

KBNERR September Community Council Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2023

12:00–3:00

Kachemak Bay Campus

533 E Pioneer Ave

Homer, AK 99603

Meeting called by:	KBNERR Community Council Chair George Matz	Type of meeting:	Quarterly Community Council Meeting
Note taker:	Ben Peters		

Attendees:	<p>Council Members: Donna Aderhold, Paul Allan, George Matz, Carol Harding, Francie Roberts, Laurie Daniel, Linda Robinson, Michael Opheim, Jessica Shepherd,</p> <p>Agency Members: Kris Holderied (NOAA KBL), Dom Hondolero (NOAA KBL), Danielle Seigert (ADF&G), Jan Keiser (City of Homer), Timi Vann (NOAA), Jaci Overbeck (NOAA), Reid Brewer (KBC), Debbie Tobin (KBC), Ross Whippo (NOAA), Katrin Iken (UAF)</p> <p>Guests: Matt Carlson, Lindsey Flagstad, Erin Larson, Bree Turner, Samantha Lopez (KPB River Center), Amy Holman (NOAA), Brent Johnson</p> <p>KBNERR Staff: Katherine Schake, Jacob Argueta, Syverine Bentz, Chris Guo, Ingrid Harrald, Jasmine Maurer, Ben Peters, Kim Schuster, Lauren Sutton, McKenna Shook</p>
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Minutes

Agenda item:	Welcome & Introductions	Presenter:	George Matz
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Discussion:

- Purpose of the council
- Quorum established

Agenda item:	Approval of Minutes	Presenter:	George Matz
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Discussion:

- Approval of June Minutes by George Matz, seconded
- Agenda Change
 - Lane Chesley unable to join so Brent Johnson will be joining to discuss material extraction amendments, KBNERR relevance, and community comment

Agenda item:	Administrative Update	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- Jane Middleton acknowledgement
- Getting to know the reserve
- Katherine will be point person for council needs and Ben support from background
- Distinction between advocating for Reserve versus advocating for political issue using reserve science
 - Katherine has a background working with gravel pit operators, experience with communications/ outreach difficulties
 - Important to put forth a single voice for unified body of people - preparing a single statement
 - Distinguishing between council hat voice unified message and individual citizen message advocating for Reserve science
 - most people won't be able to distinguish between the Reserve and the Reserve Community Council
- Who are we?
 - NOAA requirements, UAA requirements,
 - staff interests
 - community priorities
- Funding updates
 - Katherine focusing on administering funds, and eventually moving over to capacity building funds, making room for funding availability from NOAA Ops
 - Kris Holderied: We had Senator Murkowski here, had to have NOAA vest on, then explicitly taking NOAA vest off to discuss other issues
 - Francie: Are Maps available for Bridge Creek and Beluga Slough acquisition projects
 - Can provide general areas of interest if visiting reserve
 - Generally looking at the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District and wetlands north of Beluga Lake / airport
 - Congratulating City of Homer on approval of Kachemak Drive Acquisition and
 - Now the hard work begins
 - Paul Allan: where does money come from for work to be done?
 - Much of it comes from grant, including appraisals and surveys
 - Carol: when is funding released
 - Steps to release are complicated and many, we are submitting invoices and city is being reimbursed, there is currently funding for the preacquisition phase, then once due diligence is complete parcel acquisition funds will be released
- Introducing Guests
 - Jaci Overbeck
 - working in the state over past 10 years on issues of coastal erosion and flooding mostly with state of Alaska now with NOAA
 - increasing capacity with organization to understand local geospatial needs
 - Timi Vann - regional lead, alaska and Pacific NOAA OCM National Ocean Service (Washington and Oregon)
 - Centered in Seattle, not the best for on the ground work, but a good resource for the council and others for connecting to the large closet of NOAA capabilities
 - Focus on policy and programatics
 - Social scientist by training and cultural anthro with specialty in archaeology
 - Commercially fished out of Seattle,
 - struck by power of community council voice and the vitality / growth of the reserve
 - Bree Turner: Timi and Jaci are in the same office as Bree
 - visiting in september for National Estuaries week
 - Kris: it's a big statement that OCM is making an effort to have more staff on the ground here in Alaska
- Active Projects Science Collaborative (SC) Grants
 - Last opportunity to apply for SC grants with this round of funding so all sectors worked collaboratively to put in funding - total of 17 projects in system, 3 of which accepted for KBNERR
 - Science Transfer on Marine Invasive Species
 - Jasmine: EGC rapid response
 - brought state partners monitoring for Green crab to Homer for the purpose of updating and practicing an invasive green crab rapid response
 - Seeing gaps, reinforcing partnerships, developing protocols together
 - Katherine: got detailed types of rapid response scenarios and working with lots of different agency partners

