

## McCarthy Area Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 28, 2022, 6:30 PM, McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church/Zoom

*Mission: McCarthy Ara Council is a non-profit organization committed to improving the lives of locals and visitors in the McCarthy-Kennecott Area*

*Specific Objectives and Purposes: The specific objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be (1) to provide structure for discussion, decision-making and planning on issues faced by the McCarthy area community; (2) to receive and administer funds for community projects and for the administration of the public affairs of the McCarthy area community.*

**Members present:** *(in person)* Thea Agnew Bembem, Chris Chester, Jon Erdman, Greg Fensterman, Heike Frost, Bonnie Kenyon, Bernadette Martel, Erin McKinstry, Kim Meck, Nik Merlino, Gina Merlino, John Rice, Jenny Rosenbaum, David Rowland, Hannah Rowland, Laurie Rowland, Keith Rowland, Kenny Smith *(virtual/phone)* Bill Crum, Geoff Downes, Pat Garrett, Gordon Gayle, Erik Mundahl, Craig Neill, Charlie O'Neill, Lyn Plomaritis, Michelle Raven, Greg Runyan, Ben Shaine, Lori Stender, Rob Wesson, Denise Jantz

**Others present:** *(in person)* Katina Leier, Jon Cooperman, Brooke Harrington, Mark Miller, Wendy Pollock, Gilbert Rowland, Jason Lobo, Brittany Rowland, Jeremy Pataky *(virtual/phone)* Michelle McAfee, Jacob Shultz, Pat Proden, Sharon Tingle, Colin Warren

### President's report and announcements (Nik Merlino)

President Nik Merlino opened the meeting at 6:32 PM with a quorum of 9 members present at the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church and online. He thanked Bonnie Kenyon, Kenny Smith, and the Church for letting the membership use the space since Tony Zak's is unavailable. Blackburn Heritage Foundation has closed it to community use for the rest of the summer. There's currently no chosen location for the August meeting.

### June Minutes Approval & July Agenda Approval

A motion was made to accept the June 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed with no opposition. The June minutes can be viewed on the MAC website at [www.mxycouncil.org](http://www.mxycouncil.org). A motion was made to approve the July 2022 membership meeting agenda. The motion was seconded and passed with no opposition.

### Treasurer's report (Nik Merlino in lieu of Tamara Harper)

total \$ in bank/CDs now: \$162,842

within that total:

operations	\$15,288
ECI	\$63,026 (\$25,000 available for this year)
small grants	\$42,269 (including \$9,360 approved for projects)
private donations reserved	\$11,000
tony's upkeep fund	\$634
unrestricted	\$30,625

Activity since June meeting:

EXPENSES: \$15 zoom monthly fee  
\$1,427 annual Directors and Officers insurance premium  
\$510 annual General Liability insurance premium  
\$110 microphone for meetings  
\$114 hand sanitizers for outhouses

INCOME: \$235 dues/outhouse donations

### **Committee reports**

#### *Roads and Access committee (Michelle Raven)<sup>1</sup>*

Michelle discussed a letter DOT sent to NPS about access on the DOT bridge as well as an upcoming Planning and Environmental Linkages Study by DOT for the McCarthy Road. The estimated cost for the study is \$1.3 million. The first phase is the planning stage, followed by the environmental stage. The committee will share further details about the study as they have them. There was some discussion about what the letter says about motorized vehicle use on the DOT bridge. Michelle encouraged members to read the letter for more information. Nik mentioned that he will reach out to DOT to ask for them to come to the August meeting to speak further about the study. Michelle also presented maps the committee received from DOT showing the roads they manage in the area. She thanked DOT for providing the maps. For more information, see the maps and the summary of the committee report from Michelle.

