# Huffman/O'Malley Community Council It's your HOCC! September 2011 Newsletter

### **August Recap:**

We had lots of feedback about our guest speaker at the August meeting! Dan Coffey gave a presentation and answered questions about his suggested changes to the provisionally adopted Title 21. Hopefully, we now completely understand the process, and our newly formed Title 21 Committee will be working on a response as soon as the Mayor and Department of Law release the "S" version.

Station 9 personnel came by to remind us to change the batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and tell us about new hires, and Jeff Coleman gave an update on the Elmore reservoir. We also got an update on Muni events from Assembly Representative Jennifer Johnston, and Senator Giessel's aide was a 'listening post' for our community concerns.

It was wonderful to see the new faces join us at the August meeting. We hope you attend often!

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# **Municipal Budget Input Wanted**

The Mayor has created a new website that will allow residents the opportunity to give input on the 2012-13 budget and learn about the budget process. Residents can visit this site and take a short survey or can offer more detailed suggestions. Do you want more services or less? Should the first cuts be in public safety or parks? Should we have a sales tax or should we increase property taxes?

You can also sign up for the new budget newsletter. Next year's budget will go to the Assembly on Oct 1 with Public Hearings beginning on Nov 8.

Would you like to learn how to read the "green cards" that greet us every year? There is even a page that explains property tax valuations.

Visit www.munibudget.org and offer your ideas!

## **Upcoming Meeting - Thursday September 15th**

The next Huffman/O'Malley meeting will be held Thursday, September 15, at 7 pm. PLEASE NOTE the change of entrances! Enter from the South side of the building (back parking lot) and come downstairs.

Items on the agenda will include updates on the South High and AWWU Reservoir construction, the greenbelt remediation, and continued efforts to improve safety at the intersection of Huffman and Elmore.

Special guests will include Brenda Hewitt of the Alaska Department of Transportation, discussing the Huffman roundabouts and future plans for Huffman Road, as well as other State roads. We also hope for a representative to discuss the proposed Chugach Park Plan.

# **Water Well Protection Program**

The Hillside District Plan recommended a Well Water Protection program for the Hillside. The Home and Landowner's Organization, Inc, (HALO) has taken the lead by forming an HDP Implementation Committee.

The first step towards protecting our water is to understand what is out there now. HALO has underwritten a report on the current quality of the Hillside's well water utilizing data already collected by the Muni and the State. The main data presented will be the level of nitrates in tested wells. A high level of nitrates can be indicative of a problem with a well's water. This will give us a baseline and identify any current or future issues.

This effort is not another government program, but is being done by the residents. This report has many purposes but a main one is to dilute the perception that we are fouling our own water. This is important to every Hillside home owner. We will make a strong statement when we can say this was paid for by a large number of hillside residents with no government funds. HOCC has joined other councils and individuals to make donations towards reimbursement and continuation of this vital program.

Please consider making a small (or significant!) donation towards the Water Well Protection Program. You can make your check payable to HALO, and note "Water Well Protection Program" in the memo. Mail it to PO Box 110096, Anch 99511-0096.

submitted by John Weddleton, HALO's HDP Implementation Committee

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## Improved Hillside Emergency Response

Public Safety is of primary importance to Anchorage residents, continually receiving high polling numbers on voter surveys.

This spring, AFD applied for and received federal grant funding for 29 positions, hoping to reduce the burden on local property tax payers. Those new recruits have now filled vacancies dating back to 2007. By filling these vacancies, AFD has now reached minimum numbers for adequate staffing and freed up funding for other vital Muni services. This has also enabled AFD to use monies from the April 2010 voter-approved bond to staff the Sand Lake ambulance (Medic 7).

Our Huffman Road Fire Station 9 has our area's only Advanced Life Support Transport-capable ambulance. Medic 9 covers the area west from Southport/Bayshore, east to upper Hillside, north to O'Malley and south to Indian, essentially covering the largest residential population within the Anchorage bowl.

Medic 9 received 1,772 calls to 9-1-1last year, while the next available ambulance (Medic 12 from Dimond and New Seward) saw 2,696 calls in the same time frame. The new Medic 7 will now cover from the C Street/ Klatt area, alleviating a large section of Medic 9's response area, and enabling faster response times for Hillside emergencies.

AFD is truly excited about the improved opportunity to serve our Hillside residents. We hope you will never need us, but want to be there if you do!

Submitted by Brian Partch, AFD Firefighter and HOCC Steering Committee Member

#### **HOCC - Area Crime Statistics**

We provide these monthly crime statistics so that we all understand what is happening in our area and take appropriate precautions. Theft is a continuing problem that we should all be aware of. We know you appreciate the updates, and thank you for your feedback.

These are the compiled crime statistics for the HOCC-area (August 1 - 31). The cumulative amount of reported offenses (beginning December 17, 2010 to date) are in parentheses.

