

Eklutna Valley Community Council
February 25, 2015
Meeting minutes

The meeting was chaired by council president Rick Sinnott and began at 7:05 p.m. The council met at the new Eklutna ranger station. Eighteen council members attended: Skip and Tena Cheely, Debbie and Steve Thon, Margan Grover, Dan Thompson, Randy Bangerter, Jeff Schweizer, Greg McConnell, Monique Garbowicz, James Riley, Cindy and Bob McElroy, Helen Bohn, Steve and Cheryl Remme, and Lisa and Rick Sinnott.

The minutes of the December 9, 2014, meeting were approved with no changes. Rick reported \$466.64 in the council's funds.

Vet Village. The only item on the agenda was the Vet Village. The Alaska Veterans Foundation has proposed building a "village" for homeless veterans on Eklutna Lake Road just east of the AWWU water treatment facility. Their latest plans are in a Project Feasibility Report, Request for Phase I Funding dated January 2015. Council members were sent copies of the feasibility report to review on several occasions and Ric Davidge, chairman of the Alaska Veterans Foundation, discussed the project during our last council meeting.

On February 21 the Executive Board (Rick and Lisa Sinnott, Debbie and Steve Thon) met as a committee to compile a list of concerns. Rick also drafted a tentative resolution and modified it based on committee comments. Both the list of concerns and the draft resolution were based on input from council members at the December 9 meeting and during other informal discussions and emails.

The intent of the draft resolution was not to influence council members, but to provide tentative language for the concerns already expressed so that time spent on drafting language could be minimized during the council meeting. The draft resolution was detailed and lengthy. Therefore, the Executive Board decided to start the council meeting with a general discussion of concerns.

Debbie led an hour-long discussion, during which every issue on the tentative resolution was mentioned and discussed informally. Council members were unanimous in their support of veterans, particularly homeless veterans; however, most members expressed concerns regarding the chosen site and feasibility of the project based on information provided in or missing from the feasibility report.

The main concerns involved how to deal with the anticipated increase in the number of community council members, unacceptable plans to rezone the site and waive subdivision standards and other land-use requirements, the large amount of money requested from the Alaska Legislature and other funding sources, the likelihood that the project would cost more than projected, and the possibility that millions of dollars of money might be allocated to this project before it had been proven feasible.

Lisa made a motion, which was seconded, to send our concerns to the Alaska Veterans Foundation and decision-makers in the form of a resolution. She summarized the concerns listed in the draft resolution and suggested that the council would support the

project if all concerns were addressed. The chair recommended that, due to the length and complexity of the resolution, that it be considered by paragraph, which received general consent.

Bob Reagan moved to amend the main motion to delete the statement of support, at least until the feasibility report was rewritten. It was seconded. After a discussion, the amendment was approved unanimously.

Before discussion on the main motion as amended, Rick read the five paragraphs of the draft resolution. Several paragraphs were amended and another paragraph was added by general consent: "That we do not support this project as presented in the Project Feasibility Report, Request for Phase I Funding dated January 2015." The resolution was approved as amended and the discussion moved to the preamble.

Each of the paragraphs in the preamble was read aloud and discussed, and some were deleted or amended by general consent. Each amended paragraph was read again. After reading all the paragraphs in the resolution, the main motion, as amended, was voted on and passed unanimously.

In addition to the Mayor and Assembly, members recommended sending copies of the resolution to legislators whose districts include Eklutna Valley and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.