#### *Essential Community Infrastructure Funding ad hoc committee presentation<sup>2</sup>*

Vice President Thea Agnew Bemben reviewed the process for the new Essential Community Infrastructure program that was approved last year by the membership. Part of the process requires a committee of at least 5 people to review any proposals presented at the March-June meetings. There was one proposal presented for \$25,000 at the June meeting to help build a Geodesic Growing Dome Greenhouse for a new business that would be run by members Bernadette Martel and Kim Meck. Five people volunteered to join the committee (Kristin Link, Jacob Shultz, Chris Chester, Jon Erdman, and Jeannie Miller) after the June meeting. They reviewed and scored the proposal to help determine eligibility and make a recommendation to the membership about whether or not to fund the proposal. Their cumulative scores and comments are attached to the minutes. They did not recommend the proposal for funding. The average score was 30 out of 100. Some concerns included funding a private business with public funds, the long timeline, lack of matching funds, and lack of labor and freight costs within the budget. Two of the reviewers shared their points of view and Kim and Bernadette also answered some questions from the membership. The proposal will come up for a vote at the August meeting. Please see attached documents for guidelines, scoring, application materials and contact information.

### **Community partner reports**

#### *KMVFD (Chris Chester)*

Fire danger went back up. Chris announced an upcoming fundraiser on Sunday, July 31. Chris walked the site for the new fire hall with David Rowland. Dirt work is set to begin in about 3 weeks. Concrete work will follow, hopefully this year depending on availability of contractors.

#### *EMS (Jacob Shultz)*

Jacob thanked everyone for their support with the building. The next stage is for more interior work. The ambulance is housed inside the building. It's been a challenge to find enough volunteers in the right place or with the right training. If you're interested in helping out with EMS, reach out to Jacob at [mxyems@gmail.com](mailto:mxyems@gmail.com). There was a question about a possible collaboration with other medical

---

<sup>1</sup> See the following attached documents for more details: 1) DOT Letter to NPS June 2022 2) McCarthy Roads and Access Summary of Presentation 3) Map 1 McCarthy Omnibus Routes Exhibit 4) Map 2 McCarthy ROW Plat 2004 5) Map 3 McCarthy Townsite DOT & PF Roads Map 49

<sup>2</sup> See the following attached documents: 1) Essential Community Guidelines 2) Greenhouse Project PP 3) Geodesic Dome Greenhouse 4) Supplemental Pub. Dome Info 5) MAC\_ECIRviewerScoresComments072522

organizations like Copper River Native Association to help meet the need or provide telehealth. Jacob said he'll reach out.

*Kennicott-McCarthy Recreation Alliance (Hannah Rowland)*

Hannah talked about long-term planning for the playground, including an overall design. They'll be researching grants this winter to help complete the playground and may apply for an ECI grant next year.

*NPS (Mark Miller)*

Mark mentioned the letter from DOT to NPS that Michelle Raven brought up in her roads and access report. He said they're almost finished updating language on their signs and website to match new regulations. He also gave an update on the Kennecott Operations Plan review process following a question from a member. Meetings stalled during the pandemic, but the review process is now almost complete and they'll be presenting outcomes of the review and next steps to the community soon.

*CVT (Chris Mishmash)*

Chris reported a recent area wide internet outage that affected businesses and others, and apologized for the outage. They will be starting a maintenance project on the Canon Hill Tower in Chitina to level the tower. There may be some outages as they adjust the antenna. There are ongoing conversions from the CDMA network. About a dozen people still need to convert to the new equipment. As they talked about at an earlier meeting, CVT is also working to install new systems, called a point to multipoint system. They're installing new equipment on Sourdough Ridge and are going to test out a few beta customers with the new system. For it to work, customers will need line of sight with the tower. There was some discussion about neighborhoods that don't have line of sight and how that could be remedied. Also a discussion about phone service being tied to internet service. If one goes out then both do. Chris said they receive notifications if internet/phones are down in the area.

## **Old Business**

*Community Small Grant Funding proposal: Children's Program Proposal<sup>3</sup> (Gina Merlino)*

Gina reviewed the proposal that she presented at the June meeting. They started the program without funding, but if the proposal is approved, it will mean parents will pay less and they'll have more money to start up next year's programming. The program is running once a week through mid-to late August. A motion was made to grant funds requested for the Children's Program. The motion was seconded. The motion passed via voice vote with 1 no vote and all else in favor.

