

Minutes

Northeast Community Council (NECC)

April 18, 2024 | 7pm

Creekside Park Elementary- Gymnasium

7500 E 6th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99504

Board Members Present

Ron Meehan, President | **Murray Crookes**, Vice President | **Lyn Franks**, Treasurer | **Dave Weber**, Secretary | **Selina Metoyer**, Member | **Pamela Raygor**, Member

60~ people in the room and online

Ron Meehan called the meeting to order at 7:06PM and provided a land acknowledgement.

Pledge of Allegiance – Dave Weber

Board Roll Call – Murray Crookes

Minutes Approval: March

Nate Martin made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Selina Metoyer. None opposed. March 15, 2024 general membership council meeting minutes approved.

Treasurer's Update

Lyn Franks: Reported \$1,714.60 in the bank account as of April 18, 2024.

FCC Report

Pamela Raygor read the following:

Report: in search of a part-time admin clerk (see website). Beginning stages of hiring more staff, redesign website, upgrade functionality, and other service-based needs. They are clarifying roles & functions.

Mayor's Office – Trista

Congratulations to Acting Chief of Police Bianca Cross, a well-deserved recognition of her 25-plus year veteran of the force. CIP requests have begun – survey on-line through June 15th.

Homelessness plans to find more shelter space. Henning non-profit is preparing a proposal to present to the Assembly.

Assembly: HOME Housing Opportunities in the Municipality for Everyone, Anna Brawley presented. Presentation can be found on the FCC website. Run-off election April 30-May 14. Mill-rate will be set at the Assembly's April 23rd meeting, well within the 30day mandate to meet the May deadline.

Anchorage School District, Margo Bellamy. Board meets next Tuesday. They are waiting on the funding numbers from the State. The Court's decision on correspondence school use of funds will need to be taken into consideration and a plan will need to be implemented to meet student's and family's needs. Data on the 2023 school year but has yet to be reviewed and made ready to comment on or publish.

Anchorage Economic Development: Anchorage losing population, Job growth filled by those outside of Anchorage – mainly the Valley. The full presentation is available on the FCC website.

Anchorage Economic Forecast, Jenna Wright presented. Much of the meeting centered around getting the word out about the revisions that to the Building Code Changes. This presentation only emphasized the fact that the revisions to the building codes, effects on the 2040 Plan, the plans to apply 'right size' zoning, the re-write of the proposed use details – all of which have not gone out for a public hearing. All will have a significant impact on property owner's, homeowner's, and neighborhoods. It appears that the only one public meeting which is scheduled for May 20th. It would be wise to visit the Muni website to review documents, attend Planning & Zoning, Assembly meetings, etc.

New agenda format includes an open period for comments; it did not include round robin individual council presentations.

Arianna Bellizzi, Exec Director, 1057 W. Fireweed Lane, Ste 100, info@communitycouncils.org

Office hours: 9a-4p Mon-Fri

Drop off & Pick up: 11a-2p Mon-Fri

Community Concerns and Activities (opportunity for community members to share concerns, requests for the council, and upcoming needs/activities, up to 2 min)

Judy Hartly: Lives around Muldoon and Debarr and is trying to get a neighborhood crime watch formed in the area. Judy is having a rough time because the crime watch position in the police department was vacated. The Municipality is willing to put the signs up. However, the police department must coordinate with people in the neighborhood first. Judy is concerned about the crime in the neighborhood.

Ron Meehan: Have you reached out to Paul Rohbard, NECC Community Patrol? Attempt to contact him and he may be able to help.

Legislative Reports (limit 3 min. each, including questions)

Sen. Bill Wielechowski: Has been very focused on the correspondence school issue. The governor can enact emergency regulations to fix the issue. The Senate passed a capital budget for our district. The community council has long advocated for a trail on the military boundary from Glenn Highway to Campbell Tract Area. There is funding in the current budget to study that and it is the first step in that process that will hopefully lead to that trail. We got \$300K for Windsong Park, \$300K for North Nunanka Valley Park and \$1.8M for Cheney Lake Park.

CONTACT: Phone: 907-269-0120, Email: Senator.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov

Rachel Gunn, Staff to Rep. Stanley Wright: Three bills are being heard next week in committees, HB 28, HB 253, and HB 145. Wright's office is very excited about HB 145 which eliminates predatory rental practices. Rachel gave updates on other bills, HB 57, HB 126, HB 137&138, HB 157, HB 161, HB 179, HB 292.

