



# GOVERNMENT HILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

c/o Community Councils Center • 1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Jody Sola, President

Stephanie Kesler, Vice President

Peter Partnow, Secretary

Susanne DiPietro, Treasurer

Bob French, FCC Representative

Pete Murphy, Greg Miller, Ron Clark, At-Large Board Members

## GHCC Meeting Minutes January 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes Submitted by Peter Partnow

Meeting conducted via Zoom called to order at 6:32 p.m. by President Jody Sola.

1. **Introduction of Attendees:** Attendees identified via Zoom appearance and noted on the virtual sign-in sheet provided with these minutes.
2. **Approval of agenda:**  
Motion to approve agenda: Stephanie Kesler  
Second: Steve Gerlek  
Motion unanimously approved.
3. **Approval of November 19, 2020 meeting minutes**  
  
Motion to approve: Steve Gerlek  
Second: Stephanie Kesler  
Motion unanimously approved.
4. **Election of officers:** Jody Sola presented the slate of proposed officers: **Jody Sola, President, Stephanie Kesler, Vice President, Peter Partnow Secretary, Suzanne DiPietro, Treasure.** Jody requested any further nominations from the group. Hearing none, Steve Gerlek **moved for unanimous consent of the slate of officers as presented.** Second by Bob French. Motion unanimously approved.
5. **Treasurers report:** Suzanne DiPietro reported balances of the checking and saving accounts, essentially unchanged from last month.
6. **Legislative update:** **Senator Tom Begich** reported the Senate's difficulty in a coalition organizing for the upcoming session, with the Republicans ultimately organizing. Tom anticipates the session will focus on the budget rather than policy issues. Notes that support from the minority is needed to pass the budget. Because interest rates are so low, anticipates there will be options for capital projects (perhaps +/-300 million dollars) and urges GHCC to provide him with list of desired, not overly pricy (e.g. +/- \$20,000) projects. Tom will continue to push for funding for the Port of Alaska. Areas

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he anticipates pushing are no special session, readers act, oil and gas property tax (could raise +/- 108 million), a bill to provide assistance to front line employees such as fire fighters, cab drivers, etc, providing for loan interest loans, etc., and some proposed changes in the State medical insurance. (e.g. to provide coverage for colon/rectal examination) Advised the majority would likely be pushing issues to limit mail in voting and automatic voter registration.

Chris Constant asks if our list of projects should also go through the City and requested a copy of the list.. Jody Sola appointed a committee to prepare the list of projects to be provided to Tom, with Steve Gerlek to head the committee which will also include Bob French and Peggy Wilcox.

**Representative Zack Fields:** advised that the House is not yet organized but will likely have a bipartisan coalition. He has been meeting new members and working on coalition. Like Tom Begich, Zack does not think there will be much substantive legislation. Tristan added information regarding PPP funds and the ability to apply again for low interest loans, noting some changes should advantage small businesses.

7. **Assembly Update:** Chris Constant advised Muni will receive 35 million for from the rent relief. He was hoping for more, as the funding is only about 15% of the perceived need. Funding does not include mortgage relief but can address utility cost relief. Noted some Assembly members want to convert the various pandemic related mandates to ordinances. Chris does not think we need an ordinance re masks and that these decisions are best left in the hands of the executive. Discussed issue of funding for body cameras for the APD. Could be funded immediately or through a special assessment. Notes the Assembly is currently developing bond issues to be on the April ballot. Also, that the filing deadline for the April election is this coming Friday. Noted an issue regarding filling the Acting Mayor's assembly seat. Also mentioned the death threat to an assembly member.

There was a discussion as to what information or requests should be transmitted to the Heritage Land Bank regarding Track J (aka the former defense fuel site) possible use as a dog park relative to the HLB work on the Master Plan. Also some discussion regarding status of the two lots on the East side and any update from the HLB regarding legal status of those lots. We had previously Suzanne DiPietro moved and \_\_\_\_\_ seconded that a letter be written supporting the proposed dog park. Motion passed unanimously.

