

Alaska Community Forest Council

PO Box 241282, Anchorage, Alaska 99524

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2021 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attendance

Jan Van Den Top
Lisa Moore
Elise Huggins
Mitch Michaud
Susan Rogers
Nan Mundy
Meg Burgett
Nathan Lojewski
Dan Rees
Gino Graziano
Paul Guzinski
Laura Charlton

Jim Renkert
Josh Hightower

Molly Gillespie



A. Housekeeping

(9:00 – 9:20)

1. Review and approval of March minutes

(5 min)

Elise moves to approve, Jan seconds. None opposed, motion passes.

2. Any changes or additions to agenda

(5 min)

Move Molly/PLT to before program reports

No other changes

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3. Treasurers Report

(5 min)

ACFC Treasurer's Report 5/13/2021

By Nathan Lojewski

Account	Statement Date	Balance	Notes
Checking-1101204060	4/20/2021	\$5,854.06	
Savings -7783585990	4/30/2021	\$8,051.68	\$0.10 interest deposit since last report
ACFC Checking Ledger	5/13/2021	\$5,854.06	
Savings and Leger Total		\$13,905.74	

Activity since last report

- \$0.10 deposited to savings account - interest

Susan votes to approve the treasurers report, Elise seconds, none opposed.

B. Program Reports

(9:20 – 9:35)

1. Federal

(5 min)

No report. They have a new person on detail that was not available. The timeline to replace Kathy seems to be getting pushed back. Stephen Baker is current point of contact.

2. State

(10 min)

Jim Renkert

State forester Helge Eng has been hired, currently working for Calfire. He will start on June 1st and be based in Anchorage. Originally from Norway and has a Phd in forest management/science.

Starting to make real progress on 5-year plan, Forest Action Plan, update of grant forms, and accounting/admin procedures. We have awarded three more *Prunus* control grants and have two more applications awarded and in process for issuance. Working on spending money before it expires at the end of June. Working to finish deliverables on Fish Need A Forest Landscape Scale Restoration grant.

Spoke on KTNA public radio in Talkeetna about invasive *Prunus* species.

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Remove and Replace grant voucher program is in progress, getting close to launching.

Progress is being made on reconstituting Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), waiting on DNR Natural Resource and Conservation Development Board (NRCBD) to convene.

We may be conducting a tree planting project with volunteers in the burned area at McHugh Creek in Chugach State Park in August.

Josh Hightower

Made a site visit to a Machentanz Elementary School in Wasilla – they have a very small forested area that was cleared 10-15 years ago, and their hope is to create an outdoor classroom that mimics the native boreal forest ecosystem – we will continue working with them to help meet their management goals.

Took Fireline refresher last week. Depending on how the season goes, may be assisting with some wildland firefighting.

Attended a streambank restoration workshop put on by AK F&G and the US Fish and Wildlife Service – we reviewed several streambank restoration and erosion control techniques and looked at case studies about how they work in Alaska. There is a hands-on field day next week.

C. Presentations

(9:35-10:35)

1. Project Learning Tree – Molly Gillespie (30 min)
Molly is PLT Coordinator for State of Alaska, works for Wasilla SWCD. Has been on since last July. Molly discussed the basics of PLT, and how she has delivered the program in Alaska.
2. Paul Guzenski “Spruce Up Anchorage” (30 min)
Purchased 10K worth of spruce trees and donated them to 210 people locally – was intended to offset damage caused by spruce beetle outbreak. Going to start a nonprofit called “Spruce up Anchorage” will continue to donate trees yearly and be active with outreach. May also contribute

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donations to rent assistance, medical bill assistance, educational scholarships, etc. Still in the planning, organization phase.

D. ACFC New Business

(10:35 – 11:20)

1. 2021 ACFC Budget

(30 min)

Susan voted to approve treasurers report, Elise seconded, report is approved.

There is a need to set up a budget review committee with people that do not have access to the account. Nathan needs 2 volunteers.

Council needs to do biennial update by July 1 of this year, also need to identify the 'registered agent'.

Discussion of FY 2022 budget. See attached spreadsheet.

Laura moved to approve the 2022 budget, Elise seconded. Motion passed. See attached for budget details.

2. Arbor Day 2021

(15 min)

- i. Governor's proclamation is complete.
- ii. No celebrations or SAF seedling distribution at REI this year. The SAF seedling distribution is planned for the parking lot at the Change Point Church on Saturday June 26th.
- iii. Alaska Communities Arbor Day Events 2021:
 1. Soldotna Rotary is planting 200 white birch.
 2. Juneau is doing an Arbor Day Planting.
 3. Wasilla is doing Arbor Day planting.

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E. ACFC Old Business

(11:20 – 12:05)

1. Committee updates/reminders

a. ACFC nominating committee (Mitch, Jan, Nan) (20 min)

- i. Recruitment outside of Anchorage discussed.
- ii. Nominating committee has developed a general slate, but would like input for Seat H

CURRENT SLATE

1. Meg continues
2. Alex Wenninger replaces Gino
3. Elise continues
4. Bob Gorman applied for and approved for Construction/ROW, Seat F.
5. There are two fine candidates for one Seat H. Discussion ensued. Motion to vote called by Mitch.
David Jay is elected by a vote of 8-2.

b. ACFC Arbor Day grants (Gino, Dan, Nan, Elise) (10 min)

No new applications.
Two grants awarded from previous RFP.

c. Bylaws update committee (Susan, Gino, Elise) (15 min)

There is an issue with the bylaws. What happens when we lose a council member midterm? It doesn't seem to be that clear how to appoint someone midterm. Discussion of the way the bylaws are written and how that occurs.

