

Girdwood Public Safety Advisory Committee Regular Meeting

Aug 7, 2023

Minutes Final

This meeting will be held via Teams with in-person attendance at the Girdwood Community Room, 250 Egloff Dr.

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 Public Safety Advisory Committee operates under the Girdwood Public Meetings Standards of Conduct.

7:02PM Call to order, Emily Lewis, Co-Chairs

Attending are: Emily Lewis, Tommy O'Malley, Mike Opalka, Ken Waugh

GBOS PSAC Representative Amanda Sassi

Quorum confirmed

Agenda approval for Aug 7 2023

Ken Waugh/Mike Opalka

Assent

Minutes approval from June 5 2023

Ken Waugh/Mike Opalka

Assent

Announcements/Introductions/Presentation:

Old Business:

1) Community relations opportunities:

Updated Police FAQ sheet was provided for Farmers Market July 30.

Info page/phone numbers for local concerns is a Fire Dept project, draft not available yet.

Farmers Markets @ \$20 each

July 30 event was attended by Emily Lewis and was successful for outreach, fee was waived by Farmers Market.

Next is Aug 13 will be attended by Mike Opalka and Ken Waugh. Fee waiver TBA. Invoice will be needed for public funds to pay for this.

Newspaper/newsletter outreach:

Girdwood Inc will include info on PSAC in upcoming issue

Glacier City Realty newsletter included non-emergency contact info (Sam Daniel)

Sea to Ski newsletter (Erin Eker) no update

Clinic engagement: Tommy has been engaged with clinic over Forest Fair and plans to continue to engage.

Other opportunities to be considered as they become available.

2) Discuss status of upgrades to Whittier Police Station in Girdwood, owned by ACS

ACS did walkthrough with Kyle to discuss the improvements. New contact for the lease, she is working with ACS internally to get a cost estimate and provide information on how to proceed.

3) Events:

Forest Fair review: Forest Fair was busy with good weather and a weekend without a lot of other events going on. Event was well-organized, few Fire Dept calls, busier for Whittier PD with 61 calls over the weekend. In all 7 buses ran to/from Anchorage @ \$5 per person.

Traffic backed up on Seward and Alyeska Highways.

Hired traffic control was new group, next year GFF plans to return to the prior contractor for this assistance. Impromptu After hours parties took place in Town Square Park and at the airport (discussed under New Business Item #7). Whittier PD responded to 61 calls, mainly traffic and security checks.

Girdwood Public Safety Advisory Committee is a sub-committee to the Girdwood Board of Supervisors

- 4) Lt Browning Event October 6, 2023 (tentatively): PSAC was not successful in securing grant with ACF. Tommy is continuing to work on getting an account set up with Girdwood Inc to hold non-MOA funds. PSAC will continue to work on private sponsorships to offset cost. GVSA funds can only go toward a GVSA based project. Whittier can fund their own session if desired. Whittier is invited to attend in Girdwood as well.

PSAC Motion:

PSAC moves to request GBOS approve funding to hold cyber-bullying presentation by Homer Police Lt. Ryan Browning in Oct 2023 @ estimated \$1100.

Motion by Tommy O'Malley/2nd by Mike Opalka

Assent vote

New business:

- 5) Police Car Decoy program @ \$TBA (Steve Greene, Alaska Safety Bear program)
Cost for materials is \$700-\$3500; labor is about 120 hours to create a decoy police car, similar to those placed in Cooper Landing and Moose Pass. Location must be someplace not too distracting and with wide enough shoulder. Cooper Landing and Moose Pass units are removed in winter for snow clearing. Steve is working with DOT to secure permission to place one in the DOT Right of Way. Permission to place along MOA right of way would need to come from MOA Traffic Dept. Service Area can only pay for items on MOA land (ie not those in the State ROW).

Steve also works on many other safety projects and is engaged with Girdwood Fire dept on an alternative mud tool, which he has a prototype for.

Item is new business; at this point there is not a clear direction to go as the permits are not in place for decoys. Without locations established, there is no way to move forward in how to authorize funding for decoy construction.