Alaska Senate and House have exchanged budgets and Wright's office is excited on projects that will benefit the district.

CONTACT: Phone: 907-465-2095, Email: rep.stanleywright@akleg.gov

Rep. Donna Mears: It is great to see a large crowd at NECC. Education funding has had a lot of work being done by Wielechowski. In the recent week there was a court ruling that allotment for correspondence students can't be used. There are concerns the funds are being used for private school funding. Now there is a stay on that funding. Donna and others are committed for correspondence students to continue working and for students to get what they need. On energy bills, the house has been working through the Cook Inlet natural gas production and gas storage. There are some bills that will really strengthen our alternative energy systems. There are more funds added for snow plowing and colleagues were pushing back saying they cannot plan for every bad storm. However, what won the day for additional funding was that the funding doesn't have to be every bad storm, but service has to be better.

CONTACT: Office: 907-465-3438, Cell 907-632-6382, Email: Rep.Donna.Mears@akleg.gov

Rep. Cliff Groh: Cliff wants to talk about education, the budget, and bills for veterans and energy. We are stuck now in education, and we need to fix it in more than one way. We need an overall solution, and we need smaller sizes of students in our classrooms. In a presentation to the legislature Cliff used the effects of more than a decade of flat funding have had on teachers and students on the staff at Muldoon Elementary school and thanked the educators for illustrating to him the big problems that lack of funding causes. We need three things overall for education 1. More funding for smaller class sizes 2. Appropriate compensation for educators to reduce turnover that hurts the ability of students to learn 3. Simple change in the law to deal with the problem the court identified for unconstitutional allotments, fixing the homeschoolers funding problem.

There is a series of sessions that will be expensive and will take a lot of time to achieve to make a constitutional amendment for education that the governor's office wants. Cliff is committed work with Mears and others to find another solution. Cliff is holding education town hall on April 27, 5-8pm on JBER. There will be pizza and Cliff will be there with Anchorage School Board Carl Jacobs. Cliff will hold another town hall later this year off base for the education funding issue.

On the budget Cliff worked with Rep. Mears on funding for snow removal. Cliff tried to raise more state revenues by proposing tax on oil industry to provide more funding for roads, schools, and public safety, and a higher dividend. The amendment failed but Cliff will keep trying to find other ways to raise money.

HB 249 – creates a help desk to connect military vets and spouses. It is moving to the house finance committee where Cliff wants more projects.

Cliff is working on more funding for veteran service officers. These officers provide services to veterans so they can find the resources they need. There has been flat funding on this for years.

Cliff has been working on energy and a bill to increase renewable energy and wind farms and other title power. HB 349 is having a hearing in the house energy committee and will get interest to get the bill passed this year.

Cliff is trying to get more funding for roads in Muldoon, including Duben Ave.

CONTACT: Phone: 907-952-3353, Email: Representative.Cliff.Groh@akleg.gov

Sen Loki Tobin: Senator Tobin is unable to attend tonight's meeting. Tobin's office provided a written report attached to these minutes.

CONTACT: Phone 907-465-3704, Email: Sen.Loki.Tobin@akleg.gov

Assembly Reports (limit 3 min. each, including questions)

Ron Meehan: Karen Bronga and George Martinez are in special session and not able to attend.

Community Leadership Updates (3 min each) [JBER](#), [Mayor's Office](#), [Police Department](#), [Fire Department](#), [Parks & Recreation](#), [Muldoon Public Library](#), [School Board](#), [Muldoon PTA](#), [Bartlett Area Principal Group](#), [other](#)

Joy Boston, JBER: Does not have any updates, but happy to take questions.

Nate Martin: Nate knows the base has been building a North/South facing runway on JBER. Nate was curious about the noise and effect on the community with the E/W runway used more heavily. Has there been any studies done or reports?

Joy Boston: There are a couple things that are public facing. If you type into google: JBER AICUZ, you will find the report done in 2019. Part of the decision to do the project is to move the accident potential zones completely on base. Some of the North/South runway fell off into the Mountain View area and will now move it further to the North and will move the accident potential zones fully onto base property. That project is ongoing and is slated to be done next summer. Hopefully there will be some relief from the E/W runway.