- Kris: looking for volunteers from this room. The process of doing a drill exercise identifies information gaps / requirements that will be good to prepare when the scenarios occur
- Concrete next steps for southeast Alaska where first instance of green crab in Alaska occurred
 - raising awareness at state level, updating techniques, participating in Washington Seagrant training for community monitors, translating their success into Alaska's context
- George: range level of green crab expanded? Green crab on Annette Island, caught 1000 crab over the past months since July. How fast do we need to act? No extra time
- Reid: Is there interest in looking into invasive tunicates coming up in Southeast?
 - Smithsonian plate watch program been going on since 2006, Other than Homer: Valdez, Kodiak, Ketchikan, Dutch Harbor,
- Jessica: also another eDNA opportunity
- Ingrid: the timing of this grant is excellent with the EGC rapid Response, especially with the lack of human capacity. Great to start developing the capacity, people, and funding to start nodes of responders within communities all over Alaska
 - we will have a new toolkit from Seagrant and will then conduct a community monitoring trainer (nodes) for different communities throughout Alaska
- environmental DNA
 - Jessica: target species?
 - there are collected samples for belugas from Kenai River
 - water taxis noticing that belugas, harbor porpoises, seals, all species in Halibut Lagoon have diminished, interested in examining this
 - Jessica: bioacoustic data?
 - Just returned hydrophones to NOAA couldn't find the funding to deploy them and analyze data
 - Reid: there is interest in bringing whole area of beluga eDNA research together
 - people looking at eDNA from different perspectives all over Alaska
 - Kris: Working with Jessica Glass? Yes. She is a new prof at UAF, here in summer looking at how to get better tools for community monitoring.
- Indigenous knowledge/NERR Science and monitoring and Pacific bird stewardship
 - Jan: which tribal partners here in KBay?
 - All four reserves working with local tribal partners
 - early discussions with Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC)
 - Amy Holman: NOAA Regional Coordinator
 - Conversation with AOOS funding opportunities -
 - Syverine: a lot of connection between Alaska and Hawaii NERRs for headwater to estuaries to offshore thinking
- Letter of support for tagged bird tracking Motus towers
 - Kris: interested in connecting with USGS - tagging Kittiwakes at the lab
 - Donna: what is the range that birds need to fly?
 - Unsure but in other places within 200 meters
 - Jessica: any specific species?
 - Shorebirds and songbirds, anything that is tagged

Action items

Person responsible

✓ Lauren Sutton get info from Kris on USGS folks

Lauren

✓

✓

Agenda item:	Communications Updates	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- Website underway from Roca
 - Council will provide input on council page
 - staff have provided content for main landing page, Salmon Watershed Stewardship will inform initial content direction
- Communications Committee
 - Do you still want to form a committee on communications and outreach?
 - focusing first on the internal communications and then the external communications
 - Francie: suggests postponing a committee formation and following Katherine's guidelines and seeing how they go and deciding at the next meeting
 - How we outreach reserve events / council events would be great to have council input / feedback
 - Jan: is there a problem?
 - From the outreach standpoint, there are a lot of ideas and would like to see them prioritized then implemented
 - Outreach:
 - Roca will provide a lot of templates for outreach materials
 - Lingering "who is the reserve" question that exists in the community
 - could use the lift from Reserve
 - Reid: thinking about state of the Bay report, bringing together people around Kachemak Bay. Using State of the Bay formula for condensed version of KBay info without commitment
 - Annual? Maybe
 - Laurie: every three years Kachemak Bay Science Conference
 - Kris: would college be willing to host this? Fully support this
 - Jessica: a month prior to science symposium could generate
 - Francie: I think a visit to the KBI Coffee table during the non summer season would be beneficial to the KBNERR visibility
 - Presentations to the City Council

