

# **Birchwood Community Council**

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## **MINUTES**

### **BIRCHWOOD Community Council**

Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 7-9 PM

Hybrid meeting: Eagle River Townhall Conference Room 170

And via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88131919316?pwd=RDA5ZGYrSlhORFhyOUtCM2dTRmJXdz09>

#### **1. Call to Order: 7:02 PM**

**2. Approval of May and September Minutes:** motion made by Patty to approve and seconded by Ben Westveer

#### **3. Announcements:**

a) **Call to Action** to purchase OWL Camera/Speakers to hold hybrid meetings: We initiated a fundraiser at our May 12 meeting. Status of funds raised to date: \$500.00/\$1000.00 needed. We have not earmarked funds, yet from our treasury. We have \$252.00 available and would recommend contributing **\$100.00** and hold back the rest for incidental expenses like our PO Box. The fee for the box went from \$95.00 to \$100.00 this year. FCC pays yearly \$75.00. FCC refunded our Treasurer and our treasury reimbursed our Treasurer \$25.00. Used OWL at our October meeting. Discussion over cash or checks. Donation can be given to Matt or Debbie to be passed to the treasurer or sent to the BCC post office box. (Matt purchased an OWL and with the case, the total cost came to \$1,075.00) This is tabled to tonight's meeting. Raised 200.00 additional tonight. Motion made by Val to use 100.00 for OWL from our Treasury and Debbie seconded. It passed. We now have \$800.00 for the OWL.

b) Hybrid meetings: November meeting location-previously met at Birchwood ABC Elementary. Not very easy to meet there. We need wifi for meetings. Karen Richards said at ski chalet will have wifi in the future. Suggested continue meetings at Room 170, and when the chalet gets wifi, move back to chalet. Motion was made to hold meetings in Room 170 by Lexi motion continue to meet Room 170 seconded and look into Chugiak High School. BCV Principal not in support of using the library. CHS acceptable ASD has public wifi. Look into CHS, free, wifi...amended motion. Ben Westveer

c) Report on Eklutna Return to Salmon Relay held September 18: Matt Cruickshank-very cool event. All Community Councils were invited. Make effort to take down second dam. Several reps from Eklutna leadership and the village along with a couple of CC members showed up. 7KW dam. Holding water back to build water level up over winter. Pushing for salmon mitigation. Issue in future might need a further briefing for CC and Eklutna

d) Quick reminder of process when discussing topics to address the Chair-Gretchen/Debbie-there is a natural tendency when with members and friends to look at whoever you are talking to. Reminder to members that we operate under Roberts rules. Take your turn until acknowledged by the Chair. Assembly: hands the gavel to the vice-chair. Whoever is Chair when speak face chair and talk to chair and not at each other. It is important that the Chair remains neutral.

