

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 11, 2019 7:00pm
REGULAR MEETING
Ravenwood Elementary School

MEETING MINUTES – Approved October 9, 2019

Call to order at 7:02pm by Elisa Vakalis, substituting for David W. Schade.
Quorum was established.

Introductions and Announcements:

- Our meeting start time has changed to 6:30pm, beginning with the October 12, 2019 meeting.
- Elisa Vakalis is our new school board representative for Eagle River Valley Community Council meetings. The school district divides the area into sections and school board members are assigned to update specific community councils.
- James McCurtain introduced himself. James is our council's nominee for the CBERRRSA board. (Chugiak Birchwood Eagle River Rural Road Service Area Board)

Meeting Minutes Approval:

- May 8, 2019 meeting minutes were reviewed.
- Motion by Crystal Kennedy to approve; James McCurtain seconded.
- Approved by a vote of 11 yea, 0 nay and 0 abstain.

Treasurers Report: None

New Business:

ERVCC Board Elections

2 Seats open: Current Incumbent (Candidate):

Vice President: Vacant

CBERRRSA Board: Vacant (James McCurtain)

- There are no candidates for Vice President at this time.
- Motion by Joy Webb, seconded by Crystal Kennedy to approve James McCurtain as ERVCC nominee for CBERRRSA Board.
- Approved by a vote of 11 yea, 0 nay and 0 abstain.

Eagle River Fire Protection & Wildfires-Scott Bailey

- It was very fortunate we didn't have windy conditions when Eagle River fires started.
- People hike up and have fires in Meadow Creek and over Mile Hi Pass.
- There are no public trails in this area.
- Scott has asked to review the final DNR fire report for this.
- Scott contacted Phil from Forestry (761-6125) about the cause of these fires. What is cause of fires and cost associated with them?

Chugiak-Eagle River Cemetery Steering Committee

Crystal Kennedy, substituting for Greg Kennedy

- The goal of this committee is to find a location for a Chugiak/Eagle River cemetery and to manage the process of establishing the cemetery.
- Tom Looney of Chugiak is leading this effort. Greg Kennedy is our representative.
- First step is to obtain \$60,000 in funding for a land use study. Chrystal Kennedy will take this request to the Anchorage City Council to include funding in the budget. Alternatively, the land could be donated.
- Heritage Land Bank has identified some options. The municipality would then identify and choose the property.
- Anchorage Cemetery will be full in 5-10 years.

- Girdwood is also pursuing a local cemetery and currently has their land use study underway.
- Some properties have been identified as a starting point.

War Admiral Drive sidewalk

Stoney Knight – unavailable for our meeting.

- This is on the border of our community council.
- We have not discussed nor provided an opinion on sidewalks.

Old Business:

Assembly Report – Crystal Kennedy

Ms. Kennedy's update included:

- Tiffany, from Representative Merrick's office was introduced.
- September 15 the ban on plastic bags goes into effect.
- Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Committee / CER Board
 - Was re-authorized by the Anchorage Assembly. CER Board was originally created because of Title 21 changes. Municipality asked that board member representatives list be kept up to date.
 - Scott Bailey shared that there is no expiration on the CER Board existence.
 - There hasn't been record of meeting minutes or maintenance of the committee recently.
 - This board only meets when something comes up. There was a March meeting on driveways.
- Onsite consumption of marijuana by smoking has been raised.
 - Currently only onsite edibles are allowed.
 - The question of onsite smoking should be presented to voters.
 - The range of restrictions will be highly controlled and regulated. Crystal expressed concern about time required from initiative approval until it can be modified.
 - Questions raised included:
 - Will ventilation be looked at relative to other businesses nearby?
 - Will it be a free-standing facility or constructed within same building as sales, with no interaction between lessors?
 - Assembly postponed this topic until October 8.
 - Let Crystal know how you feel about this issue.
- Stormwater drain utility
 - Municipality wants approval to have new utility established to handle storm water.
 - There are many corroded sinkholes with storm drains.
 - This has been estimated at \$1 billion in projects.
 - EPA requirements include treatment.
 - This would be similar to water or electric utility. Monthly bill and assessment to those using storm drains.
 - Many organizations are exempt and do not contribute to this now (i.e. schools, hospitals, etc.). Fees should be levied on those who contribute most. Then bonding wouldn't be required to pay this cost.
 - The regulatory commission has approved this in concept.
 - Assembly will have final vote if RCA approves. \$100,000 rate study has been funded.
 - Chugiak/Eagle River storm drains are "pristine."
 - Comment: This storm water issue came up in the 90s when a developer did not prepare subdivision infrastructure properly. Concern raised that Eagle River is paying for new storm drains in Anchorage when we don't need them in Eagle River.
- Fire Chief requests improved access in and out of numerous neighborhoods as it is now limited in one road in 40-60 places including Eagle River Road, Skyline Drive and the Hillside. There are matching federal funds (10:1) that may help finance this.
- Artillery Road traffic issue