Noise complaints can be submitted at jber.pa@us.af.mil or by calling (907) 552-5387

Carl Jacobs, ASD Board: ASD is closely reviewing the superior court ruling on allotment schools. Three things 1. The district asked the court for a stay on that decision through the end of the fiscal school year to provide family stability and complete the reimbursement process. 2. The allotment process is paused by ASD until they hear further from the superior court. 3. The board meets on Tuesday and anticipates a resolution from the school board to enact emergency regulations to ensure there is ways for parents to engage in correspondence school while adhering to the parameters of the constitution.

State department of education did provide ASD AK Star test results. There were significant increases to K-3 reading scores, but haven't heard from the administration yet on the total results. ASDK12.org/hottopics does have more information on graduations, school start times, and other information.

CONTACT: Phone: 907-632-7285, Email: jacobs_carl@asdk12.org

David Christal, Bartlett Area Principal Group: Matt Wittoff was named the new principal for Begich Middle School. Ptarmigan Elementary has a principal opening for the next year. Susitna Elementary currently has an acting principal so there will be an opening there soon. Bartlett High School, the principal moved to another position so there are applications being accepted for the position.

Paraprofessionals are an important part of the school district. There are 196 openings for paraprofessionals in the district, of those 170 are for special education support for kids. The starting pay for a special education paraprofessional is \$16.13 an hour. When talking about funding, we are not competitive with some very entry level positions. 25% of the David's school's staff have openings for this and next year. UAA has not produced a teacher for the last 5 years because they lost their accreditation, so not filling positions is impacting our kids. May 14, Bartlett High School is graduating its seniors.

John Eric Thompson: Is a paraprofessional and has been working in the school district for 30 years, plus, as a paraprofessional. John is a teacher's assistant. The maintenance assistant is hired at \$25/hr. John doesn't make that much after 30 years. John is used as a substitute teacher now. He has written a string of letters. John is proposing a \$10/hr increase across the board for paraprofessionals. The guy mowing the lawn is paid more than teaching the children. The bus drivers start making \$25/hr and John doesn't make that much after 30 years.

These schedule changes that have been happening. John's says the district is going to lose a lot of employees due to changes. John hasn't found an administrator or educator that is for it. John would like to see the statistics ASD has on this.

If something doesn't change John cannot work as a paraprofessional. He has family and will have to leave his job. A \$10/hr raise may be laughed at, but sometimes John has worked as a substitute teacher. Paraprofessionals need something to keep them around.

Maureen, Rotary Club of Anchorage Gateway: The Rotary club is a local service organization, and it focuses on serving Muldoon Elementary school. There will be a lasagna-dinner-to-go event as a fundraiser to continue the work the club does at Muldoon. The club reads with kids after school and provides materials they are reading in a book club format. We challenge kids, as part of a program, to read books to the top of Denali. If kids reach the top of Denali, we celebrate with the kids ice cream and pizza parties. This program supports literacy at Muldoon Elementary. The fundraiser is May 17. For further info or tickets, Contact Ron Fassett 907-223-6897

Committee Updates – 2 min

Lyn Franks, CIP Committee: Boundary Ave is one of the top priorities we have. It is not a priority for emergency vehicles. We had asked for sidewalks from Centennial Park to businesses on Muldoon via Boundary Ave. The trail

system along the JBER boundary is also on the list. We are getting somewhere with the funding for these and for the parks, which is exciting.

Dave Weber, Parks and Trails Committee: Stu Greiner, Chair, could not attend today's meeting. Stu is planning on a parks and trails committee meeting in early May. There is a grant application that was submitted by NECC parks and trails committee for a trail along Chester creek of Chanshtnu Muldoon park and it is being reviewed by Anchorage Park Foundation, decision due on April 24. Dave also attended the Alaska Trails conference and is happy to report to the committee on state and federal funding opportunities to the committee at the next meeting.

Selina Metoyer, Picnic Committee: June 8th is the date of the picnic and will serve 12-2pm and everything is free. We do need volunteers. Please reach out to anyone on the board to sign up to help.

Murray Crookes: If there are any businesses that may be interested in participating in the picnic reach out to Murray or anyone on the board. Roscoe's had some tasty food a couple years ago.

Steve Johnson, Marijuana and Alcohol Committee Chair: Steve stated we are an advisory council and the more people the better. You are the news makers, and you can effect the change.