#### **4. Reports**

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

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- a) FCC Report: Gretchen Wehmhoff is hoping someone will take over being the FCC rep from Birchwood Community Council. So, no report. Matt asking her to search for individual. FCC does a lot of meetings via ZOOM. Gretchen's schedule does not permit her to attend. Representatives from every CC attend and meet 1X per month.
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report: Matt Cruickshank: big thing CIP \$\$ all over CBERRRSA boundaries. Mark has interest in improving drainage and expand the road in the Terrace Lane area. Need to do survey monkey about how residents in BCV. Cost estimates? Counter proposal opening: Aurora B. instead of Mark's proposal. Lexi: heard Jill say ice builds up in Terrace area. Initially Mark wanted to put in a bike path. BCC did not want that, so what about his proposal? Debbie made a good point that Mark's proposal is not a priority...move Aurora Borealis and Starner Bridge to new business tonight and make Aurora Borealis our Capital project. Ken McCarty said across from Birchwood Saloon, ( Pilot Road )the asphalt is cracking every few days expands and it could be considered a project.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report: Lexi Hill-Will Taygan of CMBR attended the Board of Supervisors meeting October 10. The Board did not move forward with a letter of support. Significant discussion about the pool. Seems every 3-4 years there are very expensive pool expenditures. Did not pass punch list. MOA signed off on anyway even though the repairs were not done right. Water circulation, decking, ventilation issues. Only contractor available was the bad one. Karen had engineer look at it. Does not have report yet. Not worth having it done wrong again. Big Capital expense. Dog park-determination from Planning, location is uphill from Peters Creek closer to Chugiak Elementary. Safety issue of entrance off of the road from Old Glenn. Presentation from the softball folks who put a lot of work into Loretta French with more improvements planned.
- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Debbie Ossiander- next meeting October 15 12-2PM at the Eagle River Town Hall Conference Room to discuss Anchorage Building Safety Service Area. Meeting requested by South Fork, Eagle River, Eagle River Valley and Eklutna Valley, and Birchwood Community Councils. Number of speakers invited. Trying to get developer. Hybrid meeting. Depends on staff person from Mayor's office. Been asking for support over the years for CERAB. Amy and Crystal b4 she left got a line item for funding and support. Assuming that a vote in favor or against will take place at this meeting. Meeting open to public. Vote by council reps on the board.
- e) Treasurer's report: Val Jokela \$152.00
- f) CVFD: Acting Fire Chief John Della Crose-live burn this evening and Debbie provided his report. October 100 volunteers, 10 ALS responded to 90 calls, Sept 903 responses with a year-to date volunteer hours of 38,000. New light rescue. New engine 31. October 10-14 school visits with the theme: "Fire won't wait so plan your escape". Fire house open house will take place October 15 from 1200-4PM.
- g) Birchwood Patrol Report: nothing new. Now that we are mostly back to in person meetings one of the officers assigned to our area will attend in person.
- h) Birchwood Airport Master Plan: Val Jokela no change. Money ran out around March/April of 2022, so no progress has been made on the plan.
- i) Legislative / Assembly reports:  
*Carl Jacobs*-ASD School Board drafted a policy for board members to attend Community Council meetings. Capital funds to address maintenance back logs. Board allocated \$49M for roofs, boilers with the intention to be proactive for roof repairs. Goal is to be proactive and prioritize projects for taxpayers. School bond in future. Switched to biannual bonds. Might

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return to an annual cycle for bonds. Proposition \$37M proposal. Issue dealing with \$68M deficit because of a stagnant rate of funding which has not increased since FY18. Bridge gap with one time capital dollars. Issue is how ASD can right size services? Unfortunately close some facilities, increase class room sizes. October 18<sup>th</sup> work session starts at 3PM and there will be 6 names of buildings presented to close. Policy he offered, a board policy change: anonymous way to report bullying. There is political support for mental health services. Partnering with districts across US. Close schools for cost-savings measure. For every building closed and refurbished saves ½ M dollars. ASD is consulting with a professional to come up with recommendations.

*Kevin Cross:* met with school board. Public safety-4<sup>th</sup> year in row. Our district is the lowest in areas of crime. Budget season. See what projects are and there will be several budget meetings. There is lots of MOA money. Taxes brought in more money than anticipated. Looking good financially. Homeless issue is not a problem in our area. Cannot tell homeless to move without having another shelter option. By supporting MOA homeless projects, we are preventing individuals from coming out here, as we don't have the resources. Eklutna River project: love to see river opened up. Largest and biggest salmon runs. Great to see it partially opened. Reached out to CBERRRSA—guidance grant for federal \$\$\$ All kinds of organizations with capital projects in our area. Need to develop a list of priorities. Big push to open Eklutna river for salmon run. Resource management: is it private subsistence or resource for all people. Large % runs thru Eklutna. Can open river with 10% water flow. Village look at financial benefit of making it available to the public. Power and water hydroelectric dam. Never been worried about water supply. 1929 is when the first dam went in. We recognize what it has done for the village.

*Ken McCarty:* slow JNU all around the election vote 24-Nov 7. Birchwood airport has a Master Plan in place. The new one is on hold. SOA and MOA on airport: MOA not interested in airport. Small plane airport---large planes come into airport. No sense in taking 1000 foot off runway. SOA did not do what was needed to transfer the airport.

*Kelly Merrick-* Mayor attended the Chamber of Commerce meeting in Eagle River and stressed the importance of having a good relationship between MOA and SOA- for funding. There is an opportunity for debate-Nov 1 1240-2PM at CHS sponsored through Gov classes. Young folks have the most creative ideas. Important engage young folks. Both senate and house candidates will be debating.

