

# Birchwood Community Council

P.O. Box 670984 • Chugiak, AK 99567-0984  
birchwoodcouncil@gmail.com

## Minutes

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 7-9 PM

Meeting held over Zoom

1. **Call to Order:** 7:03 PM
2. **Approval of February 2021 Minutes:** Moved by Debbie, Patty seconded for all 3, February 9<sup>th</sup>, February 16 and March 1 Special Minutes- approved with no objections
3. **Announcements:**
  - a) Request from Eagle River Community Council re: possible variance for commercial business for sale of marijuana in downtown Eagle River-follow up. March 1, BCC held a special meeting and passed a resolution in opposition to a retail marijuana business in a CE-B-3 district and sent it to AMCO and assembly members as well the Eagle River Community Council.
  - b) Reapportionment public hearing: March 15: Process: March 1 Map 11, version 2 was proposed, March 7 amendments, March 14: final amendments. Final vote is March 23.
  - c) Streamlining processes-Matt Cruickshank/Debbie Ossiander-lots of time sensitive items..good faith previous meeting. Looked at by-laws...only have 6-day notice. Bylaw changes need to be posted on community BB and to members. 6-day notice requirement for actionable item and on agenda 6 days in advance.
  - d) JBER Range activity March 2022: Grezeilka firing .50 cal-March 1: 8AM-11PM, March 8-10: 8AM-4AM-There will be road guards posted at barriers to allow traffic flow re: Arctic Valley Road. H.A.M.M.R. March 18-23: 8AM-11PM. Military training will be conducted: March 8: 105mm Howitzer March 8: 8AM-8PM, 120mm Mortar March 11-12: 8AM-8PM, 81mm Mortar March 14: 8AM-11PM 105mm Howitzer March 15-17: 8AM-8PM. For noise complaints email: [jber.pa@us.af.mil](mailto:jber.pa@us.af.mil) or call 907-552-5387. Thanks to Joy for keeping us up to date.
  - e) 30-day comment period open March 1-31: 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Performance Measures and Project Prioritization Criteria. Go to AMATS2050MTP website. Has to go out 20 plus years. How all projects are ranked and how placed on 2050 MTP.
  - f) 30-day comment period open March 1-31: AMATS 2019-2022 Amendment #3 of the TIPS program TPS 35M annually. How AMATS funds different programs and it lasts 3 years. No projects specifically added. Moved budgetary figures

## 4. Reports

- a) FCC Report: Gretchen Wehmhoff: meeting is next week Daniel George-Chair and Linda Chase vice chair. Increased pay for council staff. MTP performance measurements. Homeless June 30 end date for the Sullivan Arena. Most Chugiak and Eagle River CC's addressed the potential marijuana retail business and actions taken. Extended hearing for reapportionment 2 weeks. Chair post minutes from CERAB on FCC.
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report: Matt Cruickshank: Prelim look at Hilcrest intersection study: Not full study. First direct feedback from RPKA. 3 intersections used to eval metrics. 3 is Hilcrest and 7 being entrance to CHS. Problem intersection 3. No mitigation for PEDS. Scope did list Peds, so will go back and look at peds \$100K allotted for this study and to date used \$20K.. 3 plans: Alternative #1: add 3 entrances: Intersection 2-Hillcrest and S. Birchwood, Intersection 7 student and bus entrance, intersection 7 CHS exit and intersection 30 a new CHS entrance for staff and parent dropoff. Alternative #2: relocate Hillcrest north- not much gain and it does not mitigate ped issues, and Barbara Trost said it does not solve problem of getting out of the neighborhood in the AM. Still have same issue. neighborhood. Might take some park

