

Birchwood Community Council

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MINUTES

BIRCHWOOD Community Council

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 7-9 PM

Hybrid meeting: Eagle River Library Conference Room 170

And via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88131919316?pwd=RDA5ZGYrSlhORFhyOUtCM2dTRmJXdz09>

1. Call to Order: 7:05PM

2. Approval of January Minutes: Patty made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Carol-Minutes approved

3. Announcements:

a) *Reminder: limit reports to 5 minutes or less per presenter*

b) Partnering with Girl Scouts of Alaska: Girl Scout Troops in Eagle River/Chugiak area

- Troop 23060: K-3rd grade, 7 open spots, meets bi-weekly on Wednesdays 4:30-5:30 at Fire Lake Elementary.
- Troop 653: 6th-10th grade, 11 open spots, meets bi-weekly on Sundays 1-3pm at the Elks Lodge in Eagle River.
- Troop 23101: K-1st grade, 12 open spots, meets weekly on Fridays 3:45-5:15 at Ravenwood Elementary.
- Troop 23039: 1st grade, 1 open spot, meets monthly at or near Chugiak Elementary (day of week TBD).

c) Anchorage Assembly voted on January 20 to extend the membership of the MOA Boards and Commissions members may continue to serve until the end of the year 2023, and status of BCC boards:

1. CBERRRSA Matt and Val are good until 6/30/2023. We voted January 11 for both to continue
2. CERAB Debbie is good until 10/14/2023 and Patty is good until 10/14/2025. Voted January 11, 2023 for both to continue.

3. ER Parks and Rec BOS Barbara was contacted a couple of weeks ago and nothing has been done to finish the process of her representing BCC up until 2 weeks ago. BCC alternate shows the seat vacant which we know is not the case as Lexi and Barbara basically switched places around October 14, 2021. This has been a long-time issue.

4. FCC is now Carol Perkins January 2023-January 2025?

5. Chair and Co-Chair effective via election: January 2023-January 2025?

6. Sec/Treasurer: October 2021-October 2023 for Treasurer and December 2021-December 2023 for Secretary

d) Community Room 170 has been reserved through May for BCC-regular meeting place does not have wifi. Waiting for wifi to be installed at the ski chalet to be able to keep Zoom, as an option.

2022-2023 board: Debbie Ossiander, CERAB and Co-Chair; Matt Cruickshank, Co-Chair, Road Board rep; Ben Westveer: Secretary for Publicity, Carol Perkins FCC Rep; Barbara Trost, Parks and Rec rep; Patty Friend, Member at large, and CERAB alternate; Val Jokela, Secretary-Treasurer, alternate Road Board

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e) Townhall meeting February 17 at the Chugiak Senior Center from 5:30-7PM hosted by Senator Merrick, and representatives Allard and Saddler

f) JBER announcements: Joy will not be able to attend our meetings until May
Please see the following range activity scheduled for February 2023.

The ranges scheduled for the following days may close Site Summit and Arctic Valley Road. Firing .50 caliber ammunition on Grezelka range has an effect on Arctic Valley Road, and there will be road guards posted at barriers to allow traffic to pass periodically throughout the day.

Grezelka:

31 Jan - 3 Feb 8AM – 11PM daily

6 - 8 Feb 8AM – 6PM daily

21 - 24 Feb 8AM – 5PM daily

Military training (small arms fire) will be heard in the city of Eagle River and Birchwood during the dates and times below:

30 Jan - 9 Feb 8AM – 2AM daily

10 - 15 Feb 8AM – 2AM daily

27 Feb - 3 Mar 8AM – 7PM daily

Military training (Indirect) will be conducted on the following dates and explosions will be heard and felt in the cities of Wasilla, Eagle River, Birchwood, and Anchorage during the dates and times below:

30 Jan - 3 Feb 8AM – 9PM daily 120mm and 60mm mortars

7 - 21 Feb 8AM – 2AM daily 105mm Howitzer, 120mm, 81mm and 60mm mortars

Military training (small arms fire) will be heard in the Muldoon area during the dates and times below:

6 - 22 Feb 8AM – 2AM daily

Noise complaints can be submitted to Public Affairs at jber.pa@us.af.mil or 907-552-5387
Low flying helicopters—troops lower 48 and did not realize the noise impact.

g) 10-Year review CC boundaries-survey response extended through Feb 17@5PM-we have a rep from our area-Karl von Lührte from the South Fork CC

h) City approved Accessory dwelling language...more flexibility, bad part is: structure could be used as a_?__and you would have to register the building

i) FEMA still working on earthquake repairs—want to build more affordable housing grants, comp plans, hazardous maps. \$6M available to check to see if your house is sound from the earthquake.

