

Municipality of Anchorage



*P.O. Box 390
Girdwood, Alaska 99587
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>
David Bronson, Mayor*

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Briana Sullivan & Jennifer Wingard, Co-Chairs
Mike Edgington, Amanda Sassi, Guy Wade*

Resolution 2023-22

Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR GIRDWOOD INC, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LITTLE BEARS PLAYHOUSE, INC., REGARDING THE GIRDWOOD WORKFORCE CHILDCARE PROJECT

WHEREAS, Little Bears Playhouse is the only full-time licensed childcare provider in Girdwood and has provided this critical service in the community for almost 40 years; and

WHEREAS, structural analysis of the existing facility in 2011 revealed deficiencies that required immediate structural rehabilitation, significant on-going maintenance, and operational changes regarding occupancy in order to continue to be used by the community; and

WHEREAS, despite on-going maintenance and structural work, the buildings continued to age and degrade, and are far from conforming to municipal code requirements for their existing uses, operating only through grandfather rights; and

WHEREAS, for well over a decade, Little Bears Playhouse Board of Directors, a non-profit board comprised mainly of parent volunteers who rely on child care provided by Little Bears Playhouse, has held fundraisers, has researched and developed various partnerships, collaborations and locations to in order to build an adequate child care facility in which to care for our youngest citizens; and

WHEREAS, over many years the Girdwood Board of Supervisors (GBOS) has written resolutions regarding various plans explored by Little Bears Playhouse, Inc Board of Directors for refurbishment, replacement, rebuild and bonding for construction of a facility, including a 2008 resolution supporting rebuild, resolutions in 2014 - 2016 regarding construction in conjunction with the Turnagain Arm Service Coalition (TASC) in the South Townsite, a resolution in 2019 for bonding proposition for rebuild in the current location, and a resolution in 2020 to consider rebuilding on land owned by Alyeska Resort; and

WHEREAS, in the April 2020 municipal election, 80% of Girdwood voters voted in favor of taxing themselves to build a new child care facility, although the bond proposition failed Areawide; and

WHEREAS, the inadequacies of the current child care facility in which Little Bears Playhouse operates were demonstrated during the closure and subsequent re-opening during the COVID-19 pandemic, with demand for service far greater than the supply available for child care within the existing facility; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, Little Bears partnered with Girdwood Inc. to form Girdwood Workforce Childcare Project, and received an ARPA grant of \$1,600,000, of which \$1,500,000 requires matching funds, to achieve this long-time goal of the Girdwood community to construct a modern, safe building for providing high-quality child care, which is a critical component in our economic recovery, stability and future sustainability; and

WHEREAS, a new parcel of land has been offered by Alyeska Resort, allowing for a facility to be constructed that meets the space and operational requirements of a modern childcare center; and

THEREFORE, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors resolves support for the Girdwood Workforce Childcare Project, to pursue development and operation on Alyeska Resort land, as well as pursue additional grant and other funding opportunities, for the purpose of building a new childcare center facility.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Girdwood Board of Supervisors recognizes the resiliency and persistence of the many members of the Little Bears Playhouse Inc. Board of Directors in pursuing all options and all possibilities for collaboration over the last decade, and recognizes that the children who were attending Little Bears in 2008, when this project first was presented to GBOS, are now adults.

Passed and approved by a vote of 4 to 0 on this 23rd day of October, 2023.

Mike Edgington

Mike Edgington
GBOS Housing and Economic Development Chair

Margaret Tyler

Attest