Agenda item:	Committee Updates	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- Land and Facilities Committee
 - August 14, gave testimony to city of homer for approval of kachemak sponge
 - Project approved and funding for project is moving forward
 - Put in two letters of intent for nearly \$2 million each for 2023 funding opportunity after council / community prioritization
 - Final proposals will be submitted in December if advanced to next stage
- Port and Harbor expansion committee
 - Environmental stakeholders working group
 - feasibility study having design finalized by spring and selected by June
 - Calling Committee Meetings in September before working group meeting
 - Providing guidance and suggestions towards science
 - George: in terms of sediment transfer,?
 - Lauren: original plan to have environmental assessment based in October / November of this year. KBNERR stated we were unable to support the science of this plan, so this slowed their environmental assessment process. Last meeting they've begun touching on sediment transfer, this is a win
 - Are we able to complete environmental assessment with current data? Doubtful
 - Kris: this is just the initial environmental assessment
 - Meeting current capacity for working with environmental team and looking for funding for us to be more involved
 - Reid: often talk about how the University, NOAA, and Reserve can work better together. Every year teams of divers are getting together to do research in bay. We have a new scientific diver with NOAA,
 - Kris: another way to look at this effort is that effort comes under the city's contracted efforts with HDR to be proactive to get information together to provide support for HDR. Where do you see the role of the community council in this process?
 - Laurie: providing support for Lauren and staff. We have more leeway to advocate. Getting science into hands of HDR / Corps of Engineers
 - George: putting forth position that we're not satisfied with science involved in this decision. Corps wants to know if they should be in this project or not

- Donna: ultimate decision corps of engineers is coming up with is cost-benefit analysis. For this project to pass corps of engineers requirements for funding is for cost-benefit ratio to improve significantly.
 - Their focus is to come up with a configuration that brings up cost-benefit analysis to what aligns with requirements
- Kris: what are the interests of the council to then get information back from the corps on what is being used
- speculating that September 23rd public meeting will present designs and information they have to evaluate the designs
 - We don't know yet whether their methods are satisfactory
- Council needs to determine what messaging is for the corps. Want to put forth a neutral message / question determining what information is being used to make designs
- Katherine: if you're wearing council hat when presenting testimony, make sure that message is unified for entire council, staff, university
 - encourage drafting a letter that all staff and council can review and otherwise council members should provide comments as individual citizens
 - Council will draft letter and finalize messaging for September 23rd meeting
- Syverine: possibly a report out at marine ecosystems work group in October
- Jan: helpful to have summary of concerns
 - 1. are they providing sufficient data for the process of drafting designs
 - What is the question, what are they looking for: ecosystem function, diversity, etc?
 - We need to provide something about the "footprint"
 - Linkage between footprint and what the question they are looking for to determine what the footprint is

Action items

Person responsible

✓ Council will draft letter for September 23rd

Laurie Daniel

✓

✓

Agenda item:	Material Extraction Code	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- Brent Johnson:
 - Lane Chesley has chaired subcommittee on material site ordinance amendments
 - he was in contact with Coowe while developing these amendments
 - Coowe offered to put Reserve in position to review material extraction permits for groundwater compliance
 - Including language to protect juvenile salmon
 - Amendments have passed in the forum, Brent anticipates they will pass
 - Assembly will be in Homer on September 19th, and this would provide a great opportunity for people to submit comments in person
 - Donna Aderhold: Research Reserve providing free service, how often does the borough receive permit applications for new material site extraction?
 - Estimating permits would be around 10/year. Some applications will be in place nowhere near salmon spawning streams. This is a trial on both sides
 - Francie Roberts: Gravel pits get renewed off and on. How many renewals would happen and would this ordinance affect renewals?
 - Doubt that prior existing use will be allowed to make comments
 - renewal is every five years.
 - George: proposing that council take a position on this amendment and provide a comment
 - previous meeting taken a position to support this, but now time to orchestrate message
 - ad hoc legislative committee
 - Lauren: where does this responsibility fall?

- This requires watershed scope of knowledge. With GIS layers we already have, it is a matter of looking at the proposed site and seeing if it overlaps with our groundwater flow path layers. To what extent do we want to provide comments though assuming the amendments pass. Need to determine how much work and effort reserve staff puts into these comments.
- Commitment of Reserve to maintaining expertise in this area
- Brent: Research Reserve has opportunity to comment, not necessarily committed. With Robert Ruffner this is a favorable political climate to include science into policy
 - Beyond groundwater: don't see why research reserve can't make comments on proposals that have to do with salmon

