

Old Seward/Oceanview Community Council

MINUTES: Friday, September 8, 2023, 6:30–8:30 pm

Location: 12100 Old Seward Hwy, Rabbit Creek Church Huffman Campus
Zoom.com Meeting ID: 844 5795 0064 - Audio and Video Recorded
2023 Winter/Spring Schedule: Jan 13, Mar 10, May 12, July 14, Sept 8, Nov 10
Website: <http://communitycouncils.org/osovcc>

Board members present: Joan Henry (President), Kevin Skiba (Vice President), John Henry (Treasurer), Peggy Kircher (Secretary), and Gary Meader (FCC Delegate), Donna Delavante (FCC alternate).

A sign-in sheet was provided at the entry table and attendees were directed to fill-out their information.

Establish Quorum / Call to Order – A quorum was established. There were 22 people in attendance and 3 online. President Joan Henry called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and Vice President Kevin Skiba explained the meeting protocol and defined voting members versus non-voting guests.

Zoom Protocol Review – Treasurer John Henry read the Zoom protocol and advised that the meeting is also being recorded.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Joan Henry outlined the Agenda and Peggy Kircher provided a brief overview of minutes of the previous meeting. It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda and minutes of the July 12, 2023 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Officer Reports – *Treasurer John Henry* reported a balance of \$1,515.36 (12 cents in interest).

FCC Delegate Gary Meader reported that the FCC had no meetings to report on. The next meeting of the FCC will be held [September 20, 2023](#).

Representatives/Community Reports

Alaska State Senator Cathy Giessel reported that she will be doing a drive-around with MOA CIP Director, Garry Jones, next week to view the condition of various streets of concern in south Anchorage. She briefly spoke on the PFD and answered questions from members. Her weekly newsletter is published Thursday mornings [Newsletter dated 9/7/23](#). If interested, please subscribe, or contact her by email sen.cathy.giessel@akleg.gov.

Anchorage School Board member Pat Higgins reported the academic achievement gap has grown significantly in the last few years and the School Board is in full support of improving academic outcomes in their planning for the future. The late start time has been postponed until next year. They are focusing on a new reading curriculum tied to academic outcomes. They decided not to close any

schools. Abbott Loop Elementary School is now being used by Alaska Native Charter School. They will be discussing cuts to grammar schools due to financial savings. Many classes have two grades combined. They are losing teachers and having trouble replacing them. ASD is behind the financial curve, there are caps on funding throughout the state and city. Next week they will discuss goals and guardrails.

Anchorage Fire Department, Senior Captain Todd Loy from Station #9 reported upgrades of fire engines and ladder trucks. They expect 5 fire engines and 5 more ambulances in 2025. The woodlot never came through this past season, but thankfully bad weather kept fires low. However, the woodlot is expected to be funded for the next five years. EMS has received high grades for cardiac response. Cardiac arrest calls are way up along with other emergency medical calls. Many firefighters are retiring so they hope to get replacement hires onboard from academies soon. Narcan is FDA-approved and available through the State Department of Health, [Project Hope](#). Online training can be found through [Know Mine.Org](#). Capt. Loy reminded members of the importance of working smoke alarms in homes as there have been 5 fire fatalities this year due to non-working alarms. Community members expressed concern over the amount of fires that have been started in homeless camps. AFD can only make them put out fires, but have no legal backing otherwise.

Assembly Member Randy Sulte announced upcoming meetings: Assembly meeting on 9/12/23, joint meeting of the Anchorage School District and Assembly on 9/15/23, and Committee on Housing and Homelessness on 9/20/23. He reviewed Anchorage Police Department's fleet needs and funding needed: APD has a badly outdated fleet with 70-150 cars in need of repair and 30-40 awaiting new transmissions. Body cams have been a complicated issue and the problems are still being worked out. The new transfer station opens next week and the Assembly is looking at using the old facility to house the homeless, with the admin side as a navigation center. There are an estimated 700 homeless on the streets that will need cold-weather shelter; estimate \$3.5 million needed, \$2.4 from ARPA funds. Other items touched on were: Zoning change proposals, Top Improvement Projects, Scof Law, moving violations, 2024 New Seward/O'Malley/Scooter Drive Improvement, Alaska Regional ER on corner of Industry Way & Old Seward.

Mr. Sulte reminded members that he is available to the public every Saturday 8-10am at Kaladis off Huffman Road. Also, the Assembly publishes a monthly Newsletter you can sign-up for on their website.

