

- President: Bill Gamble
- Vice President: Terry Gorlick
- Secretary: Lisa Behrens
- Treasurer: Dave Malo
- Member at Large: Ben Tew
- Member at Large: David Haggard
- Member at Large: Jodi Riddell



PO Box 520931
Big Lake, AK 99652-0931

**General Membership Meeting – September 12, 2023, 7:00 PM
Big Lake Lions Recreation Center**

MINUTES

1.) Call to Order/ Determination of Quorum

By: Bill Gamble Time: 07:01pm
Quorum: Yes Attendees: 28 Voting and Associate members signed in, plus 5 Board officers

2.) Pledge of Allegiance

3.) Agenda Approval

(Per Bill Gamble, add Burma Road 4-way stop to New Business and Big Lake Comprehensive Plan to Unfinished Business) Motion: Terry Gorlick Second: Dave Haggard

4.) Previous Meeting Minutes Approval (August 8, 2023)

Motion: Terry Gorlick Second: Jody Riddell Copy signed: Bill Gamble

5.) Presentation(s)

1. Thom Lloyd – HAB Academy

We occupy the lower floor at Big Lake Postal Station. This organization supports and cares for people with developmental disabilities, to promote meaningful participation in community and daily life. We sponsor activities in Meadow Lakes, Houston, and other local communities. Thank you for the BLCC grant, which will be used for T-ball equipment. If you have any questions, we have brochures and are always ready to talk.

2. Al Bolea – DOT Ice Road Grant Application process

Handouts provided to attendees. Estimated that Big Lake would need to apply for \$30,000. Al has been working with community members to learn the application process and start gathering needed information. Al provided a description of communications to this point, current application status, and further information needed. The issue of liability needs to be addressed for contractors, BLCC, etc... Is there a role for MSB Emergency Services? Is there a role for Big Lake Trails? Who should the grant sponsor be... BLCC, Big Lake Trails? A committee of residents is needed. (There is a committee sign-up sheet on the back table)

Terry Gorlick: I'm willing to help with the liability question. I believe a copy of the MOU with MSB will also be needed. Do we need a binder/book of information for this process? I'm recalling your (Al's) last month's comment on "Ice Road Etiquette," any progress on that. Have you been in contact with Rep. McCabe in this process?

Al Bolea: Yes, I have been in regular contact with Angela Stephi, Rep. McCabes' assistant. She has been invaluable in providing guidance for this. My "Ice Road Etiquette" idea has, of necessity, gone to the back burner, in the interest of working within parameters of the DOT Ice Road Grant application requirements, to put our application process in motion.

Rep. McCabe: Very glad that someone has taken the lead, to get this project started. Confirmed that the work done so far is on the right track.

Audience member: There is a device that can be pulled behind a pickup to measure ice thickness without drilling holes, which can result in overflow problems. Cost is roughly \$2000.

Mike Szymanski: Clarify the liability issues? Plow operators, road users?

Bill Gamble: Thank you, Al, for taking the lead and doing this work after short notice. Thank you Rep. McCabe and Angie Stephi for getting the information to us in time. Starting a process like this is the hardest part. It will get better as time goes on and the process is refined.

Rep. McCabe: Thank you to Dan & Cathy Mayfield for carrying the responsibility for the Big Lake Ice Road for all of these prior years.

Bill Gamble: The council does have funding to purchase a device for measuring ice depth, as recommended by the previous council member. We have time and will produce a resolution that addresses this matter.

Al Bolea: We have a draft resolution to propose this meeting, may we consider it?

Terry Gorlick: Reads proposed resolution language (Authored by Al Bolea) to the council.

Bill Gamble: That is a very well-written and thorough resolution. I have no recommendations for revisions or additions.

Motion to pass proposed resolution as written: Terry Gorlick Second: Dave Haggard
Motion passed by a vote of the membership. BLCC Resolution 23-03 will be forwarded as written.

Discussion: Mike Szymanski we are long overdue for this.

