

Scenic Foothills Community Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 6, 2012

Call to Order: President Alexander Monterrosa 7:00 p.m. November minutes approved. President introduced executive board.

Personal Initiative for Neighborhood Change: In 2010, Lynda Billmyer and a prayer partner, looking for effective ways to get involved in positive change in our community, found the [Federation of Community Councils web site](#), which outlines the community council structure of our city. They learned that FCC wanted representatives to go to Little Rock, Arkansas, in May 2010 to observe an effective Neighborhoods USA conference and then plan a 2011 NUSA conference here. She went to Little Rock and helped Anchorage host a successful conference here in May 2011. She has stayed active with FCC since then, finding positive participation preferable to feeling powerless or being a victim. In November she attended the [State of our City forum](#). Being part of SFCC and FCC, has given her insight on the workings of our city and how a small, but significant, group of people who choose to participate can be empowered, can be part of a volunteer army working to bring about solutions on issues.

Pioneer Drive Upgrade: Dan Kirsch, design engineer with Professional and Technical Services, Inc (PTS) for the Pioneer Drive Upgrade project from Muldoon to Resurrection (MOA #04-20). This project is being managed by the MOA Project Management and Engineering Division. Pioneer Drive will change from a local road to collector status due to higher traffic. Drainage, street lighting, pedestrian walkway on south side of road. Hopes for construction summer of 2013 or 2014, depending on funding (\$2.4 Million). Would like to be prepared to build in summer 2013 if funding is available. There will be a public meeting in February 2013 to get input on the 65% design phase. Most of change along southwest side to have least impact on properties on the north side of the street. There is to be a pedestrian crossing of Pioneer to get to Chugach Foothills Park and more parking for the park.

Scenic Park and Little Dipper Park Upgrades: Cathy and Shannon Carte: [Scenic Park](#) has \$152,000 for lights and cameras and safe routes to school. Playground Option A but with four swings instead of two (two tot swings). Kids like climbing Option B. Keep existing trail lights and retrofit with LED lights with more area lighted. Not enough money to re-do the tennis courts at this time. People will be needed to thin forest to make it less dark and take out downed trees. Professional forester will specify what to do. [Little Dipper Park](#): \$73,000 for lights and cameras. Very dark park. Would like to have camera to discourage drug deals. Possible platform and benches with view of creek could reduce access to it by kids. Asking for one camera. Would like more in both parks.

Emergency Preparedness: Mark Hill, SFCC Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair, updated SFCC on [Emergency Watch](#), [Neighborhood Watch](#) and Neighborhood Patrol (a street level effort, closer than [Community Patrol](#)). It's about noticing what's going on in your neighborhood and your parks, knowing what's going on. If we're out there, THEY will go somewhere else where they aren't being observed. Next program in [Brown bag lunch seminar series](#) from [Office of Emergency Management](#) tomorrow. Hill brought handouts on all aspects of preparedness, which are also available from the web site. He will implement on his street.

Capital Improvement Projects: Assemblyman Adam Trombley informed us of a work session December 7 to put together the Municipality's "Christmas wish list" to the Legislature for 2013 capital improvements, such as SFCC area pavement upgrades, Bicentennial Park, Muldoon Library technology and materials, NE Anchorage park safety and pump track, Pioneer Drive upgrade, Pleasant Valley roads and drainage. The Capital Improvement Projects list is a draft, not a done deal, and can still be amended.

Assembly Redistricting: Assemblyman Adam Trombley also informed us that at their December 18th meeting the Assembly would consider ballot proposals for Assembly and School Board representation in the April municipal elections. One proposal would divide the Assembly into 11 single member districts and the other would have school board members elected by districts instead of at large. A redistricting board would take the power to redistrict out of the Assembly's hands. Responding to a question from President Monterrosa, Trombley said he would like the single member district to rotate but he likes two member districts. There's nothing dysfunctional about the current system. People are happy with it; it works for people. They represent larger areas but they have two members; when you shrink districts, you lose the leverage of two representatives agreeing.

Municipal Budget: Trombley said the most recent budget forecast is that it's coming in under budget by \$6.9M. Assembly said don't increase bus fares but use money in the bank that was set aside for the school district but then was reimbursed by the

state so they can't spend it. Bus fares won't go up and the administration is going along with it. The 2013 mill rate will be lower if this year comes in under budget. They haven't spent much money on snowplowing yet but we have had 15 below zero weather.

Assemblyman Paul Honeman said he was glad we put together a budget that balanced. School district did the same thing, trying to eliminate unfilled positions. He said he thinks we're in better shape than we thought on school funding, hopes the state might put in a little more. Anchorage School District will do their budget soon. Surplus in budget means we spent less money than we took in. Not a bad thing that we didn't spend all the money, but you can argue whether we are cutting the budgets too much. Services are declining. The Municipality finally hired a traffic calming coordinator. The cheapest traffic calming is speed humps but they are not popular with ambulances, snowplows, etc. Not every neighborhood qualifies for speed humps. We need to put them on Capital Improvement Projects list if we want them. We have about \$1M in the budget for traffic calming.

Honeman said he was not opposed to single member districts. It depends on your perspective, but the only place it really makes a difference is on neighborhood issues, not budget or ordinances, etc. We have a huge district – 5 or 6 house districts. He thinks the way they went about it this time was one of the worst ways of conducting public business. We need to get it right next time.

Legislative report: Rep. Lance Pruitt: He will be Majority Leader for House and is staying on Judiciary Committee. What's going to happen? "I don't know. The majority has not set our priorities yet." Obviously, there will be discussion about oil and gas, don't know yet how it will be resolved. Budget: co-chair of budget has already asked for priorities. He had a meeting this morning with Gary Jones about roads. Anchorage Public Works had a different perspective on maintenance vs. rebuilding – if the drainage is OK. Started in Scenic Park but didn't get finished. They will come back and fix it. Got too cold too fast to finish details. Roads like Little Dipper different – doesn't have gutters. Some places they can do maintenance; other roads need rebuilding. He will be talking to Scenic Park School, about school needs. A lot of conversations about education. Some easy stuff. Scenic Park has been waiting to get their ice rink. They asked for it last year and ASD didn't request what the local citizens asked for. He will talk to teachers more about it.

Neighborhood Concerns:

Cathy Carte was very concerned about drainage on streets but it's going to get fixed. Scenic Park entrance: they plowed roots and things into Scenic Park on Hennings. Street contractors need to fix the problem they created before the water flows in the spring. Same thing happens along streams, Lance said, and the state needs to take care of debris that will cause flooding in the spring.

Harry Crawford: issue that has been biggest when they wanted to cut down a big portion of Arnold L. Muldoon Park to make soccer and ball fields and SFCC was opposed to cutting trees in the park and settled on putting in an area behind Totem Theatre to make ball fields. Got one ball field completed. Two more to be done. We'd like you to put your effort into getting those fields.

Mark Hill: what's happening with Totem Theatre? Pruitt doesn't know.

Paul Honeman: windstorms felled trees everywhere in East Anchorage and there is money available to fix this but it needs to be done before ratepayers get stuck with the bills. The Mayor doesn't want to ask for disaster funds, but it needs to be declared. It's got to be done right; you can't just send a bunch of unsupervised volunteers to do it. (ML&P only paid to haul brush.)

Rep. Pruitt: an immediate concern is about a natural gas supply that is not secure in the next month and a half.

Meeting Adjourned: 9 p.m.