

Eagle River Valley Community Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 8, 2024 6:30pm
REGULAR MEETING
Alpenglow Elementary School
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Call to order by Julie Jessen at 6:30pm. Quorum was established.

Webpage: Federation of Community Councils

Meeting documents are here: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/viewfolder?id=4549>

Safety Moment: Watch out for moose!

Approve Minutes: Motion by Tom Roth, seconded by Pete Panarese to approve April 10 meeting. Approved by unanimous vote.

Representatives' Reports

AK Senator Kelly Merrick – no report

AK Representative Jamie Allard – no report

Anchorage Assembly Report – Scott Myers

- Be sure to vote in mayoral run-off.
- Assembly reversed Bronson's budget vetoes. Property tax bill will go out soon.
- \$10,000 property value exemption approved for volunteer fire department and volunteer EMS members.
- Approved budget includes \$300,000 to replace generator at Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center.
- "No right turn on red" under consideration for downtown business district.
- Holton Hills subdivision in Girdwood was approved.
- 179 blighted properties identified throughout Anchorage. Federal funds being pursued to redevelop the properties pending agreement with owner. Representative Myers will investigate number in Eagle River area.
- Every muni department is hiring. Code enforcement and AFD are the closest to fully staffed.
- Submit our feedback/prioritization on mayor's survey regarding capital improvement project list.
- Appointments to muni boards are being delayed pending outcome of mayoral run-off.
- Budget did exceed tax cap – Building service area cuts brought it back under cap. Doesn't impact ER.

School Board Report – no report

Holleman_Andy@asdk12.org, 907-742-1101 Extension 1

Anchorage Fire Department

- Fire season is upon us. Call if you see smoke and we will investigate.
- FireSpy devices have been placed on cell towers around the municipality to detect smoke/fire and report to fire department.
- Check muni.org AFD website for current fire danger conditions and to determine if you can do open burn. <https://www.muni.org/Departments/Fire/Wildfire/Pages/BurnPermits.aspx>
- If open burn for yard debris is allowed on a particular day, keep it small and hot (i.e. no smoke). If a smoke report is filed, you will be shut down.

New Business:

Alaska Solar

Nick Leonard, 907.717.0721, nick@saksolarpower.com, WWW.aksolarpower.com 907.885.2551

- AK Center has sponsored Solarize Anchorage in past but is no longer doing so.
- Would be happy to do a program for our community council, thereby reducing cost for all participants.
 - Need someone to spearhead effort to communicate opportunity and identify participants.
 - Winter months or no direct sun – doesn't work well (e.g. November-January).

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- How to recycle solar panels? Most are good for 35 years so no need to upgrade in spite of technology improvements.
- Grid-Tie technology used. Excess power is fed back into grid. Reimbursements is on monthly basis and varies across local utilities.
- In case of heavy snow (2 ½-3 ft of snow) on glass tiles – clear off with broom or hire someone to do so.
- Most installations are 12-24 tiles @ ~\$1000/tile. Smallest installation – 6 panels.
- 30% federal tax credit still available.

Public Participation in Ram Valley/Alaska Trails Study and Planning, Julie Jessen

- At April meeting, ERVCC agreed to draft letter urging DNR and Alaska State Parks to do more public involvement related to Ram Valley access.
- Ms. Jessen read proposed letter. Letter will be sent to Ben Corwin, Superintendent, Chugach Region; Ricky Gease, Director, Alaska State Parks; Senator Kelly Merrick, Alaska Senate and Representative Jamie Allard, Alaska House.
- Ms. Haley Johnson, Ben Corwin and Ricky Gease are invited to our September 11 meeting.

