

# **Birchwood Community Council**

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## **MINUTES**

### **BIRCHWOOD Community Council**

Wednesday, December 14, 2022, 7-9 PM

Hybrid meeting: Eagle River Library Conference Room 170

And via Zoom

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

#### **1. Call to Order: 7:01PM**

**2. Approval of November Minutes:** approved-corrected date of CBERRSA meeting to November 28 instead of December 19. (Note: The December 19 date is the correct date per conversation with Matt)

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

- a) Printed vs e-agendas and minutes- Val Jokela-requesting members to print out agendas and minutes they receive from BCC or FCC.
- b) JBER announcements: no questions
- c) Election 2022-23-here's who is interested from our November meeting: Nominations board positions 2022 and 2023: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary for Publicity-duties (keep up webpage, post resolutions)-Ben Westveer interested, CBERRRSA rep-Matt wants to continue, CERAB rep-takes care of input to assembly meet as needed-some issues addressed have been marijuana retail store, building safety service area-Ben Westverr and Debbie and Patty as alternate, FCC-Carol Perkins is interested. Nominations for Chair Matt nominated Debbie, and Debbie nominated Matt. Floor is open to further nominations. *Postpone until January 11 meeting.*
- d) Please face the OWL when speaking and move closer to it.
- e) Requested by Girdwood a resolution from BCC opposing Holton Hills Development. At this point in time, BCC will wait to respond.

#### **4. Reports:**

- a) FCC Report: Carol Perkins attended the November 17 meeting. There was a presentation from Carla Shaw about the honor flights to DC. No charge to vets, 1K companion fee. 5 days in DC Donations Lastfrontierhonorflight.com. Presentation Tanya O'Mally Girdwood board of supervisors area wide approval \$11M cemetery-\$3M for Eagle River and \$3M Anchorage. No charge from Heritage Land Bank 17 acres. Individual councils to support the bond. Both cemeterys would benefit. Margo Bellamy said a school board member will attend each council meeting. Vehicle noise ordinance changed. Adopted by the assembly. Raise fine from \$100-300.00. Administration would send rep to FCC at FCC request. No meeting December. Under budget. December 21 Winter Festival
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report: Matt Cruickshank-did not have quorum. Plan is at next meeting to propose motion for fully fund bridge for CIP. Plowout very expensive \$400,000 additional is funded. 12 hours plowed out here. Randy said move the rock so Jon can go through. Debbie understanding...said city quit maintaining it. There are easements granted by properties.

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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Next meeting December 19. Any objection fixing date on CBERRSA minutes approved road board meeting already occurred. None, *will correct November minutes to reflect November 28 meeting.*

c) Parks and Recreation Report: Barbara Trost-Did not have the usually scheduled Monday meeting. Tuesday was a work session specifically to address CMBR funding for trails in Beach Lake Park. Parks and Rec decided it will be a trail in Beach Lake Park and there has not been a planner for projects. Master Plan should have been pushed prescriptively forward for a 10-year development of a grade separated trail. During the work session it was found that there exists a conflict of interest on Will Taygan's part because of the number of hats he wears. He holds a paid position as Executive Director for CMBR. It was decided following the code of MOA Ethics, that he cannot vote on grant funding and trail. His alternate can. Josh Durand used to be director of Parks and Rec and will serve the role as a planner, and will start out as a volunteer and then will be contracted. Master Plan can move quicker, and the plan has to be followed. Not having someone from Parks and Rec involved has caused friction. CDMA is pretty frantic about losing more trail. Only entity CMBR will not any more forward motion, The project will follow the Master Plan and keep trail in-tact, safety features, regulatory signage, engineering estimate and approved budge. The first step is to get an engineering estimate and graphics...next meeting will be January 9, 2023. Stakeholder process. Troubling thought, if not enough \$\$\$, summer trail only acceptable but not desired. To Barbara, not great solution...will be infractions on the trails..think signage, kiosk, gates informed trespassing. BOS with quorum requested that Parks and Rec move forward...CMBR set aside \$215,000 out of \$450,000 for trail. Approved of trail will put forward and approved summer trail, full grade separated trail. At least CMBR put forth some \$\$\$ BOS has \$\$\$ set aside, need estimate. December 19<sup>th</sup> rescheduled from December 12, there will be no official discussion on this topic. Pete BOS chair wrote down that Parks and Rec will involve stakeholder groups. December 19 will be normal business discussing CIP projects, letter of support for the cemetery and CIP 2023. Meetings are now in person.

d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Debbie Ossiander work session assembly Chugiak-ER joining the building service area. If service area dissolved have to reestablish-concern. MOA attorney not have a formal position, yet. Other routes other than BSSA

e) Treasurer's report: Val Jokela \$152.00. Matt was reimbursed for the OWL and very pleased with all the support.

f) CVFD: Acting Fire Chief John Della Crose-can't make having a meeting this evening focus clearing out fire hydrants if see one, shovel it out. 85 responses, 1067 responses 4000 volunteer, 47717 volunteer hrs, update kitchen, engine 31 in shop, hope rescue 33

g) Birchwood Patrol Report-made progress on mail theft. Alaska News Source interviewed Chris Constant who portrayed Eagle River as a hot bed of illegal marijuana sales, because we don't have a legal shop. There is no data to support this and it is an excuse to put in a shop

h) Legislative / Assembly / School board reports:

**Dan Saddler**-no legislative reports, he's attending orientation, and his term begins 17<sup>th</sup> Jan. He'll be down in Juneau for 2 weeks, and will provide us with his legislative email address. He's hired staff. Appreciates BCC zoom meetings.

