

**Scenic Foothills Community Council  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, April 4, 2013**

**Call to Order:** Vice President Roger Shaw 7:00 p.m. March minutes approved. Vice President introduced executive board.

**Senator Anna Fairclough:** Operating budget \$7 million includes \$2.4 million for Pioneer Drive plus \$1 million more for other things in Senate District M. Harry Crawford asked whether Totem Ball Fields would be funded this year. Senator Fairclough said they would not.

**State of Alaska Legislative Report, Rep. Lance Pruitt:** Ten more days in session; tax bill came out of Resource Committee 2 a.m. today and gasoline bill is progressing.

**Dan Kendall, Chief of Staff to Mayor Dan Sullivan:** Mayor Sullivan asked him to visit meetings and say “Hi,” asked if we had questions for him. Publicity Chair Jerrienne Lowther asked for his assistance in getting the word out to area residents that Community Councils exist. She said we have web sites, we have newsletters, we have meetings but FCC funding for postal mail has been cut and we are unable to send out mail to let residents know that these resources exist. She asked him to help. Vice President Shaw further explained that for years community councils were able to send out mailings to all residents every couple of years with capital project surveys, etc. through FCC but we’ve not been able to do that for several years. We’ve worked hard to get the word out but we’ve had to rely on community council e-mail lists and web sites. It would be very helpful to be able to send postal mail to all area residents periodically. Shaw said mail to residents was a good use of FCC money but that funding has been cut and isn’t available to us. Kendall said the FCC budget is part of the Assembly budget. Shaw also pointed out that we get less responsiveness from Office of Management and Budget than we used to on Capital Budget information. Their municipal budget page no longer posts the budget survey info and that needs to change as well.

**Assemblyman Paul Honeman** First Quarter budget review looks like about a \$30 million surplus. I/M program went away last year. Omnibus bill raised our vehicle registration tax so what we save on I/M went to increased vehicle tax. Pretty steep increase. Budget has to balance by law. The charter says we can’t spend more than we take in but my question is the reverse of that: Why are we taking in more than we spend? We aren’t getting the services we’re paying for. Could be used for a tax rebate but Honeman is in favor of upping service to take care of important things like a lack of arson investigators. We have one, used to have three, have had acting fire marshal for more than 3-1/2 years, etc. We have arson fires, including a multi-family housing building farther north in Muldoon set on fire three times in the past six months. He would like to use some of the surplus to hire a full time fire marshal and at least one more arson inspector. Spring cleanup is coming up and he is concerned about whether that effort will get the support it needs this year. We had an election and I’m humbled and honored at the privilege to serve another three years on the Assembly. We’re ready to continue on with good government. Taxicabs: coming up. Fire Department wants to do a summer academy and Police Department late third quarter or fourth quarter wants to do a police academy for about 30 applicants. Chief is supposed to give us an update. Other cities are trying to steal our people with lateral hires so we are expecting to lose some people and the recent labor law change did not help our situation.

Harry Crawford asked about the statewide ballot last year that allows municipal property tax exemptions to rise from \$20,000 to \$50,000 if a municipality chooses to opt in. In Anchorage, this would require a change in the law, he said, and in the way our law works. Honeman said he agreed and that he will look into it.

Cathy Carte asked Chief of Staff Kendall about a list naming municipal employees with total compensation (salary, benefits, overtime, etc.) published in the *Anchorage Daily News* by [Alaska Public Policy Forum](#). Kendall said the Municipality supplied the data in compliance with a Freedom of Information Act request but was not involved in publishing the list. There was no explanation of what counted as “benefits” or how the “total compensation” was calculated; she objected to that. Those listed amounts were compared with the Mayor’s salary with no “total compensation” comparison, which appears misleading.

Robert Kuczek asked about harvesting downed trees from the windstorms last fall. He said he spoke with the municipal forester down in Juneau. He said you have to let Parks know you are interested and they send an e-mail, then you have to go down on Wednesday between 9 and 5 with a homeowner’s policy to show you have liability insurance and buy a permit. If you’ve already had a permit you can renew it. They do supervise it and have to have an employee there. Honeman

said he would contact Parks Director John Rodda about getting out an announcement because East Anchorage got walloped; Russian Jack Park has blowdowns up and down Boniface and up and down DeBarr Road on both sides and all in between.