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- We had \$8 million from state to fix this. After \$1.5 million study was conducted, there still isn't a good solution.
- Crystal participated in a meeting with the municipality and engineering department. Recommendation is to start over because study is over 15 years old. See Crystal for some map samples.
- Planning and Zoning Commission
 - The area near St. Andrew Church has been rezoned from residential to light industrial. A sign company that would like to expand presented request to CER Board.
 - Our comprehensive plan says we need more residential space in Eagle River.
 - An Eagle River representative is needed on this Commission. It takes about 6 months for mayor to approve new representatives.

School Board – Elisa Vakalis

Ms. Vakalis' update included:

- School Board meetings will be held on Tuesdays on schedule opposite the Municipal Assembly. Next meeting is Tuesday, September 17. Meetings are not on the GCI channel but are live streamed on youtube.com.
- We were projected to lose 570 students this year and that has happened.
 - October counts will be done so be sure kids get to school every day in October.
- Budget is expected to be presented in January and approved in February. A \$25-\$30 million shortfall is expected.
 - Finance Committee will determine how to engage with the communities. Please participate in this outreach for your input.
- PEAKS data dashboard is available on the Anchorage School District website. Superintendent will present to the Board on Tuesday. Parents will receive their child's information later.
 - MAP testing is going on now.
- Earthquake repairs
 - FEMA funding - \$550,000 of \$600,000 has already been spent.
 - Determining now what funds are expected and what strings are attached in order to receive the funds.
 - Our backlog of maintenance and earthquake repairs is now in \$100s of millions.
 - 46,000 children need safe schools. This is school board's highest priority.
 - Eagle River Elementary will be on track for repairs because our schools are over capacity, but it probably won't reopen next year.
 - Gruening Middle School - \$26M is needed for repairs. Soil samples came back as satisfactory.
 - Not sure at this time if this will be funded by FEMA or bonds.
 - It will likely be shut down for 2-3 years.
 - Some changes have been made at Chugiak High School to better manage junior and high school students together in one building.

Eagle River Community Patrol – Cliff Cook

- Over the summer, patrols were conducted for total of 212.5 hours, 1791 miles.
- Petty crime continues. Crime has slowed down but we're not sure why.
- Report all crimes/suspicious activities to APD so we can have more patrol cars approved if needed.
- Garage doors left open are easy picking. Do a safety check each night to be sure your home and vehicles are secured.
- Community policing is underway now. Two patrol offices are assigned to our area 14. They should be coming to your community meeting soon.
- Community Patrol volunteered at several events this summer including Special Olympics, Bear Paw Festival and Grad blast.
- Volunteers and candy donations are needed for Boo at the Beach on October 12.

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- Senator Reinbold update by Cliff Cook
 - Eagle River office is moving to Anchorage in October.
 - She will continue to fight for full PFD. Another special session may be held.
- Representative Merrick – Eagle Ridge neighborhood is participating in Treat in the Heat.
- October 6 is a fund-raiser for Eagle River Nature Center.

Questions from attendees:

- What is status of Lions Club tennis courts?
 - Ken McCarty is spearheading a fund-raising effort for \$60,000. Volunteers and apprentice labor are welcome to join the efforts.
 - A skateboard park may be established.

Committee Reports:

CBERRRSA (Road Board): No report

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board (formerly C/ER Consortium): Steve Skipper-Nothing to report.

Education: No report.

Federation of Community Councils – Tom Freeman

- Picnic held. Meetings will start soon.

Parks and Rec: Pete Panarese-No report.

Platting and Zoning: Pete Panarese-No report

Adjourned at 8:07pm.

Next meeting is on November 13, 6:30pm, at Ravenwood Elementary School.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: David Schade (2021); Vice President: Vacant; Treasurer & Education: Patsy Gunn (2021); Parks & Rec: Pete Panarese (2021); CER Consortium: Steve Skipper (2020); Platting & Zoning: Pete Panarese (2021); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Tom Freeman (2020); CBERRRSA Board: James McCurtain (pending approval) (2022)/Arlene Rasic – Alt (2022); Secretary: Joy Webb (2021)