**Carl Jacobs**-appreciates BCC zoom meetings. Since last meeting the district is back to 100% coverage for transportation, as of Dec 5. Opportunity to decrease routes and increase efficiency, minimize delays. Board goals charter and optional programs transportation. FY24 budget.

Options: bring deficiency down to \$47M deficient. Will be unspent salary to address deficit.

Looking to recruit and obtain workforce. Board approved transportation contract which brings

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salaries in line. Options: reconsider closing Abbot Loop elementary, move 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school, virtual program. Admin only to closing one. 12/19 board meeting will address which campuses to consolidate or close. Full budget not finalized until Feb. School canceled tomorrow. Budget talked about specific proposals.

Carol asked about the school board's position on truancy. Staff follows up with students and families. Students do receive extra support after threshold of lack of attendance is identified. Solutions vary by family—behavior challenges, transportation, family issues—staff addresses on a case-by-case basis. Is there a truancy law for the MOA? Carl will research. Carol's daughter says there is no support from offices. Process for students. How many snow days: 2 days where school cancelled. Looking for ways to make up time. Debbie's grand-daughter hates school except when she attends the gifted program. Her family is still very worried it is going to be cut? Not broad support. Adding bussing to alternative schools is so expensive 20 years ago, so why consider with the deficit? Transportation out of different budget. Promising signs possible. Finding potential efficiencies. Other day-savings closing schools not need as many teachers, admin. Birchwood ABC school and how maintain ABC—if send to Homestead? Consolidation is still on the table. Not a lot of support for that consolidation. The Birchwood program can be kept inside of another school...programs, staff-students. Parents support because ABC program has a low capacity would like to see it incorp with Eagle Academy. Eagle Academy needs a better setting than what they have presently. Not a proposal yet.

**5. Appearances:** none

## **6. Old Business**

- a) Update Starner Bridge/Aurora Borealis: Dec 19, 2022
- b) Chugiak CC CER Cemetery Resolution: Debbie Ossiander

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## **A resolution of the Birchwood Community Council regarding a CER public cemetery**

Whereas the Chugiak-Eagle River area has no local cemetery, and the Anchorage Memorial cemetery has very limited space, and  
Whereas the Assembly authorized the Heritage Land Bank to research local sites for a cemetery. HLB recommended a site A2 on Wolf Pack Drive. This site was later discussed and approved through a CER Advisory Board Resolution.

Now therefore, the Birchwood Community Council supports development of a public cemetery on site A-2 (on Wolf Pack Drive) as recommended in the 2021 Land Use Study. A public cemetery is a municipal use and thus is an appropriate use of Heritage Land Bank inventory. The CER cemetery should be treated as the Anchorage Memorial Cemetery is treated in code, with local members added to the

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Advisory Board. Funding to develop the CER ceremony should be raised as part of an area wide bond.

Has assembly acted on a bond. Now a push to dissolved cemetery service area to be able to accept funding from bond. Use to service area. Sep AO prorated to parks dept. Heritage wants to sell to someone else. Dissolve service area to accept bond.

Resolution will be in front of board of supervisors at the Monday Dec 19 meeting.

Why can't we be part of Anchorage funding group? If we vote down, we still pay for Anchorage and Girdwood. Cemetery service area? Break up to receive funding.

Need clarification around cemetery service area. MIL rate increase folks are concerned about. *This resolution is on hold resolution, pending further clarification about funding.*

c) Birchwood Airport Master Plan Stakeholder meeting December 14, 2022 3-5P-Val Jokela  
From the stakeholder and public meetings, there are 4 proposed Alternatives. Alternative 1 would leave the airport as is, and Alternative 4 would end up with simultaneous runway operations and place 1 runway's traffic over the inlet as presently exists and the other over residential areas, as well as a land purchase or swap of 175 acres from Eklutna and move the boundaries of the airport considerably south. Alternate 2 and 3 are somewhat similar and Alternative 2 was most popular. It would preserve the runway patterns as they presently are over the inlet which keeps the noise impact as low as possible. Alternate 2 would require a land purchase or swap with Eklutna for 21 acres which would be used to build hangars which are in high demand. The final draft analysis will be available between Jan—March 2023 and the alternatives will be analyzed against: safety, environmental impacts, airspace obstructions, land use, meeting demands for additional lease lots, revenue generation, maintenance cost and capital cost. April-June Public workshop #4 and SAG #4 which will look at the draft Master Plan. July-Aug-finalize Master Plan. It will still have to be accepted by the FAA and DOT. Eklutna is in support of Alt 2.

d) Beach Lake Master Plan-Val Jokela-covered by Barbara Trost under Park and Rec BOS work session meeting December 13th

e) Eklutna Salmon Resolution-Matt Cruickshank-represented community event by EK village and corporation- main hydroelectric dam, lost major salmon run. Assembly had resolution. Bottom dam has been removed, path for fish to get back to lake. Fish passage Ek river. Compromise power production and salmon run. Not the drinking water-build up water level if need additional power. Appreciates Matt address. Put in letter for fish and wildlife to retrofit gates to allow adequate release of water, Eklutna sockeye habitat, 20 miles of tributaries. Goals from our resolution and in support. Motion to accept, Matt seconded.

**7. New Business:** none

**8. Open Forum-**Matt is running for assembly district seat: [Mattforassembly.com](http://Mattforassembly.com).

Barbara-wondering since have OWL and recording meetings, it would make the Secretary's work easier and post on website. Don't need the video portion, only the voice, and put action items in the minutes. Does FCC post minutes? Debbie supports. Need to investigate. Mark gone Dec 16-Jan 3

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FCC conversation-recording meetings, getting away from it—storage might be an issue Not set up large capacity for data-FCC Carol ask FCC store recordings on FCC? Improve FCC Capacity maybe get funding from the assembly.

**9. Adjournment-** 8:26PM