Committee Reports

Community Patrol – Jeff Childs reported they have expanded their patrols north of Klatt Road. He distributed our Housing & Homelessness survey forms to businesses in our community and in doing so received a lot of feedback from them on campers staying overnight and weekends. The Funeral home and cemetery reported vehicles broken into and one person found sleeping in a hearse. The Storage facility and dog boarding lot off Old Seward have also reported homeless camps that trashed out the area, including empty alcohol bottles and needles, as well as fire pits. Jeff reminds us to stay vigilant, report any illegal activity to the Anchorage Police Department via 911 for emergencies and

311 for non-emergencies. If you have other concerns, contact OSOVCC Community Patrol: 907-240-7880 or 907-250-5379.

Eldon Subdivision WDID and LID – Joan read a short update from Joe Alston that they are expecting President Biden to sign off on funding next month, which may allow things to get moving on the upgrade next season.

120th Upgrade – There was a complaint that the trees on the Cemetery side of 120th are out of control and not being taken care of by the Municipality of Anchorage.

Old Business

10-Year Review of OSOV CC Boundary – The OSOV Board introduced this draft Resolution 2023-01 at the July 14, 2023 meeting with the plan to vote on the final at this meeting. Stan Moll suggested that due to the Planning and Zoning Committee’s report not being released until the end of December, that we postpone our final vote. Therefore, it was moved and seconded to postpone with unanimous agreement, to take up the final vote on this resolution at our November 10 meeting. Thanks to Stan for representing the OSOVCC at the MOA Boundary meetings.

Ellen Avenue Street Maintenance – Paving is complete on Ellen Avenue from 121st Avenue south to the end of Ellen Ave. Mailboxes have been updated as well. They also extended some of the paving onto Petis Road, which was in great need. It appears this phase of the project is nearly complete.

Clean Slate Strategy and Housing & Homelessness – Joan announced that we received about 25 responses to our housing and homeless survey and the results are available via email request. We have extended response time due to the Assembly changes and their scheduling of meetings. There was extended conversation on this topic among members present.

New Business

Liquor License Renewal – There were no items to review. Remember to call, write, and attend the assembly meeting, when these licenses are on their agenda, if you disapprove.

Seward Highway – O’Malley to Dimond – Kevin introduced a video by the Alaska Department Transportation showing the proposed traffic pattern upgrade.

Alaska Railroad (ARR) Trail on the easement – Member John Pletcher provided a historical report on the issue of the RR easement. He also provided a handout, titled “Any Recreational Facilities in the Railroad Easement Should Be Rejected.” The handout consisted of responses from Artificial Intelligence when asked “If recreation in a railroad easement is a good idea and is it legal?” The answers were No.

In summary, the Alaska Railroad is taking comments on a proposal to add to the burden of the railroad easement by allowing a recreational trail. The downtown Fish Creek Trail group anticipates traffic at 1,000 people per day. This will be coming to South Anchorage as these trails groups want to connect to the Tony Knowles coastal trail, on to south Anchorage and Potter Marsh. John Pletcher requested making your comments to the railroad (public_comment@akrr.com) opposing this additional use (misuse) of the easement. Please oppose any and all recreational uses. The easement purpose is clearly for railroad operations. The ARR has done a good job with security in the past and it needs to stay that way by not allowing any misuse of the easement. It could create a huge security risk, liability issues, and a potential risk to the gas pipelines buried in the ARR right-of-way.

Historic and current information can be found at [Alaska Railroad Transfer Committee](#), where you can also read Congressman Don Young's 1982 letter on the intent of the Alaska Railroad Transfer Act.

Election of OSOV CC Officers for 2024 – Reminder that elections will be held at our November 10, 2023, meeting. If you are interested in a board position, please attend the meeting.

Announcements / Current Issues of Note

Reef Place Property – Joan reported that the property owner received a permit to work on the property and will be removing concrete slabs thrown over the bluff.

Potter's Marsh Updates & McHugh Creek Listening Post – Joan reported that this project will be done in phases and is scheduled to start this coming season and finish next summer. Restrooms will be funded by MOA and ADF&G grants.

Johns Park – Stan Moll reported he has had several encounters with teens or young adults on small dirt bikes running through Johns Park. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on trails. If you experience similar run-ins, please report those to the Parks Department.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by the Secretary, Peggy Kircher. This meeting was recorded and if you wish to hear the full discussion contact the FCC.