

Birchwood Community Council

Regular Monthly Meeting Wednesday, April 23, 2014, 7-9 PM - Minutes

Co-chair Jill Crosby called the meeting to order at 7:01.

The March 2014 minutes were approved as written.

Announcements (none)

4. Presentations:

- a. **FCC Report** (from Chugiak Representative) Debra: The new FCC web site should have rolled out this week. Birchwood still needs to send in pictures. The FCC wants an invoice when we request the \$75 of new money for mailings and communications. The CIP list priorities will only be accepted online this year. The deadline for changes in our By-laws to conform to the new ordinance is August 31, 2014.

The FCC officer election will be held at their May meeting.

They have asked us to check if our parks are dedicated, and if not, we can ask for that to happen. (Beach Lake Park is dedicated parkland.)

The other FCC reps are asking if we can view and use our council mailing list. Maria asks – about how we built our mailing list – is it verified residents? Jill answers that Bobbi built it; we have been unable to cross check it with the FCC list. Bobbi says that she built the list and verified it from the tax rolls. We were supposed to get a free tax roll list once/year. That has not happened. She is concerned that FCC is not responsive to or supportive of the councils, as they are supposed to be. Jill comments that the \$75 was to help us get mail out here. We may try sharing a box with another council (\$75 isn't enough) or some other way to have a council mailbox. Amy thinks that maybe John would let us get mail through Parks and Rec or the library.

b. **MEA Summer Clearing:**

Julia Estey is presenting for MEA, and apologizes for all the outages. MEA will start clearing tress and tree limbs from near their power lines in the next couple of weeks. Our system has less redundancy and more long radial feeds than systems elsewhere, so when there is a break, it can be a while for people to get power back. MEA is clearing to reduce the chance of things falling on the lines. They will clear not just immediate problems, but trees, etc., that may be problematic in a few years. They have both an in-house crew and contractors; they will communicate through door hangers and robo calls. They will clear only in the MEA right of way.

If there is something you love and adore and want to keep, call and talk to them when you get a door hanger or call. A council member notes that we should move things out of the way from where trees may fall. If there is a problem tree just out of the ROW, that you want cleared, call and talk to them about that, too. They will be chipping the downed trees. If there is something large you want to keep for firewood, let them know and they'll try to do so.

Bobbi asks how far limbs have to be from the power line; Julia doesn't know. Bobbi thinks it's 4 feet. Amy asks if they will be clearing only areas with lines, or also easements for future development. The first priority is existing lines, but if there is time, places with lines coming soon may also be cleared. Amy asks for contact information for the person to talk to (Eddie). Julie will give it to Jill, who will forward it.

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- c. **Pat Chesbro** is here and wants us to know she is running for the open Senate seat F, which includes house districts 11 and 12. Some of us are district 13 (Senate seat G) but some are District 12.. Pat was an educator, teacher, principal, Superintendent, and then worked at UAA. She will leave bookmarks on the table.

5. Old Business

- a. **Monofil Update:** Lexi reports the results of the membership vote on the BCC resolution to support Chugiak Council's position on the monofil: 30 in favor, 1 opposed.

Do we wish to take action on a separate BCC resolution, opposing the monofil for reasons that affect Birchwood Council? Debbie is in favor of waiting until July and seeing what Eklutna proposes before we make our own proposal. Dan (who has property in both councils, including the Birchwood Saloon) thinks this project is just about them lining their pockets and we will not benefit. **Ray** thinks we know enough, and ***makes a motion that BCC opposes the monofil as it is written now, because it impacts our area as well as Chugiak.*** Bobbi seconds. She mentions the potential pollution of the Mink Creek drainage. She knows two people with permits to get drinking water from Mink Creek. The second reason is that Chugiak CC would like the truck traffic on the Old Glenn to use South Birchwood exit rather than North Birchwood to access the freeway. Bobbi thinks mixing this traffic with lunch and high school traffic is a bad idea. She thinks we should support our sister council since they have asked and it is reasonable. She doesn't think Eklutna/Central Monofil can mitigate the effects; sheet rock is toxic when it degrades. She doesn't want any more dumping here. Debbie doesn't think that there will be much opposition to the motion as stated. She also opposed the project as currently written, although for different reasons. She wants to be sure that North Birchwood does not get heavy commercial traffic because of the elementary school. Another council member thinks that our rural character is dependent on our aquifers, and that this project is right above Mink Creek and is a major risk. Sole Rainwater thinks this is a relatively inexperienced company that doesn't do a very good job of dealing with the toxics; the buildings that will be torn down are full of asbestos, etc. Tony sees two things – no benefits to the councils, and enormous potential danger. ***The motion passes unanimously.***

Maria Rentz notes that Chugiak CC got an email from Erin Elam saying that they would be asking for a postponement of the permitting hearing before the Assembly. It will be postponed to September 23.

- b. **MEA Substation update:** Jill asks if Amy can tell us about this. MEA did appeal; but no action has been taken at this time.
- c. **BCC by-laws revisions update:** the proposed revisions will be available before the next meeting.

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- d. **Design Criteria Manual (DCM) revisions update:** This project is moving slowly. It is critical for rural parts of the community because we have tried to push in the past for some different standards including smaller roads, less lighting, and allowing recycled asphalt paving. We tried to keep a rural standard as much as possible in title 21, but it will be implemented through the DCM. We need to ensure that we keep an eye on this. Debbie notes that the Hillside passed the Hillside District Plan, which limited lighting and allowed narrow roads. And we incorporated that into chapter 10. But the DCM language doesn't match our chapter. Although the assembly didn't have to approve the DCM in the past, perhaps it does now.
- e. **September Birchwood Bash:** We plan to do this again. We will invite everyone, have food, and then a short meeting afterward. We'll talk more in May and possibly July.
- f. **October Elections:** The two co-chairs will rotate out. We are looking for anyone who would like to be chair/co-chair.
- g. **Summer Meetings:** We will meet next month, and probably in July for the monofill.