Does the ACFC want the bylaw committee to add a provision for adding a person to the council mid-term?

Nathan moved to have the bylaw committee to work on wording that would allow for adding a person mid-term. Elise seconded.

Elise made a motion to accept the new change, Gino seconded. The change reads "The vacancy shall be filled by a person nominated by a council member and approved by a majority vote of the council."

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F. Lunch Break (12:05 – 1:05)

G. Public Comment Period (1:05 – 1:30)

No public comments.

H. Community/Council Member Reports (~3 min/each) (1:30 – 2:15)

Seat

Member

A. Arborist

Paul Guzenski

Trees are DYING!!!! I don't SLEEP!!!

Other than that, we are great! Beetle is definitely moving its way up hillside so this year should be fun. Lots of more difficult to access lots and fire concern. We are expanding to two full crews so that will help with the volume. We now have 3 Certified Arborists on staff and should have a CA on each job and every estimate which is pretty darn cool!

B. Forester

Dan Rees

No report.

C. Municipal Planner

Laura Charlton (Vice Chair)

The 12-Year sticker on the Tree City USA sign is up, though there is no Arbor Day celebration other than a borough proclamation. Some folks are starting a community garden, and she encouraged them to apply for a grant or two from ACFC. Someone is starting a hydroponic garden to sell lettuce.

D. Landscape Architect

Elise Huggins

Sand Lake Elementary School is losing young birch trees. There is an incredible amount of what appears to be oystershell scale on the living and dead trees. Any suggestions? Are any other areas affected by this, something to worry about?

The Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (AKASLA) played a large role in the Landscape Plants for Alaska website along with the Cooperative Extension Service and Division of Forestry/Community Forestry. AKASLA pays a small fee every 5 years to maintain the site, however the site has never been updated and is copyrighted by the original designer who is the only person who can make significant changes to the information. They will be discussing how to move the site into the future. What do Council members think about the site? Any thoughts on what should happen to it?

E. Horticulture

Nathan Lojewski (Treasurer)

The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) has worked with the Alaska congressional delegation to request \$35 Million over 5 years for spruce bark beetles on the KPB. This has not been approved by Congress, but the KPB appears to be gearing up to receive funds.

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Chugachmiut's Yukon Fire Crew (YFC) began work removing hazard beetle-killed trees with the USFS at the Russian River Campground. The YFC also began work on the Sterling Fuel Break. Chugachmiut is working with the USFWS and the Kenai Native Association to complete about 55 acres of mastication treatment on the Sterling Fuel Break begun last winter.

F. Construction/Right-of-Way
No report.

Jeremy Douse

G. Small Community Service

Mitch Michaud

Spoke with city of Soldotna for a resolution for a Kenai Peninsula Peace Crane Garden Trails park in Soldotna. They are providing support for tree planting by seeking grant funds. Has been taking part in meeting with a group interested in reestablishing the Anchorage SWCD. The Alaska Association of Conservation Districts supports reestablishment of an Anchorage SWCD and in becoming part of the association once they are approved by the DNR Natural Resource and Conservation Board (NRCDB). However, the NRCDB is not active right now. Discussion of whom from Mat-Su could be on the NRCDB. Seeking information on best practices for city tree canopy assessment.

H. Community Forestry/Beautification

Lisa Moore

Sitka had a planting and renovated a garden at the fire hall. They put in cherry trees, and that could have been the Arbor Day planting. So she is trying to get some information to the news and a proclamation together for Arbor Day.

I. Industry/Business
No report.

Corey Steffen

J. AK Cooperative Extension Service

Gino Graziano (Secretary)

I have done three presentations with the AFE on various invasive species related topics including why chokecherry is a problem and controlling it. Working out details and permission for control plots in Anchorage parklands for removal of prunus. Teaching a class at the Anchorage School District Summer Academy "The Changing Boreal Forest".

K. Member-at-Large
No report.

Jan van den Top

L. Member-at-Large
No report.

Patrick Ryan

M. Member-at-Large
No report.

Susan Rogers

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N. Member-at-Large

Nancy "Nan" Mundy

The Juneau Urban Forestry Partnership managed to get together an Arbor Day event. Scheduled for the 17th. Planting two trees with three classes of elementary students. The planting is back at the cemetery.

O. Member-at-Large

Meg Burgett (Chair)

No report.

I. Further Discussion

as time allows

J. Next Meeting, Monthly teleconference

Monthly Teleconference, June 10, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Will invite the new board members to the June meeting. New member orientation will be held from 11-12, and followed by the regular teleconference from 12-1.

K. Next Quarterly Meeting

August 13th or August 20th

Meeting is scheduled for second Friday, and Jim may be on leave, so need to discuss when to do this meeting. Council will work out details and decide whether to meet in person during June 10th teleconference.

L. Adjourn 2:20