-11PM. There will be road guards posted at barriers to allow periodic traffic. Military training will be conducted for 105mm Howitzers and 81mm mortar. Feb 8 8AM-8PM, Feb 15-17 8AM-8PM and March 7-14 7:30AM-8PM. For noise complaints email: [jber.pa@us.af.mil](mailto:jber.pa@us.af.mil) or call 907-552-5387. Appreciate Joy's heads up.
  - c) Reorganized reports into internal and external reports. External reports will have a time limitation of 5 minutes. We are working towards making the meetings more efficient. Can contact ahead of time, if more time is needed.
  - d) Transfer of Birchwood Airport from SOA to MOA announced February 9, 2022. Dan Saddler stated there is a meeting 6:30 Friday evening at Birchwood Airport
4. **Internal Reports**
  - a) FCC Report-Gretchen-shared BCC 2201-1 resolution update. FCC is looking for a new VP. FCC complimented Matt on running a great meeting.
  - b) CBERRSA Road Board Report- Val- Board voted to keep the mil rate at 1.92 and to initiate a vehicle replacement program for vehicles at 90K. MOA does not any longer pay for the vehicles
  - c) Parks and Recreation Report: Barbara Trost-budget was moved to the March meeting for approval. Dog park is in design and there is another meeting for final plans. Mirror Lake land exchange will take place February 14. Will access park land near Edmunds Lake. There will be a public right away up into Eklutna property off of the Mirror Lake exit with Eklutna giving access to Baldy.
  - d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Patty Friend-Will be meeting Feb 19 at 1200 on ADU's and maybe bylaws and the possibility of a variance for a marijuana retail store.
  - e) Treasurer's Report-\$277.00
  - f) Birchwood Patrol Report-Jeff back in AK. Patrol officer will come to our next in person meeting.
  - g) Birchwood Airport Master Plan: Val Jokela. The comment period was extended to February 4

2021-2022 board: Debbie Ossiander, Co-Chair, Matt Cruickshank, Co-Chair, Road Board rep, Gretchen Wehmhoff, Secretary for Publicity, FCC rep, Barbara Trost, Parks and Rec rep, Patty Friend, Member at large, Val Jokela, Secretary-Treasurer

## **5. External Reports**

a) CVFD: Tim Benningfield-Not in attendance

b) Legislative/Assembly/State/School Board reports

Eugene Harnett Representative McCarty aide: Rep McCarty working on bills HB 53 to limit PFD to military with intent to return to AK. HB 108-vocational education bill for schools. SOA DOT intend to transfer Birchwood Airport to the MOA. Request that Rep McCarty speak with Brian Anderson, SOA engineer and John Bender, SOA DOT/PF Deputy Commissioner.

Pat Higgins: AK association of school boards meet this week-end in JNU. Several agenda items: foundation formula-get the standards we need to get. Flat funding. Federal funds are helping presently. Sept 2024 must spend the money. Did not have enough funds when developed in 1999. COST of living Mat-Su 7% and Kenai 14% more than ANC which based upon 1999 funding. Reading and math prof low. Need to do some curriculum changes and proactive funding. Commitment to student wellness and safety. Hoping for support from Assembly after July 1. Need to get grad rates up. 2<sup>nd</sup> week in March look at candidate applications for Superintendent.

## **6. Appearances**

a) Gretchen Wehmhoff-running for Assembly District 2-Seat A. Website: teamGretchen.com

## **7. Old Business**

a) EagleExit Briefing-Sean Murphy unable to complete because of connectivity

b) FCC representative-Gretchen is interested. Will only be able to give a streamlined report. Val made a motion for Gretchen to be our FCC rep and Patty seconded. FCC policy—can't speak at meeting, but can report back to BCC, if running for office.

## **8. New Business**

a) Potential reapportionment for Birchwood Council area-Matt Cruickshank-Reapportionment is in process-sharing information, at this point. Fall 2021-committee formed of 6 assembly members. Recommend to assembly for new boundaries and thence adopted. Public process- voters passed to have 12 assembly members. Downtown district needs additional folks to populate area. All districts must be relatively balanced. Additional rep to district 1 is needed. Crystal reported that the reapportionment committee is now considering 4 maps instead of 10. Map 6 version 2 known as the Anchorage Action V-2, Map 7 version 2 known as the Robert Hockema V-2, Map 8 known as the Alaskans for Fair Redistricting and Map10 known as the Denny Wells Map B. The next Reapportionment Committee meeting is February 14 from 9-12:00. There are 2 public meetings: February 24 and March 1, 2022. A decision could be made March 1. Discussion about whether to call for a Special Meeting or Emergency Question took place. It was decided that it would be better to hold a special meeting February 16, 2022 at 7PM to vote on the Resolution, and via our ByLaws the President can do that. An email to all Birchwood CC members with the attached Resolution needs to be sent out 6 days in advance of the Special Meeting in accordance with Birchwood CC By-Laws. Val to send out resolution to members on Thursday February 10. The Resolution stated: "The Birchwood Community Council resolves that the Assembly extend the public testimony for 2021 district reapportionment 30 days to allow community councils to discuss the current reapportionment maps within the restraints of their bylaws."

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b) Resolution requesting the Assembly uphold Title 21, Chapter 10 Table 21.10-4-allowed land uses in Chugiak-Eagle River in regards to a proposed commercial retail marijuana establishment in Eagle River CE-B-3 district is being developed by Patty. Crystal went to the planning dept and there is no room in code for a marijuana business in B-3. There are 3 Commercial zones in Chapter 10 for Eagle River-Chugiak. The draft resolution was introduced and read. It will be voted on at the March 9 meeting. It will be sent out to our members. Ben Westveer suggested adding wording from ERCC. Whereas—last one from ERCC add to our resolution. Crystal stated it needs to be sent to the SOA AMCO board making it clear we flat out opposing the licensing of the establishment. Assembly will not see it at this point. Want to make sure sentiments known by state board. Barbara stated it is not in our council area...support it or stay out be careful. ERCC asking for our assistance should go into resolution. Representative Ken McCarty: HB 289 create MJ task force...issue of CC's having a say in matter. Honor communities and honor the Comp Plan. It would be a violation of title 21, as it is not supported in the table of Commercial land uses. This is in front of state, and not MOA, yet. Around title 21...reinforcing what MOA is doing. It is not just an Eagle River issue. Dan Saddler stated that the proposed location at 12111 Horseshoe Drive is a blatant disregard of Chapter 10 of Title 21 Land uses for Commercial CE-B-3. Friendly amendment by Ben...added to Patty's motion, Gretchen second. Patty stated the theme is we support the land use code. Whereas ERCC requested our support... Gretchen. Second whereas. Within 1000 feet of 3 churches. BCC resolves to oppose in support of ERCC. Added 10 minutes...to meeting...Ken McCarty stated it is a home rule of authority. SOA recognizes sovereignty State recognizes established rules that are on the books and should honor.

- 9. Open Forum**-Dan Saddler running for an open seat with no incumbent running for seat. Rep McCarty stated the mayor is very involved with Birchwood Airport and is interested in using the Industrial park for storage, and food security and using the RR. In district Friday. Running for Senate. Ben Westveer asked when we would meet in person? Sentiment right now is to meet via zoom. We can return to chalet. What is threshold we can tolerate? Hybrid meetings maybe for awhile.

**10. Adjournment:** 9:28 PM