

# Birchwood Community Council

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## MINUTES

### BIRCHWOOD Community Council

Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 7-9:30 PM

Hybrid meeting: Beach Lake Ski Chalet

And via Zoom

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

#### 1. Call to Order: 7:01 PM

**2. Approval of April Minutes:** Debbie moved to approve, and Patty seconded: Carol Perkins had a correction to the minutes; "I believe that the road board said they could not help Randy vacate his BLM easements as that would require them to do the same for everyone affected by the road improvement. That would be cost prohibitive."

#### 3. Announcements:

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

b) **JBER:** May 4-19: Northern Edge Exercise, May 29: Memorial Day event at Delany Park Strip Vet's Memorial 0930-1030, Register for iSport if recreating on base, Access updates to Ft Rich National Cemetery for Memorial Day Services-jber.jb.mil

c) Bike Month events-Bike to work day May 19-Val

d) Mark Butler retiring from FCC June 30 -20 years. Begin recruitment for new rep

e) 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade funding-Debbie-long time funders stepped aside- Department needs help

f) Free spruce trees from Anchorage Audobon Society details at:

<http://www.mrwhitekeys.com/trees.html>

g) AFD Open house May 20 10-2PM Local 1264 AFD training center Airport Heights

h) AMATS: AMATs up for public comment: when discussing trails and trail expansion there was no mention about Eagle River parks, and no discussion about transit for Eagle River-Chugiak. Debbie would like to send the same comments from BCC. Motion to approve to make those 2 points-Add ER parks, and public transport to our area. BCC's comments: "Why does page 18 speak to conferring on trail development with Anchorage Parks and not with Eagle River Parks? and Why does the extensive section on transit remain silent on providing or returning transit service to the almost 30,000 people who live in Chugiak-Eagle River (most of whom commute along the Glenn into the Bowl)?"

i) Seward to Glenn connection planning meeting-PEL Planning and Environmental Linkage Public Meeting #3 May 18 430-630 Fairview rec center. The Planning document is a government mandate and needs to be completed in 2 years.

#### 4. Reports:

a) FCC Report: Carol Perkins-restructuring FCC and figuring out how FCC will work with Mark retiring at the end of June. She attended an emergency meeting May 10, 2023.

1. Mayor Bronson attended the meeting via ZOOM. He said there would be a newsletter that he would have FCC distribute. The main point of his presentation was the Anchorage port is in poor condition but there are on-going repairs and upgrades. Money is coming from the federal, state, city governments and a settlement of the law suit. 1.5 billion will be needed in 2025 to finish the work.

