

Girdwood Land Use Committee

Notice of Meeting on June 12, 2023

7PM

Minutes Final

Meeting will take place via Teams teleconference and in person at the Girdwood Community Room, 250 Egloff Rd.

The following items have been submitted as agenda items for consideration at the meeting of the Girdwood Land Use Committee. A voting member is any Girdwood Valley resident eighteen (18) years of age or older. Non-resident property owners, businesses, and non-profit associations are allowed one (1) vote per entity. Detailed voting qualifications can be found in the rules outlined in the Girdwood Land Use Committee Operating Principles.

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors, its committees, and subcommittees are subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act as found in Alaska Statute 44.62.310 and Anchorage Municipal Code 1.25 - Public Meetings.

The Girdwood Land Use Committee operates under the Girdwood Public Meetings Standards of Conduct.

Agenda Item LUC 2306-01:

Land Acknowledgement:

Call to order 7:02PM Kevin McDermott, Chair

Agenda Approval for June 12, 2023 meeting

Joel Ribbens/Mike Edgington

Assent Vote

Minutes approval from May 8, 2023 meeting

Joel Ribbens/Guy Wade

Assent Vote

LUC Officer reports: None

GBOS updates: Jennifer Wingard new GBOS LUC chair. GBOS responses to the HLB Work Plan and the DOT Airport Lease are in the meeting packet.

Announcements:

Agenda Item LUC 2306-02: Update and community input regarding housing and housing developments

- New Housing and Economic Committee has held kickoff meeting in May. Meetings are scheduled for last WED monthly at 12PM. Chair is Brett Wilbanks. New web page opened, group reports to GBOS.
- Outcome of GBOS Letter of Request to HLB April 19 2023: No response yet.
- Progress on facilitated housing workshop/open house: Likely to be held in conjunction with work by Imagine!Girdwood once they are funded to move forward.

Agenda Item LUC 2306-03: Public Comment (3 minutes each) None

Agenda Item LUC 2306-04: Committee Reports. Any items for update or discussion should be brought up at this time.

Housing and Economic Stability Advisory Committee status update: Previously introduced under LUC 2306-02. IN the future, reports from GHEC will come under this heading. No other committees provide reports.

Old Business:

Agenda Item LUC 2305-05: Review and input on HLB 2023 Work Plan and 5 year Management Plan [DRAFT 2023 Annual Work Program & 2024-2028 Five-Year Management Plan](#), comments due by June 9 (no extension granted). Letter provided in the meeting packet. Letter has been sent to HLB staff to be considered and addressed in work plan and 5 year plan. Plan then will go to HLBAC, ultimately to the Assembly for approval. Some larger issues are addressed by GBOS in their letter, primarily the role of HLB as a developer instead of land manager.

Agenda Item LUC 2305-06: AWWU request for LUC recommendation of GBOS Resolution of Support an Intra-Government Permit (IGP) between Girdwood Parks and Rec and AWWU for a proposed project to create a substation at Vail Drive

Improved substation will replace 3 existing pump stations. Building will be about 32'x40', designed to fit in to residential area. New facility will be more efficient, decrease maintenance costs, provide better water pressure. Such facilities are planned to have fencing surrounding, if this is not necessary one will not be installed. There will be an access gate, however.

Once design is complete, AWWU will come back to GBOS to discuss traffic impact to re-set water lines and build structure. It would be possible with the improvements in place for Girdwood to pursue a hydrant service area to extend hydrants up to areas currently not served. Service Area is interested in collaborating with AWWU on this project to fix drainage and install fish passage culvert. GVSA manager and AWWU will connect on this item.

Motion:

LUC moves to recommend GBOS Resolution of Support for an Intra-Government Permit (IGP) between Girdwood Parks and Recreation and AWWU for a proposed substation at Vail Drive.

Motion by Joel Ribbens, 2nd by Ryan Hutchins-Cabibi

Vote by poll: 5Y 0N 2A; Chat 1Y 0N 0A; Room 5Y 0N 6A; Vote by voice 0Y 1N 0A

Total: 11 yes, 1 No 8 abstentions

Motion carries

Agenda Item LUC 2305-07: Alien Species Inc request for LUC recommendation for GBOS Letter of Non-Objection for weed spraying on MOA land in 2023 and 2024. LONO has been received for prior years' work. 2 year span is desired to allow for follow-up spraying if needed. Tim Stallard's company has been handling invasive weeds in Girdwood for about 8 years. This project applies only to MOA land, not private land. State land (highway) has separate agreement with weeds contractor. Invasive weeds do ecological harm, particularly to the waterways and marshes. Invasives are categorized, the focus of this program is to curb the spread of the highest ranking (worst spreading and damage causing) weeds in Girdwood. Prevention methods, including education and efforts to keep weeds from entering the ecosystem are preferred. When weeds do arrive, manual hand pulling or mechanical methods (mowing) are used for those that will respond to these methods. Some weeds are helped by mowing and pulling and grow faster and spread with mowing and pulling – including Orange Hawkweed. These persistent weeds may need to be handled with herbicide control in order to keep them from infesting waterways and choking out native species that rely on those ecosystems. Spraying is not performed when it is raining. Sites are marked and noticed 2 days prior and 3 days following spraying, as required by municipal code.

