

Meeting Minutes January 10, 2018

Meadow Lakes Community Council Inc.

❖ 3 Officers required for quorum: TOTAL = 4 YES ❖

Pres: Patricia Fisher ❖ Vice Pres: Rae Arno
 Treasurer: Cindy Michaelson ❖ Sec: Janet Henkel
 Council Coordinator: Tim Swezey

❖ 3 Committee Chairs required for quorum: TOTAL = 7 YES ❖

Education: Cally Leader ❖ CIP: Terry Boyle
 Bylaw: Linda Conover ❖ Mem: Lacy Harris
 Trail: Lori Benner-Hanson ❖ Safety: Larry Michaelson
 Gaming: Ariel Cannon

❖ 10 Members of the Meadow Lakes Community required for quorum: TOTAL = 12 YES ❖

Meeting Quorum = YES

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by President Patti Fisher. It was determined that a quorum was present.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited.
3. **Approval of:**
 - a. **Agenda** – Linda Conover motioned to approve the agenda, with a second from Jan Henkel. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - b. **Minutes** – Lacey Harris motioned to approve the November minutes, and was seconded by Ariel Cannon. There were no December minutes as the December meeting was our Christmas party. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - c. **Treasurers Report** – Cindy Michaelson presented the treasurers report for November and December. The main expenses incurred during November included liability insurance and the Mat-Su Imagination Library. In December there were no expenses. Income was collected from the Split-the-Pot raffles in both November and December.

4. Reports:

President – Patti Fisher gave the presidents report. Patti stated that our February meeting will have a town hall feel to it, as we discuss crime and crime prevention in our neighborhood. There has been much discussion within the neighborhood regarding crime, and as we have no local police force and limited trooper support, the borough has become involved. Neighborhood watch, and perhaps the borough mayor and attorney will be available. Local businesses have been encouraged to attend and speak. Please see Patti after the meeting if you would be interested in participating in this meeting, or have further ideas for our meeting agenda.

Gaming – Ariel Cannon presented the gaming report. Split-the-Pot sales between the last two Tuesday Night Fights was over \$1000, and all 300 tickets for the Christmas raffle were sold. Ariel thanked everyone for their support.

Community Safety – Larry Michaelson presented the community safety report. Larry said he had nothing new to report, but stressed that basic ice safety is always a concern. The temperatures should rise this weekend, so please be extra cautious when you are out snow machining, skiing, etc. Please be avalanche aware, and always on the lookout for open water on creeks and streams. The roads are also still slick – drive carefully, watch your footing, and stay safe!

Parks & Recreation – Tim Swezey presented the parks and recreation report. He advised us that a joint meeting with Houston is being planned to plot the route to the Bench Lake trail.

CIP – Terry Boyle stated that this report will be presented by tonight's guest speaker.

Education – Cally Leader reported that swimming lessons will be pushed back until next year, as no one responded in time this year.

Membership – None

Bylaws – None

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Council Coordinator – None

5. **Presentation:** Jessica Smith, Chief of Planning for the Mat-Su Borough, was this evening's guest speaker, along with Ted Eischeid. Jessica stated that she works out of the planning department, a division that acts as somewhat of a research and development service. Jessica's presentation is on the Capital Improvements Program. This program consists of three types of projects: 1. Capital improvements within the budget, i.e.: repairing a leaking toilet in the borough building, 2. Road Service Areas – which consists of revenues coming in from area property tax, targeted to cover maintenance in that area, and 3. Capital Planning – which looks over input from submissions for an approximate 6 year period as to what each local area feels are needed improvements within their areas. She urged residents to look over these suggestions and let them know if they are still areas of concern, as well as bringing forth new ideas. Jessica stated that the planning department is always looking for more input on capital improvement projects. Although some of the documents are not synced together on the website, please look for your projects and make sure that they are in the CIP. Jessica also mentioned that during the last year, there was a 70% turnover rate in the planning department. Because of the high turnover rate, the department took a year off to reorganize and retrain so that they would be more effective. This is one of the reasons that Jessica is here tonight, and she urged everyone provide comments and feedback.

Jessica stated that many projects can be talked about for close to 20 years before they reach the construction stage, and she provided handouts covering many of these projects. She asked us to remember that DOT feels they are not going to have any additional funding for the next 10 years, which will leave us relying on federal funding only. She stated that she was aware that the Seldon Road Extension project was a hot ticket item in our area, and that the borough knows that this project is a priority. The borough is currently waiting to receive the new list of capital improvements from the DOT. This list was due on October 1, and has not yet been received. The borough assembly then presents a top ten priority list each year, based on the DOT list.

Jessica mentioned that the Mat-Su Borough is the poster child for US Fish and Wildlife service, due in part to our culvert installations allowing salmon to move freely to and from their spawning grounds. Often issues like these fall into both the capital improvement and transportation areas as they affect both matters.

Sherri Rusher asked if the borough was coordinating mass transit for seniors in the borough. Jessica replied that there is a long range transit plan. The borough is working on a state requirement for federal transit authority funding, due to human needs transportation of their clients. There is currently a planner working on this issue with DOT, and they are closely looking at the cost and benefit analysis. Currently, there is a list of 26 transit providers who will all be working together to provide this service, although Mascot and Valley Mover have merged into Valley Transit. Jessica said that transit is a complicated issue, and although your local government does not own the transit services, they do their best to coordinate and plan for them.

Ted Eischeid, one of our new planners, has been here since October. Ted is a former teacher who has previously worked with the volunteer lake management program. Ted feels that if you don't plan it, it was an accident, and that the better planning effort put into things brings a much better end result. He has reviewed the MLCC comprehensive plan, and stated that it is fairly lengthy. When our earlier plan was adopted, our population was 5000. In 12 years our population has almost doubled to 8000, and he encouraged us to update our plan to reflect this growth.