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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2. FCC still has not received the grant from the Muni. Working on savings and a gift from a retiring assembly woman. The problem is unexpected requirement to have cyber security insurance, a late report and the new contract. The Assembly wants a budget also.
3. Two committees were set up. One to do a search for a new manager possibly full time if there is money. The other committee is called 'The Way Forward'. To review the by-laws and goal of the organization.
4. There is the possibility of a meeting in June due to the number of items needing attention.
5. Discussions about training for council members. 5 years ago, FCC hired a trainer. In the past the Ombudsman office did a training. Mark has a training manual that he can send if requested. Hard copy but may be able to email digital.
6. Many community patrol grants are due to expire at the end of June. Councils should check on their dates to renew. MT View council has a patrol car that they need to sell soon. Must go to a non-profit.
7. CIP reports are due June 15th. They should be completed by 1 person only.
8. UAA has requested that archiveable materials be submitted by one person only. They can only accept paper.
9. Mark Butler retiring FCC manager made a special report recognizing people whom he felt made the community councils successful. He gave a very good presentation of Debbie Ossiander, listing all of the positions that she held in her long involvement in civic duties.
  - b) CBERRRSA Road Board Report: Update Starner Bridge/Aurora Borealis-Matt Cruickshank-Starner-dates pushed back lots of items for procurement back order, notice to proceed end of July, but will wait until September because of salmon in the river. Aurora Borealis-meeting request from the homeowner to get a temporary easement-then will be able to maintain the road and get supplies in. Agreement to survey the land moved forward. Owner does not like to sign a temporary easement and go around the property, so will have to engineer a retaining wall around the property. Another hurdle-so will figure out the route. Want to get the road back up and open, with speed mitigation. Trying to stay with basic standards. Reason not go across corner-if person sign over easement, that would be the best. Meeting last Monday of the month. Any sign if that property owner will change his stance? It takes him going into the office to sign his name, and he is not engaging.
  - c) Parks and Recreation Report: Barbara Trost-Tanya and Jeff will talk about Beach Lake West Lake and Chugiak pool. Mike Braniff-is hiring and Eagle River PnR is fully staffed. Jeff Urbanas is the new landscape architect, Tanya Lieberman is the Deputy Director. Lifeguard training starts after Memorial day week-end. McDonald Center has a new website and logo, with lots of summer camp offerings.
  - d) Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board: Debbie Ossiander-nothing to report
  - e) Treasurer's report: Val Jokela \$184.00. Closed po box and received back \$3.00 key deposit
  - f) CVFD: Chief Scott Fisher: Report: 104 volunteers, 10 ALS responders, 72 calls in April, ytd 346 calls hours 4, 913 volunteer hours with 20, 398 hours total year to date. Apparatus and facility rescue 33 project-not spend money go after bond properly. Engine 31 due to be replaced. APD chief needs to give blessing and then assembly. Work on air compressors on a couple of trucks. Station 31/35 have new compressors. Ready for fire season.
  - g) Birchwood Patrol Report: APD Briefing: Officer Larosa we have the best-behaved area. Works with BCC patrol. If you don't call, they don't know. They look for patterns. Mailbox thefts-post on internet and there were no calls. Encourage call and post fb. We have some vehicle tapering, burglary, community crimemap.com.-tool. Appreciate training facility at Birchwood Airport. Mail theft drastically dropped. Debbie-the proposed marijuana establishment-assembly saying

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undercover marijuana sales in Eagle River. Officer Larosa stated there's lots of drugs from all over. Drug unit noted that big busts have slowed down statewide.

h) Legislative / Assembly / School board reports:

**Dan Saddler**-majority leader-1 week out from the 121st day. Budget will be passed next Wednesday May 17. Capital operating budget 50/50 split and proposed \$2600.00 PFD. Put in more than \$175M- 1x funding for education. Senate wants 25% 25% funding. Conference committee waiting for sSenate to pass. Starner Bridge is not looking good: the Senate is not supporting it. There was money in last years budget. Matt noted that CBERRRSA passed funding up to \$1.2M guaranteed for Starner.

**Kevin Cross**-ER Valley CC also supported and submitted a resolution to transfer \$4.5M from the remaining \$5.2M for Artillery Road Interchange. They also supported keeping CC boundaries where they are at. Assembly land use and land zone- R7/R6-new technology can have higher density, lots of grants AWWU for utility expansion \$4.1M for sewer and water improvements, passed budget- retired more in bonds, 340 short average vacancies 20-40% understaffed, so property taxes are down. 6K folks left Anchorage and the average age was 25-35 years old. Create more affordable houses, land use houses. Resolution extended to June 20-deal with cemetery not area wide and put in new Anchorage Cemetery Board for area wide bond. Not just paying with our property taxes. June 20 new area wide board. Have not done a cemetery in 100 years.

Congratulations to Matt as the liason for labor board.

**Carl Jacobs**- Acknowledged 2023 graduating class. Prop 14 funds -child care-new start times: 8AM for elementary, 845 AM middle school and 9AM for high school. Board policy amendment house bill-ASD now requires 1 hour course on the science of addiction. May be approved early June. Andy Hollerman will be the new POC for the school board in September for BCC.