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

## Birchwood Community Council

lands. Alternative #3-is a roundabout which does not have CBERSSA funding. Have to get on State Transportation plan, and it does not deal with peds crossing street. Gretchen-heard from folks-crossing street and talked with kids, and the Principal of CHS has great ideas for entrance and exits from CHS. Cross walk is hard to walk across circle. Maybe a bridge—maybe funding from church, too. Principal did not feel her input was considered. Barb noted that the roundabout is good for vehicles. Maybe a tunnel underground? Kids will take shortest path. Alternative#4 is to take no action—leave as is. The Powerpoint will be available outside the meeting, but it is not close to being finished or final. Barb-getting an account from church—17 kids. Growth will fluctuate. School numbers down from 2K to 1K due to COVID. Using student numbers from 2019. Except the numbers for this study used this year's numbers. Church classes 4X per day, so maybe there are more than 17 kids total...could be 17x4 times per day.

- c) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Debbie Ossiander: 3 items on agenda-look at bylaws given the go-ahead to use as adopted. The proposed marijuana retail store which is mostly opposed, and ADU's looked at current code language---how many folks live in an ADU, where are they placed, and how large could they be?. If lots 2 acres or more, ok? Birchwood has lots of properties with multiple small bldgs. Girdwood just did change ADU's in their section of Title 21 and want to make them more available to people. Frustrated with lack of support from city on Chapter 10.
- d) Parks and Rec: Barbara Trost: Dealing with budget. Next meeting vote on budget. Most of money to go for big ticket items: parks and rec maintenance facilities and CHS pool. Set aside \$\$ for Edmonds Lake Mirror Lake easement P&R signed off on the paperwork. Already part of agreement on land swap for parking at Baldy.
- e) Treasurer's report: Val Jokela: \$277.00
- f) Tim Benningfield-no report
- g) Birchwood Patrol Report: no issues from Jeff
- h) Birchwood Airport Master Plan: Val Jokela: Pilot meeting Feb 11, and the Birchwood Airport Association was totally unaware. Also contacted the planners and we are still on course to continue with the Master Plan process. Gretchen: sent mx to assembly members: 1 group is working with Mayors group-Bill Starr working on this. Bill worked thru Mayor and thought everyone was coordinated with. No one did the communication well. Bill consulting for Mayor's office. Comm with stakeholders not done. Dan Saddler: did attend meeting—Lars Gleitzman also ran the meeting with Ken McCarty and feel like they were ambushed by process-lead astray from master planning! Birchwood Airport Association has their own survey. Speculation about what might be in store for the airport. Who benefits-Barb Trost: Why would the state give it up a money- making airport? SOA has 200 some rural airports...just like to lighten the load—focus attention on rural airports, city might expand managing Merrill and allow the city allow for more input at the local level. Vanessa Stephens-father is a pilot and caught off guard. There isn't a comprehensive pilot list. Brice Wilbanks-has captured some questions—not interested in Girdwood. Increasing other business at Birchwood Airport such as flight schools moving out here.
- i) Legislative/Assembly/School Board and other reports:  
**Carl Jacobs: ASD-board approved larger labor contracts for teachers and supportive staff-3 years in length, superintendent update-applications closed-23 qualified, will conduct interviews with finalists. 1600 surveys—internal and external surveys. School**

## Birchwood Community Council

Bond prop #1-roofs, value to tax payers, as it is maintenance oriented. ASD has Connect newsletter. 30 campuses impacted. Debbie-make a point to get pdf to Carl about CHS traffic issues. Board met with Anchorage assembly and discussed dangerous crossing at various schools. Will add CHS to list.