Last time we met there was an issue brought up and the corner of Muldoon and 6th. Steve contacted Brown Jug and they will do what they can. Hopefully they will be watching that a little bit more and a renewal is opening up and Brown Jug will have an alcohol bar and start offering tastings.

There is a house bill in process for regulations related to alcohol delivery. Marijuana will have a two-year renewal rather than a one-year renewal. This will affect Catalyst and Tree House dispensaries in the NECC area.

Charles England: Since last council meeting that Charles talked about the Brown Jug issue Charles stated the bus stop has been a lot cleaner, and the patrol cars have been beefed up in the area and we thank you (Steve).

Dave Weber: We have an ad hoc committee to update the NECC website that is hosted by the FCC. Most content has not been updated in several years. The goal is to have a fully updated website by the end of June. You can contact Dave if you have any questions or suggestions.

Presentations: (5 mins)

Creekside Elementary Playground Replacement

Peter Briggs/Yuki Jansen: Peter is a consultant with the school district and Yuki is with the school district.

The Creekside Elementary Playground expected to be inserted this summer, completed before fall.

Peter showed pictures of the existing equipment and of the planned new structures. Peter described the features of the new structure. All the flooring will be rubber tile and multicolored. Peter targeted around 100-120 kids to be on the playground. There will be wheelchair accessible features.

Construction for the playground will be in May and the playground won't be available till Mid-August.

David Christal: The elementary school is in the life skills program, and this will serve all our students that attend the life skills program. Around 20 years is the longevity of the planned playground and the current one is over 20 years old.

Stephanie Taylor: Will pea gravel be available if people want that?

Peter Briggs: Typically, from a safety perspective, no.

Tom Scott: There were some kids that came over and lit a playground on fire. Will this one do that?

Peter Briggs: There are rubberized 2x2 rubber tiles and for the playground that caught on fire, the flooring is made of shredded rubber. The 2x2 rubber tiles are more fire resistant.

Brandy Pennington: Brandy has 5 boys and spends a lot of time on playgrounds. How much is this going to cost in property taxes? 20 years is not a lot of time. When doing the next design phase Brandy asked that the district consider a 50-year life span in their next project. Brandy cannot afford the changes that will cause property taxes to rise. It is hurting her family and financial stability.

Yuki Jansen: We don't replace playgrounds every 20 years, sometimes it is 40-50 years.

David Christal: The manufacturers say the playground will be warranted for 20 years, so that's why we say 20 years is the life.

Old Business (Limit 6 min/item including discussion)

Ron Meehan: Stu is not able to present

Nate Martin motioned to table the resolutions. Hal Galzaway motioned to 2nd. None opposed. Opposition to Boundary Avenue East Extension Resolution and Muldoon Perimeter Fire Safety Road Resolution are tabled.

[Opposition to Boundary Avenue East Extension Resolution](#)

Muldoon Perimeter Fire Safety Road Resolution

New Business

April Board Elections and Nominations

Candidates: Lyn Franks, Nate Martin, Selina Metoyer, Stephanie Taylor

Pamela Raygor: Presented that 48 people were eligible to vote in person. Pamela described the process of voting in person and on Zoom. There are people who have been validating people eligible to vote in person and online. There will be two people handing out the ballots and two people collecting in person. There will be two people working on facilitating the zoom poll. Calling in on zoom is possible but you cannot cast a secret ballot.

Murray Crookes: If you have not sent a photo ID to the community council email and were not previously validated on the list you will be moved to the waiting room while the voting happens.

Ron Meehan: Are there any other nominations from the floor?

Sherilyn Cunningham: Nominates John Cunningham

John Cunningham: Accepts the nomination

Ron Meehan: Nominees are Selina Metoyer, Stephanie Taylor, John Cunningham, Lyn Franks, and Nate Martin

Lyn Franks: Introduced herself to the voters.

Nate Martin: Introduced himself to the voters.

Selina Metoyer: Introduced herself to the voters.

Stephanie Taylor: Introduced herself to the voters.

John Cunningham: Introduced himself to the voters.

Vote Count for seats A, B, C

Nate Martin: 48 Stephanie Taylor: 47 John Cunningham: 37 Lyn Franks: 21 Selina Metoyer: 18

Nate Martin, Stephanie Taylor, and John Cunningham are elected board members

Ron Meehan: Thanked the candidates for stepping up to run and looking forward to making the community better.