8. **JBER Update:** Denny Hostetter reported that the Government Hill gate to the base is again open. Denny is with community engagement at JBER and notes that base engineering is interested in any suggestions to improve maintenance to access to the Base. Molly asks if there will be an air show this coming summer. Denny thinks it is unlikely since normally the show is on a two-year rotation and our show had been planned for 2020.

9. **Community:** Donna Mears, NE Community Council, Arts, 1% MOA—had to leave early. Jody passes on info.

**Fire Station #1—Captain Nick Davis,** Senior Captain newly assigned to Station 1 downtown. He has been with fire dept since 2004. They have good safety gear for protection, including dealing with the pandemic. There are 60

AFD members at Station 1 with three shifts of 20, including a number of some new firefighters.

**Mackenzie George, Anchorage Climate Equity Council** works with the Municipality on this Plan. The plan was completed in 2019 and applications to serve on the council are being solicited. (Information about the Council can be found by googling.

**Shanelle Afcan, Solarize Alaska:** a program run by the Alaska Center. Shanelle provides program background, noting to date around 275 installations involving 9 community councils areas. Indicated might be possible for those interested to get program going for 2021 construction, but more likely planning would be needed to have the program operational on the Hill for 2021 if there is sufficient homeowner interest. Noted a presentation regarding the programs can be found by googling on the internet.

**Donna Wilson** school board candidate for Seat F. She has three kids who are out of the ASD. She has been a foster parent for many years. She works with the school business partnership and does a nonprofit work for high school age students. Information about her can be found on her website.

**10. Business Reports: Alaska Railroad--Tim Sullivan** nothing has changed. From 500,000 passengers in 2019 down to 30,000 in 2020. Also, a large reduction in freight. Off season trains remain on hold. Still waiting to see if cruise ships will be sailing this summer but is not overly hopeful.

**Crowley: Greg Miller** reported it has be quiet at the terminals and will continue to be. They have cleaned some tanks and there have been some inspections. Noted that the warehouse has been empty although it was shown to a potential tenant.

**Port of Alaska: Steve Ribuffo** does not quite have the final 2020 wrap up numbers for Port but estimates financial results pretty flat, even with the loss of the cruise ship traffic because of increased activity at the airport and resulting fuel activity from the Port. Noted that the Port Modernization program continues to move ahead and will have pictures at the next GHCC meeting to display. He reports that things are ahead of schedule on the fabrication. The mooring piles that the equipment to tie up ships will be shipped here shortly and anticipate 2021 work should start on time.

**11. Old Business: Solar farm on greenbelt/buffer zone update:** “The Steves” have continued to meet and discuss. Steve Gerlek says the spring will be key time. There will be a site visit to make assessment as to type of uses that will be possible. Solar farm may require a long lead so use of parcel may be divided into two parts. It was noted the dog park would be an “off lead” park. This led to discussion by Chris Constant and others regarding proposed changes to the Muni leash laws to require dogs to be on leash everywhere.

**12. Committee Updates: FCC/AMATS Update:** **Bob French** noted there was a meeting last night including presentation by the Muni appraiser regarding the recently issued green cards. Protest deadline is February 15 and 60/70% of protests are resolved without going through the full appraisal. Chris Constant points out that the appraised values generally went down a bit. Bob French advised there will be an AMATS meeting next week.

**13. Community Comments: Parking along Hollywood Avenue** was discussed, with mention of snow removal problems and traffic problems created by some on street parking there.

Jody mentions some discussion of a **Mayoral and School Board Candidate Zoom Forum** in February or March either on our own or in conjunction with other community council(s). Bob French and others mentioned/discussed possible issues of such meeting being “zoom bombed” and steps that could be taken.

Steve G asks Greg Miller about the nature of the potential interest in the Crowley warehouse (as discussed in Greg’s Business Report) and if such use could impact residents on the Hill. Greg Mill indicated there was nothing definite, and that our concerns would be considered if some potential use materializes.

**Melinda Gant** advises that the Downtown Plan is being reviewed with a stakeholders’ meeting next Thursday. The Ship Creek area is incorporated into this plan including possible Bike connection. The Goal is to have the plan completed by July. Jody encourages interested residents to log into the Thursday meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at \_8:31 p.m.**