J) Volunteer fire dept. Darryl Parks missed deadline for filing—so, there will be a write-in campaign

K) City uses traffic calming techniques—no way to help Chugiak-Eagle River as it is based upon a certain number of cars and speed.

4. Reports:

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- a) FCC Report: Carol Perkins-presentation on homelessness, Barrett Inn and Comfort Inn businesses calling for income-vouchers, residence leases, no families, each property separate business, sinks, microwaves, rent 850-1150.00. Daniel Foland-new parking ordinance, large lots not being used, looked at guidelines from other cities, increase ADA parking, better bike parking, shared parking, green cards, another special meeting assembly Amy and other issues, not solved Aux housing. Approved money information wild lands.
- b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report CIP projects for Birchwood CC area: Matt Cruickshank-Starner Bridge fully funded. Unanimous support. Aurora Borealis homeowner before easement given up wants the old easement vacated. We currently pay 1.9 mills. This is broken down to 1 CIP and .9 operating budget. McKenna contract extended terms, and there is a significant rate increase, so used the fund balance to pay the difference and will raise the mil rate .94. Approve CIP next month. BCC gotten their big project. Local road board to discuss issues.
- c) Parks and Recreation Report: Barbara Trost-next Monday meeting BOS, nothing on cemetery. Cost wifi chalet. On list to accomplish for Parks and Rec. Plans for agenda this coming Monday. Working on it can't get to until spring. Barbara will ask.
- d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Debbie Ossiander-none
- e) Treasurer's report: Val Jokela \$152.00.
- f) CVFD: Acting Fire Chief John Della Crose: no one ran for vacancy, looking for another truck, 2 out of state finalists for chief position.
- g) Birchwood Patrol Report: no word
- h) Legislative / Assembly / School board reports:

Dan Saddler: House Representative Majority Leader and is participating on the following committees: House Natural Resources, House Health and Social Services, House Labor and Workforce Development, House Military and Veterans Affairs, House Revenue, House Legislative Council, House Resources, House Labor and Commerce. Cathy Tilton is Speaker of the House, and Calvin Schrage is House Representative Minority Leader. Priorities-formulating, support resource dev, strong national defense. School funding issue, matched by portability funding. Retention employees, share risk, not state debts, affordable housing and child care. Representative Saddler can be reached at 907-465-3783 rep.dan.sadderaklegislative.gov.

Carl Jacobs-school board report-students can attend school board meetings, FY24 budget-balanced budget-reduction services, \$16M funds from SOA, gained \$28M thru vacant positions, not enough educators in our state. Bills legislature: SB52 BSA not adjusted since 2016, cut funding public education, due to the way the formula works, as property values increases shifts funding to local tax payers- \$16M. Passed landmark student attrition- dozens of kids will get at least 20 minute lunch, and the staff will make the cafeteria more efficient which will make for better academic outcomes. Charter optional-lottery open through 15th. Assembly school bond major construction project \$37.8 million. Birchwood Elementary School is slated for a security vestibule with 2 sets locking doors, and the entry visible by staff. Curriculum-K-3 reading curriculum adopted and recommended by Dunleavy administration. Higher focus on evidence-based construction. Support schools through truancy-attendance 90% this fall. Any inconsistency process---no known gaps. Hierarchy to address is: Supervisor, Principal, higher ups to work through the problem. Carol-problems kids coming in late consistently---worse problems at Title 1. Varies by family. No one broad approach to mitigate. Go through chain-adjust school start times. Townhall opportunities.