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## 5. Appearances

a) MEA Parks Substation Update: Julie Estey -foot print small, up and running and reliable power. Still trees to plant-end of summer site walk. Mark Hamm represents the district. Election being held for 2 at large seats: Anastasia Buretta and Dan Tucker. Level power-sign up for budget billing. Eklutna hydro project-working in 25 years do studies ways to bring water back into Eklutna River. There will be public meetings in fall.

b) Beach Lake Regional Master Plan, and Chugiak Pool-Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation- Deputy Director Tanya Lieberman/Jeff Urbanas-Planner PM-Deputy Director, Jeff Urbanus land scape architect with MOA since 2001. A lot of noise about West Lake Trail and he acknowledged that he hopes to clarify, as to date, it has not tracked well- alignment proposed. User group gets grant typical to approach PnR. Social trail runs north side of lake. Casual user more multi-use traffic. Preplanning feasibility analysis. Question was posed: How can you document public meetings- with several plans? If plan at this point? All decided at this point other ways to go forward. Bridge spoken to is \$1M..no way bridge going to be built. Is there a safe option? Deficiency in park staff- will this far into process bringing on line adopted. Worked 450K Arbor program...this is the section of trail once funding. Originally asked for \$1.2M...complaints not a plan, not a process. Will changed his idea and parks and rec not involved. Meeting in Nov-December so much confusion BOS asked that PnR step in the middle of process. Consolidated public process BOS voted on moving forward. Feasibility analysis- only process in Beach Lake Master Plan feasible option to move forward. All decided feasible option to move forward with an at grade crossing. Primary user group move forward barrier fencing both sides of crossing, signage, chicane gates either side of trail-minor 2 gates have an opening-both sides. Recommend moving forward-adopted element BLMP. Improves the safety of the crossing. Preplan process-followed all steps. Analysis-bridge? Chicane fencing. Conceptual 35% approved. Not at 35%... all other things...Debbie-BLMP approved to protect dog mushing ---BCC got fingers into it. Very protective—Jill-avoid its a lot of noise-dismissive concerns raised in plan...BLMP-in moving forward going from grade sep-stepping down or up—who is liable if dog on trail crossing trail same time team is there? Seasonal use-a lot Will coming again and again...Kourosh Partow-CDMA-originally Will's presentation was 100% opposed. Jeff and Tanya-100 apposed had meeting with CDMA-any multi-use CDMA-at grade crossing- 2 grants to open up trails-site wise. Sponsorship by Polaris-KP sees anything to be lost he'll be out there. Mark Hamm-thinks coming...reality being used. Safe option-it is encouraging Birchwood Camp using chicanes. Alan-comment regardless of how move forward-missed staffing and board and public—info from greater public missing. Looking at BCC public meetings-2 Nov meetings-feasibility study does not look like...come up with better process—need to dial in. There is alot more involved-unique situation with the mushers. Do not RR through process and leave out the public. NW Quarter—fought for years. PnR involved the council...so much head ache and heartache-PnR not there—vote happened 2 days ago. Matt- 1 thing seen---large changes to the community: Comp plan is the guiding document—protects the community. It is alarming that it is so easy to by-pass protecting documents including the BLMP. Val asked the question as to why all the other Master Plans under PnR followed the normal process except that BMLP was the only one adopted by the assembly as an Ordinance? Will send update of the status of the pool-last failure was in 2012. PnR is nursing it along. The BOS approved up to \$4M for safety standards. Want to do the job right and not have to open and close all the time because the job was only partially completed.

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## 6. Old Business

a) Birchwood Airport Master Plan-Val Jokela-stakeholder meeting to be held May-June- Ken noted that there are other AK Airports (Aniak and Dillingham)that there is a move to shorten the runways, as was originally proposed for Birchwood

## 7. New Business

a) Matt/Val CBERRRSA terms expire June 30-continue or nominations open-Debbie motioned to support, Jill seconded and the motion passed. They need to go on “On-Board website to submit paperwork. Appointment dates for both are aligned

b) Heritage Land Bank Plan-Debbie Ossiander-comment on HLB work plan on line. Page 15-disposal fair market value plan calls for HLB asking parks to buy from HLB? And if PnR does not want the land, HLB will sell to the public. Page 21-new site selection don’t need another study Matt to adopt comments as submitted by Debbie, second from Patty. Comment to HLB advisory board. Ordinance change how cemeterys are done Approve comments-“ We have two major concerns with the draft HLB plan, specifically in its treatment of the cemetery site marked for Chugiak-Eagle River:

1. Page 15, Chapter 3 speaks of disposal for fair market value of HLB 1.111. Why is HLB asking for payment on property intended for municipal public use? HLB property belongs to the Municipality and is to be used to benefit its citizens. I disagree that one part of the Muni should pay another part for use of public land, particularly when it is unclear where eventual management authority for a cemetery will be centered. I also strongly disagree that this property should even be considered for sale to the public. It has been identified through a site study as the preferred cemetery site, a public use that is to benefit the citizens of the Municipality. This use is part of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. It is totally wrong to sell it.
2. Page 20, states that there will be attempts to complete a site selection study for potential CER cemetery use. This study was commissioned and has been completed. It has been approved at a meeting of the Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board and has been presented to ER Parks. The CER Advisory Board was specifically created to advise the Municipality on land use issues in Chugiak Eagle River and to monitor compliance with the Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive plan. Why is there consideration for redoing the previous site study?”

c) Request for ERVCC representative for Housing and Homelessness Committee Assembly approved AR 2023-97, As Amended, a resolution adopting the “Clean Slate Strategy” on March 21, 2023. **Chugiak-Eagle River District Community Councils have been asked to choose one representative to be a part of this work with the Housing and Homelessness Committee.** Each community council representative should be a conduit for the opinions of the respective community councils within their Assembly district. A draft timeline for this work has been developed and can be found here, along with other helpful documents:

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/Clean-Slate-Approach.aspx>

Ken McCarty is interested-involved with homelessness and mental health-lots of homeless across from CHS, involved with mental health trust issues. Homeless have-services in Anchorage, but not here. Central place folks can get to. -select someone from BCC-Carol Perkins representing BCC-lived in Chugiak-40 years-homeless problem for long time...will

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be that way until housing goes down. Need for broad consensus as it is not only 1 issue that causes homelessness. Addiction, is a big part. And there is no affordable housing. Forest Park is closing down so, where are the residents going to go? Transportation-people mover in town. Free rides. Outside perspective. All CC's make a recommendation on who they want. Going to all councils to seek support. Ken is attending all councils. Carol-could go to CC's, too. Voted for a motion to support both-2 nominations: took a paper vote, and Ken's name will be recommended.

## 8. Action Items

a) Resolution Eagle River traffic mitigation study-2011 CBD study. Solutions connectivity issues. 2 grants totaled \$8.5M. 2017-2 different plans-11 priorities...most feasible project—hot topics-low priority projects...grab Centerfield connection, 2017 \$6M left-plan traction 1 way loop, Pizza Man, church, until refine Artillery Road interchange—projects could continuously be ripped up? 2021-new plan spend money-DOT professional estimates \$4.5M give portions funds to DOT-did not want to acknowledge-transfer \$2M..now pursue design Centerfield---1 way turn lane by Johnson tire—3M remaining funds go to DOT. See something done with remaining funds \$5.2M—used up by Dowl. Passed by ER Valley CC. Transfer \$4.2M to DOT and fully fund...Debbie motion to support, seconded by Patty. Revise line 20—ER correct typo...and accept. No plans for artillery—funding for design—if have ready design easier to secure funding for Artillery Road as it is not a CBERRRSA project. Resolution passes.

b) Resolution Beach Lake Regional Master Plan Ordinance AO 2011-70 move to approve, second Master Plan does call for grade separated crossing. PnR said it was not prescriptive to mitigate safety concerns. PnR feels way forward. Patty-CDMA significant group but not the only group. 1 user we have Master Plan letter does not negate what master plan says. Alan: Does it state Citizens Sara Doyle, planner outlined not work well unless grade separated. Debbie-draw folks to last sentence ask for plan to be reviewed and updated. Carol Perkins observation: Starner total cost: \$1.2M...why is bridge going to cost so much over a trail? Conceptual analysis-feasibility analysis by Boutet..complaints..supposed to be discussed...have some drawings and some calculations. Total plan with overhead \$5M Barbara: it was handed out to BOS without discussion..cost analysis...feasibility portion. It is an important document for decisions paid \$20K to Boutet...conceptual crossing analysis..culverts and bridges...double tunnel, single tunnel, draft and final version. Language-no year round trail: Amend plan—assign person for input from community groups, another public meeting—go to assembly or go to parks and rec and go to BOS. Resolution passed.

**9. Adjournment** (BCC will meet again September 13) Jill-motion to adjourn, second by Debbie...9:10PM.