6. New Business

a. Capital Improvement Project rating by BCC

Tony speaks to road board list. One item that affected BCC was a Birchwood Loop multipurpose gravel trail. Another was road access to the Glenn, to improve South Peters creek on ramp. He thinks the North Birchwood on-ramp is also too short. On snow storage site development, Eklutna did not get approval for a CUP for snow storage near Powder Ridge. Right now, Fred Meyer, Walmart, Eagle Crossing and Eaglewood have snow hauled and pay for it; downtown does not. Right now we don't pay for any snow hauling through taxes, but eventually we will have to. Debbie brings up the need for a cemetery – can we add to this list? (we can). She would like to see the Municipality set aside some land for that. Also, three of the fire stations for the CVFD need major maintenance and a state grant would be very helpful. Also, Chugiak has in the past asked for a walking trail from the Bella Vista area along the Old Glenn. ***Debbie moves we amend the list to add, reserving a site for an eventual public cemetery, and asking for grant monies for building maintenance for the CVFD. Tony seconds.*** Jill comments that the monofill proposed to eventually house a cemetery. ***The motion passes unanimously.*** There is a question about improving North Birchwood loop. The current plan is for surface work only. There is a lot of development at the interchange, and if there is development farther down the road the traffic could really increase. Jill will ask DoT to clarify their plans for the Birchwood Spur area.

7. Reports

a. CBERRRSA Road Board Report:

There was a short meeting. The most important thing that came up was the need for an emergency meeting and CBERRRSA bylaws didn't cover it. Bobbi notes that Tony as chair had the power to have work done up to \$10,000. Tony says true, but this issue was different and we need to fix the bylaws issue. Amy comments that she heard from a person who was upset that the special meeting may have violated the open meetings act. It would be good to have a procedure in place.

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Debbie asks what they decided to do about Aurora Borealis Drive. Nothing, perhaps some chip seal but not major correction.

Tony is asked if the board wants reports of road problems? He recommends people call Mark Littlefield directly.

b. Parks and Recreation Report: <http://www.muni.org/Departments/ERparks/>

Summer projects are proceeding.

C. Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board:

Debbie asks if Karl is the official member from South Fork? He is, by default.

CERAB has met twice on the Eklutna overlay issue. The proposers revised the ordinance to address the concerns from the first meeting. One concern is that the district would have no public easements, no eminent domain, etc. The board talked about that, and ended up supporting the district as written because of the historic political status of Eklutna, which predates Anchorage. There is a question about the size of the overlay district. It is a little bit bigger than the village.

Debbie has worked out a way to call meetings; she ends out notices of outstanding issues, and if two members want to take something up they will meet.

Jill asks if CERAB should take up Eklutna's next phase of Powder Reserve development; she saw work going on. Eklutna is proceeding to the next step of tract 40a; it will be going to P&Z on June 9. Debbie has heard about this; there will be a small commercial development as part of it. Eklutna is trying to sell the property across from Fred Meyers, or build a new building there. The new alignment for the Glenn Highway exit at Artillery Road will run through their building, and also take out the small shopping center there by the exit. Eklutna will present at the May meeting. Jill is concerned with the planned commercial property.

Open Forum:

Bobbi – Three Bears is asking for a liquor license, they are next to a church and near an elementary school; and there are other liquor outlets nearby. Won't theirs be too many? It meets the legal requirements. Bobbi is concerned that it will be quite a concentration of liquor licenses in that area.

Jill notes that we should check on the gravel pit reclamation and landscaping near the airport. Now that the snow is gone, we can look at what they have actually done. Tony reports that the berm is in and graded, but bare.

Amy reports on several issues:

The municipality has certified the election and sworn in new Assembly members. First Quarter budget revisions are in process. They held a special meeting with the school board; since there is no state budget, we don't know how the city will be affected.

Also, she notes that there is lots of information is available at Munibudget.org. When you click on your community council all the relevant projects come up. If you create a login, you can make comments. You can add a project and do many custom things.

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There may be money for the MacDonald Center, from part of the \$13 million surplus. \$3 million was 'found money' when they converted software programs. They conducted an audit and about a million belonged to Chugiak-Eagle River. The Muni will try loan that money to Parks & Rec to keep the work on the MacDonald Center project moving. The Assembly passed the HLB 2014-2019 5 year plan. It included section 25 and other parcels that could be considered for disposal. Bill moved to pull the section 25 acres out of that part of the plan.

Community Council training was insightful, they talked about community building and stressed that Community Councils are starting to age and need to bring young people into the process. They pushed social media, Facebook, and other ways to help young people be as passionate about the process as we are. Amy thought it was a great training. But she also notes that numerous councils have expressed their frustrations with the FCC. Several assembly members are listening. She asked for FCC to provide our mailing lists to Councils, and they promised to do so; however, they did not. The FCC operation is a contract and the Assembly could put it out to bid.

Karl invites anyone who wants to come to the next South Cork CC meeting on May 1 (the last one before summer hiatus). He notes that SF has some ongoing issues with ASD about projects they were supposed to have done (like Yosemite drive drainage) but that have not happened. Also, ASD was at a hearing for getting rid of lot lines under the High School, and they turned that into an attempt to delete the requirement to bring Yosemite Drive to collector standards.

Tony asks about snow machine race. Jill will check on what happened.

Bobbi suggests that we ask youth attending about their opinions on issues we are discussing.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54