**Crystal:** announcements: elections to get ballots in mail by March 15: vote early to be sure ballot gets in on time to verify signature. Mail or use drop boxes. Assessable voting center behind library open M-F 8-6. Info on election page on the muni website along with a sample ballot. Other bonds on ballot: facilities area wide upgrades, public transit bond in with community area wide. Debbie noted the City took all buses away from Chugiak-Eagle River so why vote for rest of city? Process-ballot tracking—go to muni elections webpage—page for elections—track your ballot---anchoragevotes.com. You can tell if your ballot passed the signature process. Reapportionment-struggling through public hearing process. Appreciates BCC support. Public hearing March 15. Narrowed to map #11—amendments process open to that map. Not connected to Girdwood. Took out Hillside area. Map 11-John Weddleton keeps JBER with ER, gets rid of Muldoon, which goes back with district 5. Does what is good for Chugiak Eagle River. Matt-worried about amendments---public can't see amendments until 14<sup>th</sup> and vote on the 15th. At least this way can see the changes ahead of time. Public testimony on 15 is important. Week after vote by assembly---if there is a major change, have to take it up. Assembly sticking to what is designed. Thank you to Crystal—great communication. Ombudsman asked for money for CERAB.

**Eugene Harnett:** watching Birchwood Airport—why state get rid of capsule money for septic at the airport? Working on Lions Park. Matt-adopted request for reps to find funding for Starner Bridge-alternative route closed with ice bridge obligation to 4 house holds across the bridge. Asking for help for additional funding. It was \$700K and now probably \$1.2 M. Capsus deadline passed this year. Gretchen to check in with Senator Hughes to see what they have done already for bridge. New districts—bridge is in district 12. Crystal: noted Starner is also on Mayor's radar—legislative priorities. Brice: budget \$1.2 committed from the Mayor's office

**Brice Wilbanks:** CERAB: alternate send meeting minutes to Brice. Overview Birchwood Airport-still early intro stages. Friday change over name dept state and federal funding. FAA can't take money looking for other airports. Why: SOA approached MOA. SOA over 200 airports in system...streamline development, more local control. Cash positive airport. Events: women history month March 15, women in govt March 17, fireside chat anchorage. Senior Citizen tax exemption due March 15. Look for ballot. Gretchen: important purchase occurred without checking in with local residents. What if people don't want the airport to have more traffic. Think of ANC and their extension of runway. Concerned with Eklutna casino—made it clear desire different flight patterns to Birchwood to bring folks in. Matt concerned about traffic patterns. Eklutna casino—no statement re casino. Vanessa-if come in managed better? What would those be? Streamline for SOA. Community involvement is critical. Barb-add onto Gretchen concern about traffic to and from airport. Don't want more traffic. Sounds like more commercial use. More traffic down north BCV. Val-no changes was made very clear by all the stakeholders participating in the Birchwood Airport Master Plan. This is totally contrary to the desires of the community as a whole. Where is the funding coming from, what does it cost to manage and run Merrill Field which should

# **Birchwood Community Council**

give a picture of the costs that may be dumped on the Eagle River-Chugiak communities. This process lacks transparency.

**Joy Boston:** mask mandate is lifted except military medical and dentist. Exercise Arctic Edge is taking place Feb 28 through March 17th and Polar Force exercise will run March 28-April 8. There will be 2 booths at the Great Ak Sportsman Show—Joy will be there with a booth April 1-3. National unaccompanied Vet's cemetery is open to the public the last Wednesday of each month at 2:30.

**5. Appearances-none**

**6. Old Business:**

- a. Alternate to CERAB-Debbie's appt so long ago—she moved to appoint herself, and Patty as alternate, Val seconded and it passed.
- b. Reapportionment map presentation-Matt Cruickshank- pull off agenda-already addressed.

**7. New Business-None**

**8. Open Forum-**

Vanessa Stephens-Assembly District 2 Seat A-all 3 candidates support Map 11

Dan Saddler-House District 24

Kevin Cross-Assembly District 2 Seat A

Gretchen Wehmhoff-Assembly District 2, Seat A

Barbara Trost-last meeting should check with address list not getting FCC or BCV emails.

Bylaws-historical context to rule-when Bobbie could not continue with council-some groups rammed motions through and not enough time was allotted to discuss. Keep options open-folks need advance warning not vote down something on the spur of the moment. Matt-good points, but good to take option for short deadline items. 90% amended and then approved.

What about amendments—do we have to wait now another month?

**9. Adjournment: 8:59PM**