- 6) DOT Alyeska Highway bike path
Paint for bike path @ \$TBA
Bike path is also within the DOT ROW. Paint to refresh the pedestrian/bike only stencils must be paid for by DOT, GVSA funds cannot legally be used for this project. DOT may still have funds in the Alyeska Highway repave project that could be used for this purpose. DOT has not yet responded to the request to see if there are funds available for this project. Last time they were painted, the project was about \$3500.

Current project with DOT is the status of the pedestrian bridge over Glacier Creek. The abutment has been eroding throughout the summer. DOT has surveyed the site and they are in permitting phase required before work can begin.

- 7) Mt Hood Rd/Airport gate and camping/parties on airport land (Cody Rice)
Cody Rice and others who live near the airport state that airport land past the access gate by the new hangars is a consistent location for late night/early am parties during most community events and holidays, such as Forest Fair, New Years, etc. Events are loud and disturbing to the neighborhood and involve speeding traffic on the small neighborhood roads adjacent to the area. Neighbors have requested help from Whittier Police and request firmer enforcement in the future as many are underage, drinking and driving. Chief Achee responds that Officer Corbett worked on this item over Forest Fair. Public requests for specific information about after hours parties and response needs to be requested via Public Records Request available on the Whittier website: [Public Records Request – City of Whittier \(whittieralaska.gov\)](https://www.whittieralaska.gov/public-records-request). Information cannot be provided to public without formal request.

The airport gate at the end of Mt. Hood is gated to restrict access to the taxiway and runway. Gate keys are held by those with property beyond the gate (hangar owners and AWWU) and gate is often left unlocked by those who have the keys. It is unclear how PSAC can require

better management of the access gate on State land, however it has been suggested that public could follow up with state as a nuisance neighbor.

Other Business:

8) Review upcoming community events:

Fungus Fair	Sept 1-3	Community Room and trails
Alyeska Climbathon	Sept 9	Alyeska North Face Trail
Rotary Festival	Sept 23	Town Square Park
Cyber-bullying workshop	Oct 6	Community Room (date TBA)
Girdwood Trails Marathon	Oct 7	All Trails
Kids and Cops	Oct 14	Ice Cream Shop
Health Fair (Rotary)	Oct 14	Community Room
Coffee with Cops	Nov 18	Girdwood Grind

9) Girdwood Grassroots concerns from prior meetings:

- Alyeska Highway Pedestrian Safety Corridor (Bike Path) concerns: addressed already
- Speeding concerns:
State Roads: Alyeska Highway, Crow Creek Rd, Mt. Hood at Airport – study underway
MOA Roads: Timberline, Alyeska View, Mt. Hood at Neighborhood – study underway
- Parking concerns – Timberline – signage placed at cul de sac used for Virgin Creek Falls. Olympic Mtn Loop – parking project completed
Loveland – Traffic dept requires that before signage is placed, Alyeska Resort make steps to improve parking. Alyeska has improved parking on 3rd lot by removing storage items held there and has promised to improve efficiency in parking this winter.
- Alyeska Highway interchange impact on Public Safety: No report. Public Safety entities met with DOT and engagement team for the project early this summer and provided input.

Another area of concern is Donner Rd/Alyeska Highway due to overflow of parking from the Brewery. Residents request signage to determine parking on 1 side of the road only. Public is encouraged to call WPD for citation and towing if it is determined that parked vehicles impede emergency vehicle access. New parking ordinance does not require onsite parking.

10) Roundtable comments from the PSAC board: None

11) Confirm next meeting date: Sept 4 is Labor Day. PSAC will likely reschedule or cancel this meeting.

Public Safety Reports:

WPD Update (WPD Chief Andre Achee) – May 215 calls; June 163 calls; July 187 calls (61 of which were Forest Fair weekend).

GFR Update (Chief Michelle Weston is on fire assignment in Fairbanks. GFD has been busy today with rollover accident at Alyeska Highway/Seward Highway, medical emergency and mud response, which turned out to be non-rescue situation. Recruiting for new members this fall. GFD received grant for training @ \$150,000, which they will put toward FF1 and 2 training.

GBOS Public Safety Supervisor report: Staff reports on Amanda’s behalf that GBOS is working on 2024 budgets currently.

Public Comment:

Mike Edgington states that PSAC could add to their next meeting agenda discussion of property tax exemption for volunteer Fire Dept and EMS members. GBOS is discussing this currently and would like input from PSAC.

Adjourn 8:25PM