



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

November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Peter Partnow

Meeting conducted via Zoom called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Vice President Stephanie Kesler.

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: Suzanne DiPietro
Second: Peter Murphy

Motion unanimously approved.

3. **Approval of October 21, 2021 meeting minutes:** Motion to approve minutes: Tom Brenan
Second: Susanne DiPietro

Motion unanimously approved.

4. **Legislative update:** Senator Tom Begich reported that nothing was accomplished during the special sessions. Indicated that the State has revenue from multiple sources but does not think there will be a revenue plan. Indicated that the Senate members are getting along well. Discussed reapportionment, indicated issues with the plan as recommended and believes there will be legal challenges, which he thinks will be successful due to districts not being contiguous and open meeting act violations. Note his opinion piece: <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2021/11/12/the-alaska-redistricting-boards-last-minute-gerrymandering-failed-our-state/>

Speaks highly of Kelly Merrick from Eagle River who may end up as a candidate in our new district. Tom can be contacted at Sen.Tom.Begich@akleg.gov | 907-465-3704 and sign up for information at Begich Bulletin at <https://aksenatedems.com/senator-tom-begich/>

Tristan Walsh, aide for Representative Zack Fields reported no much has occurred since the end of the session. Echoes Senator Begich's comments re reapportionment. Also spoke highly of Kelly Merrick.

5. **Assembly update:** Chris Constant also speaks highly of Kelly Merrick. On Municipal budget, hearings continuing. Lots of complex issues including mobile crisis team, homelessness. Notes Covid seems to be waning and the mask mandate likely to be lifted. Noted he is working closely with the School District regarding its bond proposal. Regarding Municipal reapportionment, thinks process will likely have public hearing around February 15. Notes a consultant was hired to assist with the

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process. Timing of the municipal election for the new seat not yet clear. Could be a special election to fill the new seat. Information can be found at <https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/Municipality-and-Assembly-Reapportionment-Committee.aspx> or Christopher.Constant@anchorageak.gov

Steve Gerlek raises question of the illegal tree cutting, noting Parks and Recreation lacks code enforcement power. Chris will follow up and requests a letter or resolution from GHCC on the issue.

6. **Treasurer's Report:** Susanne DiPietro reports no deposits or expenditures.
7. **JBRR:** No report.
8. **Anchorage School District:** Margo Bellamy reports the school bond proposal will be for 111 million. Notes there has not been a school bond since 2020. Reports a search for new superintendent will be a national search using a consultant. Notes there will be a work session with the Assembly regarding various items pulled from the Municipal budget by the Mayor. Notes the District is struggling to hire bus drivers, substitute teachers and full-time teachers. Reports both the AEA and Totem collective bargaining agreements have gone to impasse.

Bob French inquires re status of Inlet View and Margo reports both Inlet View and Lake Otis are included in the bond proposal. Bob notes that cuts in benefits has hurt the school district's ability to attract and retain teachers. Legislation to address issues in the teachers retirement system was introduced this year: <http://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/32?Root=HB%20220>

Thomas Pease reports that the school district teachers do not feel they are supported by the school board and as a result, the school district is losing many teachers. He believes there will be further teacher shortage if the benefits issues are not addressed. Margo agrees noting the need to retain existing staff and attract new teachers to the district.

9. **Anchorage Fire Department:** Nick Davis reports high numbers of transports for emergency medical services in October. Bob French asks position of the AFD regarding location of the crisis management team. Nick says he supports the program without regard to the department where it is located. Notes 20 department personnel recently went through training in a shipboard fire fighting class.
10. **Kelly Merrick,** currently the House Representative from Eagle River, District 14 attends, provides some background information about herself (she is a "hockey mom" and has lived in Eagle River for 20 years), and notes she has been redistricted. She can be contacted at 907 250-1443.

11. Business Reports: Alaska Railroad: Tim Sullivan reports the railroad has a five-year plan which can be provided. The plan does not include painting of the water tower. Steve Leider reports he has been working with the railroad regarding the view shed on the east side.

Port of Alaska: Steve Ribuffo reports that the big cranes are no longer here as the in-water work for the cement terminal is completed. Remaining work is above ground. Next year work will need to be done to relocate the floating dock. At this point, Steve has no update on the litigation with the feds which is under advisement and has no further update regarding the possible solar farm.

Vertical Bridge – Stephanie Kesler reports she may have additional information regarding this project in future regarding if there will be a tower and if so, where. Indicates company will work with the GHCC on this. Steve Gerlek reports a walk around was done.

Parks Master Plan—Steve Gerlek notes next step will be a virtual public meeting to collect ideas so we can go to Parks and Recreation for work to be done next summer.

12. Committee Updates: FCC/AMATS Update: Bob French reports that the FCC has some funding available for mailers. Re AMATS notes public comment period extending into January.

Parks Master Plan: Steve Gerlek reports a community meeting has been set for January 12, 2022.

13. Other Community Comments: Stephanie Kesler notes the December meeting, as usual, is cancelled, and that the nominating committee is working.

Merle Akers, a former longtime community resident reported on questions regarding the old communication buildings and questions regarding signage.

Motion to Adjourn: Unanimously passes. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.