- KPB Material Extraction Amendments

- Amend KPB 21.25.050, as follows: 21.25.050. Permit considerations—
 - Within 30 days of receiving an application, the planning director or designee shall review the submitted application for completeness and compliance with this chapter. If it is incomplete or does not meet the requirements of this chapter, the planning director shall notify the applicant in writing. The planning director shall thereafter either return the application to the applicant or schedule the application to be considered by the planning commission at the next appropriate scheduled meeting. **Upon receiving an application, the planning director or designee will forward a copy of the application to the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (“KBNERR”) for review and comment. KBNERR will have thirty days to provide its review and comment prior to submission of the application to the planning commission if the application is otherwise complete.**
- Amend KPB 21.29.005, as follows: 21.29.005. Intent and Purpose.
 - The purpose of this chapter is to provide a land use permitting process to regulate the operation, scope, and duration of earth materials extraction and processing within the borough while promoting the public health, safety, and general welfare of the Kenai Peninsula Borough, **including the health of aquatic systems that support salmon.** It is the further purpose of this chapter to promote compatible, orderly development.
- Amend KPB 21.29.030, as follows: 21.29.030. Application procedure.
 - A. In order to obtain a counter permit or CLUP under this chapter, an applicant must first complete and submit to the borough planning department a permit application, along with the fee listed in the most current Kenai Peninsula Borough Schedule of Rates, Charges and Fees. The planning director may determine that certain contiguous parcels are eligible for a single permit. The application must include the following items, without which the application will be deemed incomplete:
 - 1. Legal description of the parcel, KPB tax parcel ID number, and identification of whether the permit is for the entire parcel, or a specific location within a parcel;
 - 2. Expected life span of the material site;
 - 3. A buffer plan consistent with KPB 21.29.050(A)(1);
 - 4. Reclamation plan consistent with KPB 21.29.060;
 - 5. The depth of excavation;
 - 6. Type of material to be extracted;
 - 7. A site map professional surveyor licensed in the State of Alaska to include the following:
 - a. Location of excavation, and, if the site is to be developed in phases, the life span and expected reclamation date for each phase;
 - b. Proposed buffers consistent with KPB 21.29.050(A)(1), or alternate buffer plan;
 - c. Identification of all encumbrances, including but not limited to, easements;
 - d. Points of ingress and egress. Driveway permits must be acquired from either the state or borough as appropriate prior to submitting the application;
 - e. Anticipated haul routes, contingent on approval from the governmental agency with regulatory jurisdiction over the road;
 - f. Location of any processing areas on the parcel, if applicable;
 - g. North arrow;
 - h. The scale to which the site plan is drawn;
 - i. Preparer's name and date; and
 - j. Field verification must include staking the boundary of the parcel at sequentially visible intervals. The planning director may grant an exemption in writing to the staking requirements if the parcel boundaries are obvious or staking is unnecessary.
 - 8. A site plan, prepared by a qualified independent civil engineer licensed and active in the State of Alaska to include the following:

- a. Surface water protection measures, if any, for adjacent properties, including the use of diversion channels, interception ditches, on-site collection ditches, sediment ponds and traps, and silt fence;
- b. Location and elevation of test holes, and depth of groundwater, based on the seasonal high-water table. At least one test hole per ten acres of excavated area is required to be dug. The test holes must be at least four feet below the proposed lowest elevation of excavation depth;
- c. Location of all private wells of adjacent property owners within 300 feet of the proposed parcel boundary; and
- d. Location of any water body on the parcel, including the location of any riparian wetland as determined by best available data [.] ;
- **e. Ground water protection measures for anadromous streams, especially with regard to juvenile salmon, as identified by shallow groundwater flowpaths and critical areas of aquifer connectivity, such as recharge, where this information is available.**
- 9. A statement by the operator of the site that the requirements of KPB 21.29.045 have been satisfied.
- B. In order to aid the planning commission or planning director's decision-making process, the planning director may provide vicinity, aerial, land use, and ownership maps for each application and may include additional information

Agenda item:	Council Business	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- National Estuaries Week
 - Staff participation event where does the council fit in Katherine feels reverse
 - Council members have opportunity to be the voice and face of the reserve
 - Possible outreach: Coffee Table, op-ed,
 - Worked with state, federal, etc for proclamations
 - Estuary crawl
 - Issue for the Communications
- Reappointments
- Council Committees
 - research and education are standing committees:
 - when Lauren is back from maternity leave, we hope to reinvigorate the research committee
- Public Comments
 - Watershed Collaborative is currently on hold
- National Meeting
 - Budgets for travel are limited this year, don't know enough about the role of council and what they bring back to know if it is worth funding council travel this year as well
 - If council feel strongly about sending representative, providing justification / proposal for funding to go
 - Most friends groups operate as a non-profit, UAA is lukewarm on this idea

Action items

Person responsible

- ✓ Council Member writing an op-ed for homer news
- Undetermined

Agenda item:	Council & Public Comment	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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Discussion:

- Kris: my job has been advertised, would appreciate if you'd share with them how you share with me, getting them into the loop
 - Hired Ross Whippo,
 - Hired Paul Cziko,
- Happy birthday Kris

Agenda item:	Closing Remarks	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
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