Robin Dern: assembly interim rep-2022 accomplishment report-increase snow plowing funds by \$15M. Funded Eklutna restoration of Eklutna River for migrating salmon. Liaisons: Working with school district re: Anchorage pandemic recovery funds, early ed, alcohol tax as a source. propriety

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is for a cemetery, drainage, permitting, Crystal K. is behind comprehensive elections for positions, as we keep extending so representatives can vote. Funded \$35.9M in affordable housing, \$200M port, streamline for home builders, unintended consequence ADU's. Public safety-new emergency equipment, mobile crisis team big accomplishment, mental health issues, recruitment hard for APD/AFD, improve for base student allocation, community connectivity, long term transportation, secure local control of 5th and 6th Ave. Chugiak pool-get project funded. Business growth. 1. Chamber new leadership? Acting Ex director- 2. Access locally Chugach State park-contentious-3. Big deal snow plowing-our contractor used in town. Lots of confusion around plowing—Priority that dedicated funds stay in Eagle River. Complaints snowplow operators-confusion on contracts, rates, not enough trucks or dump sites. 4. When discussion is around funding the Senior center it means Anchorage and not our Senior Center.

5. Appearances: Nancy Clark, Manager, Chugiak-Eagle River Library- update-requests for curbside services-reinstate on limited basis Feb 25-1000-1300, 1500-1700-appt only. Sat only and for only books on hold. Garden programs starting March 11. Working with Anchor Gardens. Programs summer. Community school fair Feb 25 1300-1600. Almost fully staffed-position vacant over 1.5 years. Have had only a staff of 3-4 only from staff of 8. 2nd biggest library in circulation after Loussac-close to 30% distribution compared to the Loussac.

6. Old Business

- a) Update Starner Bridge/Aurora Borealis: Debbie/Matt-priority capsus project \$1M funding. CBERRRSA paid for the bridge out of maintenance money. Work will start summer 2023. Paid for design 4-5 months ago.
- b) Chugiak CC CER Cemetery Bond: Debbie Ossiander -big hassle proposed bond not area wide just service area supported. Funding has been area wide-Tom O'Malley historically area wide funding. Moved from Health Dept to Parks and Recreation. Fear is we do not want bond to go forward, as we are paying for Anchorage, so not sure how it works if not area wide. HLB willing to give land away to Parks? Does that assume parks will pay for it?
- c) Birchwood Airport Master Plan-Val Jokela-no updates
- d) Beach Lake Master Plan-Val/Barbara-working through process-expecting engineering estimate for grade separated trail in master plan. First step to go through how much money this project will be short. Will Taygan has \$450K for this. Group does not want to spend that much and more costs. Can't more beyond until estimate. Go back to councils and what is doable. Support from Parks and Rec—Josh Durand lead project. Coordinator CMBR and mushers. Large efforts end of Malcom Drive for parking lot at this location. CMBR improve Peters Creek trail. Presently there is money to be had. CMBR ruined it at Edmonds Lake and one attendee thought it is now too dangerous to hike those trails.

7. New Business

- a) Comprehensive Plan update-Matt-Comp Plan update-last Dec 2006-every 10 years redone. It was due 2016: it is the governing document for our community and a reference for positions. We want to write our own plan. Funding professional service agreement. City has to update plan through city planners working with community. Debbie moved to make this a priority request to update comp plan-seconded by Carol. Passed.
- b) CER Community Chairs-Matt-FCC Chairs-unique opportunity to be in one space-CERAB. Like to form new group for our area-stronger voice-mechanism leaders of

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councils to regular meetings. Planting seed. CERAB only land use issue limited. If something else comes up, can't address through CERAB. Carol will send out a letter to other councils with suggestion. Each council take an action to form a body. Do we have power to do this...all types of code now for CC's. Thing sent out for bylaws. Questioning by-laws with CBERRSA by laws and approved by assembly.

c) 2018 assembly passed a law if a building is abandoned, they can fine you. Requirement is to put it on list that OA is keeping code enforced. A neighbor bought a vacant property on the list, and is working on cleaning it up. All that remains is a mobile home. He is getting fined \$1K. It is structurally sound- folks were living in it. Code enforcement is confusing abandoned and vacant in and rolling them into one pot. If vacant can be fined? Condos are on list of vacant condos. Definition of vacant...just has to be on the list and you get fined? Code enf—vacant same as abandoned. He said he was using the mobile home for building storage, and they did not accept it.

8. Open Forum: no topics

9. Adjournment: Matt made a motion to adjourn and Patty seconded 8:27