Jerriane Lowther said that Mark Hill also had been leading a project of this sort in Arnold L. Muldoon Park but she did not know all the details. The Municipality is concerned about liability and safety issues for people doing the harvesting and she said they should also be looking out for the ecology of the forest, that it was possible to damage a forest without meaning to; the Municipality should have safeguards for the safety of the people and of the resource. Honeman agreed; he will follow up. Lowther also asked about downed trees on Chugach Electric and Municipal Light & Power right of ways and whether we should also be talking to them, lest the cleanup costs be added to ratepayers' electric bills. Honeman said yes and that the Governor had declared a disaster and the Municipality had requested that the Legislature appropriate money from disaster funds to do the cleanup. His concern was that the funding requested remain in the budget currently before the Legislature. ML&P figured they needed about \$800,000 and Chugach Electric about \$1.5 million; if not funded will be paid by ratepayers. Honeman also urged that people who see potholes in streets report them: [Pothole Busters](#) Hotline: 343-MEND (343-6363).

**Roger Shaw:** East Anchorage District Plan consultants are still working to complete the draft plan. He passed out copies of their PowerPoint, which is posted at [www.eastanchoragedistrictplan.com](http://www.eastanchoragedistrictplan.com). There will be an open house on the draft plan at 6 p.m. April 9 at Begich Middle School. When they get a draft of the plan unveiled, they will post that on the web site. If there are changes that need to be made in the draft plan, it is important to get that information now, before the plan is adopted.

Senator Fairclough mentioned Pioneer Drive being one of the key items for funding in the capital budgets and we have revised plans that will be shown in a public meeting here (at Wayland) at 7 p.m. May 1, the day before our next meeting. You will get a notice through our e-mail list and people adjacent to the project will receive notices from the Municipality. This is scheduled for summer 1914, if the funds are appropriated, but it might start earlier; gardens in the median will be disrupted.

Next month will be SFCC Elections. Secretary Brynn Moe has resigned and Jerriane Lowther asked for help in finding a new secretary; five consecutive months as acting secretary with her communications duties as Publicity Chairman is enough.

Cynthia Jaranson asked what had happened with plans for the old Alaska Greenhouse property at Muldoon Road and DeBarr. Shaw said it is owned by the Municipality but the final disposition and usage has not yet been determined. The Municipality has long wanted to sell off the frontage for commercial purposes and develop the rest as a park. Northeast Community Council and Scenic Foothills Community Council have gone on record asking that the entire 29 acres be developed as a park at some time in the future; that continues to be the position of the two councils and is reflected in the East Anchorage District Plan. Another suggestion is that the entire area be designated PLI (Public Lands and Institutions) and only allow development that would support the activity of a park, whether it be a skating rink or a chalet as in Russian Jack Park, etc. There are a lot of suggestions out there and we don't have anything final at this time.

Honeman said the Assembly had requested \$3.2 million from the Legislature to change the status of the front parcel to PLI lands. Lowther said Rep. Pruitt had said at the constituent meeting that this wasn't going to work but he had requested \$500,000 for development of a park on the old Alaska Greenhouse site. Honeman said the two back sections were already PLI and the front parcel was not. The back section is already park, the middle section is PLI with intent to develop it as a continuation of the park and selling the front section is not being pro-actively pushed as this point. Resolutions by both this council and NECC, petition drives and public comments make it clear that this land should be used to develop a park in Muldoon. We have high density now, with higher density coming, and we don't have parks like Kincaid in Muldoon.

Lowther said the council had received queries from the Municipality about what SFCC was planning for the Anchorage Centennial in 2015 and that we should be talking about that. She proposed that we push for developing a park at the old Alaska Greenhouse site as an Anchorage Centennial project and that we also look at developing trails to join the Alaska Centennial Park at the Glenn Highway with Far North Bicentennial Park on the southern boundary of Scenic Foothills by way of our new Anchorage Centennial Park that we've been calling Muldoon Town Square Park. She said this would be a tremendous 100 year anniversary project for Anchorage and that it would benefit more than just Muldoon.

Shaw said another perspective is that Muldoon tax dollars support all Anchorage parks except Girdwood and Eagle River, which are separate, so only Girdwood and Eagle River would be disadvantaged if the Muldoon-DeBarr frontage wasn't sold. He then suggested that the price could be just that smaller percentage that would reimburse Girdwood and Eagle River.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.