Theft Reports: 4 (43)

Assaults: 0 (15)

Burglaries: 4 (14)

Disturbances: 0 (14)

Drugs: 0 (5)

Vehicle Theft: 1 (4)

Liquor violations: 0 (2)

Weapon Offense: 0 (1)

Fraud/Forgery: 2 (10) DU: 0 (1)

Vandalism: 1 (10) Disorderly conduct: 0 (1)

Other Undefined Offenses: 0 (7)

The majority of crimes continue to occur in a corridor between Lake Otis (east), New Seward Highway (west), O'Malley Road (north), and DeArmoun Road (south). Reports of thefts continue to out pace the other crimes. If you are a crime victim, please be sure to report it to the Anchorage Police Department so that the information is logged into the MOA's crime statistics database.

Compiled by Wayne Crayton, HOCC Steering Committee Member. Information is from Anchorage Police Department records at <a href="http://crimemap.muni.org/">http://crimemap.muni.org/</a>

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# **Vocabulary of the Month:**

"Non-Conforming Structures"

A "nonconformity" is something that is not legal. There are two ways this happens.

A property owner can create a nonconformity by building a rental apartment attached to a primary residence in an area zoned only for single-family homes, or building a deck in the mandatory lot setback. These situations are immediately nonconforming, and illegal.

The other way a nonconformity can occur is when something was once was legal, but the law changed. This made that item, whether it is a structure or a use of a structure, illegal under the revised law. This use or structure is now nonconforming. The use or structure may gain permission to continue, however, severe restrictions are now placed upon the use or structure.

As an example, a garage is built on private property, but that lot was incorporated into the Municipality with the Hillside incorporation. Now, that garage is a nonconforming structure due to the fact that it is too close to the lot line. It is "grandfathered" in, and is allowed, but only in its present state. It cannot be enlarged, but may be reduced. It cannot be substantially altered unless doing so reduces the amount of nonconformity.

Say a tree falls on the garage, destroying part of the structure. If the damage is more than 50%, that garage cannot be fixed, but must be torn down. It cannot be rebuilt except on another location on the property that is legal.

The other issue involving nonconforming uses is that the property owner is limited in ability to sell the property, and financing often difficult to obtain. The rental apartment built must be removed or the deck torn down before the property can sell. Relocation of wells and septic may also be affected by a nonconformity. These are reasons that noncomformaties are generally regarded as a "slow death" of the structure or use.

One of the issues involved in the Title 21 revision is that, if the rules change, nonconformaties may greatly increase.

Is there a word or acronym you would like defined? Let us know by contacting HOCCnewslettereditor@gmail.com

## **Huffman Park Cleanup Additional Details**

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Again, we thank all who participated in the Huffman Park "Devils Club Eradication Day". Thanks to a myriad of volunteers, including Huffman Elementary, Trinity Presbyterian, and the dedicated group of South High students, the volunteer hours required for Anchorage Park Foundation grant funding were completed!

Special recognition to Megan Holliday, the Director of Children's Ministry at Trinity Presbyterian and to Huffman Elementary parents who spearheaded this effort.

Thank you to all! Enjoy the park!

## From the President's Desk

I'm asking for your time.

Not a lot of your time, but at least two hours a month.

From 7 to 9 pm on the third Thursday, to be exact.

In return, I promise to start on time and end on time. I promise that you will learn something, will have the opportunity to share and meet others in your community. When you sign in at the meeting, be sure to include your email address. Each month, you will receive this newsletter, and you will be the first to know what is happening in your neighborhood. If you are already on our email list, I ask you to print a copy of this newsletter and share it with a neighbor.

Is there an issue you would like the Council to address? Simply let me know, and I will put it on the agenda.

Is there something going on in your neighborhood that you wish to share? We can add it to this newsletter.

Are you concerned about upcoming legislation or want the Council's help on a difficult situation? Give us the opportunity to participate.

In short, the Community Council is your first and best opportunity to participate in our Representative Democracy. You have the opportunity to participate in our future, simply by giving us two hours of your time.

Pete Nolan, President Huffman/O'Malley Community Council

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# Just a Random Thought...

Help!!! Somebody stole Summer !!!!!

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#### **Welcome New Members!**

Thanks you for your support! Dues paying members are vital to our mission of two-way conversation and grassroots community input.

If you are not yet a dues-paying member, simply use the form at the bottom of this newsletter. Membership fee is only \$10 per person each year, and yes, we do accept larger contributions (please see instructions below). Your donations pay for a gratuity for our meeting location, community outreach events, office supplies and our priority - this newsletter! For our "snail mail" residents, you can become an "email person" by just letting us know, and save us some postage in the process!

And remember to contact us with your comments and concerns, because YOU CAN make a difference! Feel free to pass this e-Newsletter on to your neighbors, then remind them to join.

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Yes, I want to become a contributing member of HOCC Enclosed is my contribution of \$10 per person for this year.

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Physical Address:
Filysical Address:
Mailing Address:
Phone (home & other)
E-Mail
Comments & Concerns:

Mail to: Huffman/O'Malley Community Council, 1120 Huffman Road, Suite 24, PMB 420, Anchorage, AK 99515

**Please note:** Donations in a higher amount are greatly appreciated and accepted. For donations to be tax deductible, please make your check out to: FCC (Federation of

Community Councils) on behalf of "Huffman O'Malley Community Council". Please send this donation to the above mailing address and a tax deductible receipt will be provided. Thank You!