*Joy Boston:* updates-past AF recruit service-inflight academy next summer target audience 16-18 years old. No cost. 3 weeks transportation to get to training and 15 hours of flight instruction. No commitment to AF. Dept of defense for 3<sup>rd</sup> year defense infrastructure \$90M for grants for projects. Port of AK submitted grant request and received one for \$5.3M. The community proposes project for the grants. Ground training maybe included as part of the 15 hours.

## 5. Appearances:

a) Revive Alaska Community Services: Cherilynn Stone, Executive Assistant Operation: Community services are established to serve Ak through support service...housing security through financial literacy, hot meal kitchen, provide homeless response...take from homeless to 12-18 month process to get highly motivated folks off street. Also provide assistance to families and children. Complete day care and schooling. Homeless suffer gaps in schooling and parents can get back on feet. SOA food pantries...south side. Midtown food pantry. 11-2 food distribution. Food drive month of Sept. Biggest-comfort homes

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villas—low-income housing for seniors and vets. Low income housing work with VA. Open to tours of facility. Branch out throughout AK. Like to establish food pantries in all communities. Invitation to raise money: hosting a Vets Day at the museum Nov 12 at 6:30. revive AK. org is the website and info@revivealaska.org is the email.

## 6. Old Business

a) Update Starner Bridge/Aurora Borealis: Debbie Ossiander: Rocks went away and now back again. Out pouring of neighbors attending meetings. Status of bridge replacement. Stakeholders only 1 does not agree. Public use easement. Same foot print of existing road, put in speed bumps. Mark working with property owners: all but one person not on-board. McCarty talked with 2 who are not for it and they are on the road. Give Mark L feedback and get clarification. Mark said he had signed agreements. Initially property owned by LLC and they live out of State. Rocks moved for septic and put them back.

b) AMCO re: Alice's Marijuana Retail Store status Eagle River- The application was addressed during the AMCO Board Meeting September 21-22, 2022. A motion was made and seconded to table this application to the March 2023 MCB meeting. There was no opposition to the motion from the members of the MCB board.

c) Follow up drainage improvement along Hillcrest, Shims, Almdale, Husky, James Way and Terrace Lane-Matt Cruickshank-as per Mark Littlefield:

The objective is to:

Widen the paved surface to 22'

Add shoulders to the surface

Possible elimination of one ditch on one side of the route and install a drainage system.

Phased in project over three years.

e) Bike Trails and the Beach Lake Master Plan-Matt Cruickshank, Val Jokela-Parks and Rec rep for CCC- And CMBR—grant from MOA. Lexi...Will sort of has grant. Expiration date December 2024. Been trying to come up with plan. Saw a piece of map. Coastal Plan---old plan loop included. Will trying to build on that. It involves changing mushing trails so bikes can get out to inlet. Master Plan-cross trail to get to inlet. Grade separated needed for the dog mushers, as well as other user groups: Will does not have \$\$ for grade separated. Talked with ASDRA sight line needed to cross trails. Lexi did not find any of Will's ideas viable. Have to go across fire creek, back on the road, then on Eklutna property and have to cross RR. Big disruption to mushing trails. Might have \$\$\$\$. What would enhance community and this would not be the coastal trail in ANC. Need the give and take of folks from the community. Maybe some \$\$ go to NW corner. Other things to think about. CMBR did Mirror Lake Park. On trails not well placed.

## 7. New Business

Debbie made a motion to make Aurora Borealis and Starner Bridge our CIP priority over the drainage project proposed by Mark Littlefield. Cost associated with bridge is expensive. Patty seconded. Tom Prunty: bridge is important-Ben Westveer. Motion approved.

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

Dan Saddler-republican candidate for State House District 24

Daryl Nelson democratic candidate for State House District 24

Ken McCarty-republican candidate for Senate Seat L

Kelly Merrick-republican candidate for Senate Seat L

*Lexi*-Boo on the Beach 5:30 to 7 for the kids and teens are 7-9:30. \$8.00 is the cost of the tickets.

Senior center trick or treat October 31.

Thanks to Karen R for setting up Room 170.

OWL worked great. But we need a screen to be able to see the participants on ZOOM.

Aviation School—student asked [www.recruiting.af.mil/aim-high-academy](http://www.recruiting.af.mil/aim-high-academy)

October is election month for BCC as we missed it, a motion was made to take it up in November

## **9. Adjournment**- 8:54 PM