Ram Valley Access project

Haley Johnston, Deputy Director, haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org | 907.444.5766

- Ms. Johnston reviewed recent activities related to Ram Valley access project (See April meeting notes).
- Criteria established by AK Trails for potential access points and trails which included
 - Legal land access and parking.
 - Parking already exists and is legal.
 - Challenge of the trail to include diversity of user types.
 - Community and neighbor impacts.
 - Sustainable trail is possible (not requiring excessive maintenance)
 - Need to acquire property
 - Route connects to other trails or forms a loop
 - Wildlife impact
 - Doesn't impact sheep negatively (count has been decreasing for many years)
 - Avalanche zone
 - Year-around access safety
- Timeline – have 5 years with current grant to complete feasibility study.
 - Criteria above will be used to rank potential access points/trails.
 - September – rough draft that is ready for additional public input.
 - Goal to complete revised draft by end of 2024.
- If funding is obtained for construction, another 5-year timeline will be established.
- How to provide input:
 - A survey link will be created on AK Trails website soon.
 - Eagle River Nature Center will have info board. Leave comments via paper form or use QR code.
 - Hope to have public forum at ER Nature Center, possibly in September.
- Submit your substantive comments to haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org, Ben.Corwin@alaska.gov, Ricky.Gease@alaska.gov.
- Not currently connected to other trails. Look at AK Long Trail website and provide feedback now to increase support from Bureau of Land Mgmt.
- Ms. Johnston will return to ERVCC in September to provide another update.

Eagle River Valley Community Council Annual General Meeting and Elections

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Board Positions expiring May 2024 (3-year term). Officers are chosen from Board. Board members generally fill officer or committee positions.

For each position listed below, a motion was made and seconded. Then vote was held.

- Motion by Tom Roth, seconded by Tom Freeman to elect to Alex Jorgensen to Board Seat #3, Pete Panarese to Board Seat #6 and Sarah Davenport to Board Seat #7. Approved by unanimous vote.

Officers (Chosen from Board for one-year term)

- Motion by Tom Roth, seconded by Tom Freeman to retain Julie Jessen as President. Approved by unanimous vote.
- Motion by Pete Panarese, seconded by Tom Freeman to retain Tom Roth as Vice-president. Approved by unanimous vote.
- Motion by Harry Young, seconded by Tom Roth to elect Sarah Davenport as Secretary/Treasurer. Approved by unanimous vote.

Federation of Community Councils delegate

Motion by Tom Freeman, seconded by Pete Panarese to elect Alex Jorgensen as ERVCC FCC Delegate. Approved by unanimous vote.

Standing Committees (one-year term)

- Motion by Tom Freeman, seconded by Pete Panarese to retain Tom Roth on Education Committee. Approved by unanimous vote.
- Motion by Tom Freeman, seconded by Tom Roth to retain Pete Panarese on Platting Board. Mr. Panarese is willing to retain position but would step aside if someone with real estate background could take position. Approved by unanimous vote.
- Motion by Tom Roth, seconded by Tom Freeman to retain M. Dean Cox on Emergency Preparedness. Approved by unanimous vote.

Old Business:

Eagle River Community Patrol - Cliff Cook

- Patrolled 18 hrs. covering 139 miles.
- Petty crime is increasing in our area. Be sure to report it to 311 or 911. Lock your home, car and garage doors.
- Some instances of squatters in the area. It is very difficult to have them removed. Call Code Enforcement and your Assembly representatives (Scott Myers & Mark Littlefield).
- Vandalism is increasing.
- Secure your items out of site at trail heads.
- Eagle River Community Council is joining the Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce to determine if membership could be of mutual benefit. \$95 to join for one year. Potential benefits include networking, partnership/collaboration opportunities, increased visibility, advocacy and representation, and access to resources and information.
- Report all crime & incidents to 311 or 911.
- Bears are awake. Secure trash. Watch out for moose & their calves.

Platting – Pete Panarese

- Development of Eagle River Crossing (85-87 units) at the end of Driftwood Bay is progressing. We had a presentation from The Boutet Company in October, 2023. On October 31, 2023, a letter outlining our concerns was sent to The Boutet Company, Eagle River Street Maintenance and David Whitfield, Municipality of Anchorage Platting Board. It appears the concerns our CC raised regarding connection to Eagle River Lane are not being addressed.

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Chugiak/Eagle River Parks and Rec Board – Ruth Armstrong – no meeting held.