Community Announcements

None.

Ron Meehan adjourned the meeting at 8:48PM

Upcoming NECC meeting: May 16, 2024

**Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Weber, Secretary**



Alaska State Legislature

Office of Senator Löki Gale Tobin

Legislative Update

Today is day 94 of this legislative session. As we head into the last month of the legislative session, which is constitutionally limited to 121 days, there are a lot of things happening all at once in the halls of Juneau.

Last week (April 12, 2024), a Superior Court judge ruled the 2014 correspondence school allotment language unconstitutional. This is an evolving issue, but the most important thing to remember is that Alaska's public correspondence programs pre-date statehood. Although things are in flux, I am confident that Alaska's robust system of public school choice will continue. Only this time, it will be in alignment with the Alaska Constitution. I highly recommend [this article from the Alaska Beacon](#) describing Judge Zeman's decision.

On April 3, the Senate Education Committee held a very informative hearing on a provision in federal law called "Maintenance of Equity." The goal of the "Maintenance of Equity" language in the American Rescue Plan is to ensure that state education funding to historically underserved groups of students remained at pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. Unfortunately, on March 27, the U.S. Department of Education alerted the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development that Alaska has not met "Maintenance of Equity." To achieve "Maintenance of Equity" the State of Alaska will need to make approximately \$17 million in supplemental education funding payments to school districts in the amount of state funding reductions considered disproportionate under the FY 22 and FY 23 maintenance of equity requirement.

Unfortunately, the Administration is contesting the determination from the U.S. Department of Education and refuses to put forward the needed supplemental budget request. As a result, it is now up to the Alaska State Senate to resolve this issue by including funding in the budget under consideration by the State Legislature. Neighbors, I am committed to resolving this issue so that we follow federal law.

Last week, the House worked on the operating budget bill, which is House Bill 268, it has now been handed over to the Senate. The draft capital budget bill (SB 187) was on the Senate Floor last Friday. I am proud to have worked to include dollars for Covenant House, Indigenous placemaking, the Anchorage Museum, Harvard Park in Government Hill, road resurfacing for Tyonek Dr, a new scoreboard for Barlett High School, and resources for the Alaska Native Heritage Center. This past week was National Library Week, so it is timely that I worked to include long needed funds for the Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) and Alaska Library Catalog. These dollars are currently included in the draft budget which is now in the House and as it works through the process, I will continue to advocate for them to remain there. The budget process is a collaborative effort and I worked to jointly fund projects to make sure the impact every dollar allocated to Senate District I is maximized. Due to the internal politics of the legislature, districts with House Majority members received a higher allocation of capital dollars, so I worked with Senator Wielechowski and his House members to fund good projects in our neighborhoods.

Please reach out via email (sen.loki.tobin@akleg.gov) or phone (907-465-3704) or subscribe to our online newsletter if you would like to receive more frequent updates between now and the next community council meeting. Subscribe at lgtobin.substack.com!

To follow along, watch the Alaska Legislature live, you can tune into floor and committee hearings at AKL.tv.



For an in-depth look into policies, interviews with legislators, and conversations with stakeholders, please check out my office's podcast! Available on Apple Podcast, Spotify, Good Podcast, and anywhere else you listen to podcasts.

Personal Legislation

SB 27: *Contraceptive Coverage* (Ability to receive 12-months of birth control).

SB 46: *Brain Injury Awareness Month* (AK has the highest rates of traumatic brain injury).

SB 100: *Access to Marijuana Conviction Records* (expunging marijuana violations from court view from before personal use was made legal).

SB 101: *Renewable Portfolio Standards*

SB 109: *Employee Rights and Employer Speech* (prohibits an employer from requiring an employee to listen to employer personal beliefs or opinions in a captive audience meeting).

SB 115: *Physician Assistant Scope of Practice* (improving patient care and access).

SB 229: *Extreme Risk Protective Orders* (allows family members or law enforcement to petition a judge to remove a firearm from the environment of a person deemed at risk of harming themselves or others, also known as red flag laws).

SJR 17: *Urge Congress to Extend the Deadline for Expend Federal American Rescue Plan Children and Homeless Youth*

SB 175: *Establishing a manufacturer-funded system for electronic device recycling*