Primary herbicide tool proposed is Milestone. Cornerstone is a glyphosate product that is proposed only for use on Bohemian Knotweed and bird cherry (mayday trees) as they don't respond to other methods. Meeting packet includes presentation and handout from Alien Species Inc on invasive weeds.

Members of the community are concerned about the spraying and specifically about use of glyphosate in and around public land, water systems, wells, etc. They request that the community work on hand-pulling to achieve results.

Motion:

LUC moves to recommend GBOS Letter of Non-Objection for weed spraying on MOA land in 2023 and 2024.

Motion by Jennifer Wingard, 2nd by Briana Sullivan

Vote by Poll: 2Y 1 N 4 A; Chat 1Y 2N 0A; Room 1Y 5N 4A

Total: 4 in favor, 8 opposed 8 abstentions

Motion fails

New Business:

Agenda Item LUC 2306-05: Airport land lease. Extension of comment period to 7/12/23 likely. Update on GBOS activity provided previously in the meeting. State of Alaska Airport leasing believes that they have no obligation to follow municipal zoning, this item is being studied currently based on a project at Ted Stevens Anchorage Airport. Girdwood's situation is a bit different because it is a rural airport, however Girdwood Land Use code specifically addresses non-aviation use on airport land.

Comment period is to be extended after the current period closed (5PM today), for another 30 day period, during which it is expected that petitioners will address Girdwood and provide information on their project(s). It is unknown currently if there are any other bidders on the parcel at this time. Comments must be submitted to the State via regular mail. No email comments are accepted.

Assembly members are somewhat aware of this situation, especially Anna Brawley, who has been involved in the issue at the Anchorage Airport. Municipal Planning is also aware.

It is anticipated that discussion of this with any/all petitioners will occur at GBOS on June 19 and LUC July 10. It is unclear what other opportunities will occur for the community to engage with the petitioners. Glacier Lodge LLC has expressed interest in working with the community to create a supported, successful project and has suggested a stakeholder group, however this would not occur prior to end of the comment period likely ending July 12 or 13.

Agenda Item LUC 2306-06: Inclusion of Comprehensive Girdwood Transportation Plan in DOT Annual Work Plan for 2024/25. Girdwood's transportation plan is a limited scope document now out of date. It does not include state assets such as the airport, Seward Highway and railroad. It has been noted that a comprehensive plan is needed. Asking to be added to the work plan does not guarantee that Girdwood Transportation plan will be included, but it shows interest in transportation planning. DOT Planner Mark Eisenman has been working with staff on other projects and noted that a lack of updated plan is limiting Girdwood efforts to secure grant and other funds for needed projects, including fish passages and pedestrian path improvements. Mr. Eisenman will be invited to attend the July meetings to answer questions.

This topic spurred conversation about the proposed Alyeska Highway/Seward highway interchange. The area, addressed as Seward Highway Safety, has been on plans previously. Now it has moved to design phase, and the project scope is becoming more clear. Public requests that DOT provide an update on the status of this project. Staff will invite DOT to update the community with a presentation.

Agenda Item LUC 2306-07: The Herbal Cache request for LUC recommendation for GBOS Letter of Non-Objection for License M19277 Renewal

Herbal Cache is seeking renewal. Overall Marijuana license renewal is shifting to a 2 year cycle, more similar to alcohol license renewals. No negative comments have been received regarding The Herbal Cache, no opposition to renewal of the license has been received.

Group discusses the possibility of receiving some amount of marijuana sales tax back to the community for some local purposes, potentially early education/Little Bears. This is similar to the alcohol tax, a portion of which is dedicated to behavioral health and training for police and first responders. A ballot item passed in the 2023 Spring Municipal election having to do with disbursements of funds from marijuana tax. Specifics of implementation and distribution are not currently known.

Request for GBOS/LUC Joint Meeting (2 of 2 required meetings completed in 2023): Jan 4, Jan 9, Apr 10 2023

Adjourn 9:07PM