Larry Michaelson stated that the reason many of us are involved in the community council today is due to the past SPUD process, which was voted down at the last minute. Larry said that while he feels we do need a comprehensive plan, we don't need a lot of regulations to tell us how to live on our own property. When asked about the differences between a SPUD and zoning, Jessica replied that both are fancy words for land use regulations. Zoning regulates your land use as well as the land use of your neighbor, and admittedly this is a tough conversation. Larry stated that this tough conversation is what keeps most of us returning to our community council meetings.

Sherri Rusher said that she was involved with both the comprehensive plan as well as the SPUD. While the comprehensive plan was a positive experience, the SPUD almost destroyed our community, and she questioned why our plan needed to be updated. Jessica replied that if the vision had changed, then the plan would need to be updated. There are new tools available, and the community initiates the process. Ted stated that community

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members could be reached through a community fair as well as the internet, and although many community members would not respond, it was a good way to begin collecting information and interacting with community members. Jessica added that the community needs to be involved as they are the experts – this is their backyard, so to speak.

Many members added that they want to govern their land in the way that they see fit as long as they are not causing damage to the environment, wildlife or their neighbors, and were good stewards of the land. Linda Conover agreed that we should most likely review our comprehensive plan and see if it does need to be updated. Patti Fisher agreed that we should put this on our agenda within the next few months for discussion.

Jessica encouraged Patti to call with any questions on existing projects, and added that the next meeting of the planning commission would be Monday night, January 15, 2018. Terry Boyle thanked Jessica and Ted for their presentation.

6. **Correspondence:** Correspondence links were listed on the agenda. Jessica Smith, Mat-Su Borough Planning Chief, stated that there were several issues that needed to be addressed with the application submitted by Alaska Frontier Cannabis, LLC before it could be moved forward.
7. **Old Business:** None
8. **New Business:** Sherri Rusher mentioned that Laverne Heim has passed away this morning. Laverne was an original member of the community council
9. **Agency Reports:** Fire Chief John Fairchild reported that Station 73 is moving into the fleet maintenance side of the building now. The grand opening should be late February when everyone is moved in and settled. There were 597 runs in 2017, with 33% being rescue/medical runs, and the remainder being smoke and fire related. We had a great holiday season with no bad calls. The budget is currently at the directors, where it will next go to the mayor and then on to the assembly.

Most of the area lakes have 14 – 20 inches of ice depth, although there are still some areas where open or moving water can occur. Be aware of your surroundings and be careful! The annexation did go through for the West Susitna Parkway area, and we have taken up to Twin Papoose into the Crooked Lake area and hope to build a warming station within the next couple of years.

Please put up your house numbers – if we can't find you we can't help you! Richard Cannelli volunteered to drop off flyers concerning house numbers on his route. Cally Leader added that the green street number signs are available, and you can make your own sign and stick it out by the road for \$10 -\$12.

Cindy Michaelson asked about the danger from spruce bark beetle infestation for the coming fire season. Chief Fairchild responded that there is a large infestation coming across the Red Shirt Lake area. Once you begin to see signs of an infestation it is too late to save your trees. He also stated that the Firewise program seems to have lost its support with the state, and it appears at this time that it is going to be up to the local communities to address this issue, and he will help in the planning for our local area.

Larry Michaelson stated that he had noticed an increase in speed on the Parks Highway and expressed a concern over increased accidents due to this. Chief Fairchild responded that so far this had not been a problem, and encouraged everyone, as always, to contact him with any questions or concerns.

Assemblyman Randall Kowalke stated that January 16th is the next borough assembly meeting, where the bag tax will be addressed. Patti Fisher mentioned that the effective date for the bag tax would be July 1, 2018. Mr. Kowalke said that Senator Dunleavy had resigned from his senate seat, and he had applied to finish his term. He stated that when the governor vetoed the school bond, the borough took that hit, resulting in funding being pulled from the capital projects budget. Although there have been 6 million dollars cut from capital projects, we are still 2 million dollars short, and this is the reason that we have not been able to move forward with some of the capital projects. There is currently a task force in place to review school funding, as we need to clean this process up. There has also been talk of implementing an area sales tax. Mr. Kowalke feels that by moving into the senate he may be able to help in these areas, as well as moving state troopers back to Talkeetna, and fixing SB91.

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Cally Leader voiced her disapproval in holding a special election in the middle of winter to try and pass sales tax legislation for school funding. She feels that this type of issue should be put to the people during a regular election, due to our low voter turnout. Mr. Kowalke replied that when he was elected to the borough assembly, there was only a 13% voter turnout. School board members can serve for life, and some of them are not up to speed on the current issues. The borough assembly cuts a check to the school district, and is totally uninformed as to how the school district appropriates the money.

In closing, Mr. Kowalke advised against taking 4 to 5 years to update the comprehensive plan. He stated that Talkeetna had recently finished updating their plan, where they just reviewed the overall plan and changed some minor things, including a boundary change to match their original plan. He added that he remembers the opposition against the SPUD in our neighborhood when he was running for election in 2015.

10. Persons to be heard: None

11. Approve Meeting Location:

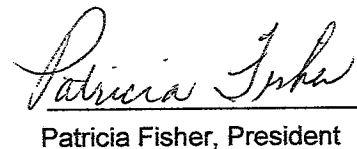
Meadow Lakes Elementary School Gym
Parks Highway
Meadow Lakes

Wednesday, February 14, 2018
Sign In: 6PM to 7PM
Party: 7PM – 9PM

Cally Leader moved to approve the February meeting location and was seconded by Lacey Harris. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm by President Patti Fisher.

 2/14/2018
Janet Henkel, Secretary Date

 2/16/2018
Patricia Fisher, President Date