## **New Business**

*KMRA: Playground proposal (Hannah Rowland)<sup>4</sup>*

Hannah presented a small grants proposal to add picnic tables, umbrellas, and a bench to the playground. Kennicott-McCarthy Recreation Alliance is also requesting funds to cover the startup costs for the nonprofit, including filing fees. The nonprofit will own the playground. They're requesting \$1,354. They're also hosting a few volunteer days to help rake some of the larger wood chips (Aug. 15 & 19) and potentially help build the picnic tables (September) if the proposal is approved. The proposal will go to a vote at the August meeting. See attached documents for a full copy of the proposal.

*EMS: Funding proposal for operations, equipment and training (Jacob Shultz)<sup>5</sup>*

---

<sup>3</sup> See Children's Program Proposal

<sup>4</sup> See KMRA Playground Proposal

<sup>5</sup> MAC\_GrantEMS\_2022

Jacob presented a small grants proposal for \$2400 to cover the cost of ambulance insurance, equipment, supplies and training. It gets busier every year, which requires more people to get involved, so training more people at higher levels is important. They have \$1000 in unrestricted donations to provide as matching funds. They could also use in-kind donations as matching funds instead. The proposal will go to a vote at the August meeting. See attached documents for a full copy of the proposal

#### *Mail Shack Expansion (Thea)*

Thea said Jeannie Miller brought up the idea of using community funds to expand and/or redesign the mail shack so it better accommodates packages. There's no official sponsor or proposal, but if anyone is interested in spearheading a project, contact Thea ([thea@agnewbeck.com](mailto:thea@agnewbeck.com)). There could be a mail shack committee to head up mail shack issues and also discuss the problem of the puddle in front of the mail shack in the spring and during the wetter times of year.

#### *Discussion of Annual Elections (Nik/Erin)*

The annual meeting is on Thursday, August 25 at 6:30 PM at TBD location. Eleven board seats, including four officers' seats, are up for re-election. Tamara Harper is stepping down as treasurer after 16 years of hard work, so anyone interested in running for treasurer should email the MAC Secretary at [mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com). Please submit your name to the MAC secretary by **Thursday, August 18** to be included in the slate of candidates on the ballot. You can also submit a short paragraph about yourself. Anyone can add their name at the meeting to be considered as a write-in candidate. Candidates have 5 minutes to speak or answer questions if they want. If you're unable to attend the meeting, but you want to vote, you have two options: 1) vote via email up to 6 hours before the start of the meeting or 2) delegate another member as a proxy to cast your ballot. You either need to submit a written authorization to the secretary at least 6 hours before the start of the meeting or send the authorization with the proxy to the meeting. You must be a current voting member to cast a ballot. If you're unsure whether you've paid your dues, please send me an email to the MAC Secretary for an update. Dues are \$5 per voting member. Cash or check can be sent to the McCarthy Area Council, PO BOX MXY #31, Glennallen, AK 99588.

#### **Announcements**

The Wrangell Mountains Center is hosting the Tin Can Annie's Truth Be Told Storytelling Festival. There are three events: a competition at Glacier View Campground on Friday, August 12 (includes a barbecue fundraiser), another competition and salmon chowder fundraiser at the Old Hardware Store on Saturday, August 13, and a winners' showcase at the Kennecott Rec Hall on Sunday, August 14. The grand prize winner gets \$500.

Hannah Rowland thanked the church for letting them host the vacation bible school there.

A motion was made to end the meeting. The motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

The next MAC meeting will be Thursday, August 25, 2022 at 6:30pm at TBD.

The next MAC BOD meeting will be August 18, 2022 at 6:30 pm over Zoom and/or in person.

Minutes taken by Erin McKinstry, Recording Secretary