- Next meeting is May 20 at Beach Lake Chalet.

Federation of Community Councils – Joy Webb

- Arianna Bellizzi, Executive Director of Federation of Community Councils update:
 - Town Hall series is planned on what is a community council. Will be recorded and posted online for reference. FCC delegates should consider volunteering for these panel discussions.
 - FCC Website re-design is planned including logo and graphics re-design, pending funding.
- FCC office is being recalibrated. Setting expectations that things will change. Executive Board will review changes first and then bring before community council delegates. New executive director reports to president of FCC.
- Officer elections will be held on May 15. Current nominations: Amanda Moser-President; Daniel George-VP, Mike Edington-Treasurer, Evan Leaf-Secretary.
- FCC Meetings are open to the public. Next meeting is May 15, 6-8pm, either in person at BP Center, Birch Room or via Zoom.
- Mayoral update, Assembly update and School Board updates were provided.

Emergency Preparedness - Dean Cox

- More volunteers are welcome to join our Community Emergency Response Team. Contact Mr. Cox for more information.
- Training for Community Emergency Response Team consists of ~12 hours of online coursework followed by one (1) day of in-person training. In person training will be held Saturday, July 6 at Town Center, Room 170.
- Current team members should notify Mr. Cox when they complete the online training.

Education - Tom Roth

- Significant changes to school start times go into effect on August 15. Elementary – 8am; Middle schools-8:45am; High Schools-9:30am. Monday start times will be one hour later.
- High school graduation: Monday, May 13. Chugiak HS-2pm; Eagle River HS 7pm.
- It is unlikely charter schools will see any changes.
- \$60M deficit is projected for next year.
- Administration presented 5-year plan to school board. School closure planned but no specific schools have been identified.

Chugiak/Eagle River Advisory Board - Julie Jessen – no meetings held.

- Any progress on scheduling a Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan update? Unlikely until after Chapter 21 changes are completed.

CBERRRSA (Road Board) – Crystal Kennedy

- Eagle River Traffic Mitigation study for Artillery Rd is on hold.
- Anticipate some changes to Artillery Rd/Cross Dr. with design 65% complete. Cross Dr. to Pizza Man will become one-way. Brooks Drive will connect to Centerfield Dr. Public meeting will be held this month. Feedback is being solicited.
- Budget has been established with mill rate of 2.1 (up from 2.0), approved cap. McKenna's contract (snow removal) for next year increased by 24%.
- Street sweeping will be completed by June 1.
- If repairs are needed due to lawn damage from snow plowing, call ER Streets & Maintenance at 343-1510.

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- Capital budget wish list includes Citation Dr, Sun Beau to ER Loop, Eagle Crossing to Prudhoe Bay, sidewalk in Heritage Estates to ER Lane. Let Ms. Kennedy know of any other projects.
- Starner Bridge contract is awarded. Replacement work will begin this summer.
- Glenn Hwy-Hiland Rd interchange meeting was held. Five or six different configurations are under consideration.
 - Concerns include back-up down ER Loop Rd during rush hour, maintenance of bridge overpass.
 - Provide feedback at <https://glenn-hiland.com>
 - Public meetings have not been scheduled yet.

Adjourned 8:38pm.

Next Meeting September 11, 6:30pm at Alpenglow Elementary School, 19201 Driftwood Bay Dr, Eagle River.
No meetings will be held in June, July or August.

ERVCC Board Members (Term Expiration) President: Julie Jessen (2025); Vice President: Tom Roth(2025); Education: Tom Roth(2025); Parks & Rec: Ruth Armstrong(2026)/Jared Goecker-Alt(2026); C/ER Advisory Board: Julie Jessen (2024)/Jared Goecker-Alt(2025); Platting: Pete Panarese (2025); Federation of Community Councils (FCC): Alex Jorgensen (202)/ Joy Webb-Alt (2025); Road Board: Crystal Kennedy (2025)/Arlene Rasic–Alt (2024); Emergency Preparedness: M. Dean Cox (2025); Secretary/Treasurer: Sarah Davenport (2025)