6.) Treasurer's Report (Treasurer not available – Bill Gamble read Treasurer's written report)

Checking: \$38,283.63 Savings: 2,048.77\$

7.) Membership Report (Ben Tew not available – Secretary reported current status)

89 Voting members, 7 Associate members, plus 2 new members signed up during tonight's meeting

8.) Reports

1. Legislative (State House & Senate)

Senator Shower: (not available for report)

Representative McCabe: Signed SB87 last week. Sizeable number of loggers present, interested in the lumber industry being able to sell locally produced lumber to construction businesses. Big step in revitalizing this industry. We need to manage our forests better, and this is a step toward that. Happy to be a co-sponsor and see the Governor come out for the signing.

STIP comment period is over, but Rep. McCabe will accept further community input and forward comments. We need to be more involved with DOT. This is an important thing. We also need to be aware and involved in the West Susitna Access matter.

Had a meeting today at the MSB Assembly chambers about Port McKenzie. Rep. McCabe believes a road will "kill the port." What is needed is rail access. Much discussion still needs to occur.

Bill Gamble: Any progress on the rail access project?

Rep. McCabe: Other projects are commanding more attention at this time. Still talking about possible creative solutions. Federal railroad administration is also involved – lots of moving parts.

Audience members: What about the "disappearing" gravel problem, what about the idea of selling the port?

Rep. McCabe: Talks were about selling the port loading equipment, not the port property itself.

Dan Mayfield: Cruise Construction has shipping traffic moving through the port now.

Scott Wilson: What was it that stopped progress on rail access to the port?

Rep. McCabe: Changing economy and funding concerns. Talks are restarting about how to get this moving again.

Audience member: What about the West Susitna Access road... will it be public access?

Rep. McCabe: Yes, with DOT involved, it must be public access.

Terry Gorlick: What about Beaver Meadows Subdivision?

Rep. McCabe: On hold for now until things “cool off.” Public comment period is closed.

2. Assembly (District 5)

Member Tew: (not available – committed to joint School Board meeting)

3. Fire Service (West Lakes Fire Department)

John Fairchild: Will help with ice road maintenance this winter. (Audience: Yay!!) 17 structure fires this past month, 2 high-risk, West Lakes firefighters went above & beyond to prevent loss of life.

“New” ladder truck (from Central Mat Su) was very important to the success of these structure fire responses. We have come to the end of 100+ calls per month trend we have experienced over the summer, and returned to the more normal 60-some calls per months. That being said, we can’t be complacent. Reminder to have furnaces / heat sources / chimneys inspected before winter weather arrives. Carbon monoxide calls spike every year as soon as cold weather arrives. Too many preventable deaths occur. We all need to change out smoke and CO detectors soon.

4. Road Service (all boards reporting)

Pat Daniels: Introducing RSA resolution to place a 4-way stop at the intersection of Burma Road, and West Susitna Parkway. Proposed resolution (RSA Resolution 23-06) distributed to the membership present at this meeting. Big Lake RSA is also asking for speed and traffic pattern review on these roads. Initial borough response as relayed by D5 Assembly Member, was that there needed to be more community support for any proposed changes to these roads. Borough proposed warning signs only, unless more community support can be demonstrated.

Bill Haller: Recommends modified wording to address “actual driving speed” vs “posted speed limit.”

Terry Gorlick: Recently traveled the area in question, driving the speed limit, and was passed numerous times by traffic traveling at significantly higher speeds. Can testify that this can be a dangerous section of road.

Rep. McCabe: DOT is in talks about upgrading Big Lake Road and handing it off to Mat Su Borough for oversight and maintenance. This may also apply to Hollywood Road. Hopes to have more information available next meeting. It is understood that this would affect Big Lake RSA funding.

Bill Gamble: BLCC letter of support would be best way to express support for RSA Resolution 23-06.

Terry Gorlick: Motion to write letter of support for RSA Resolution 23-06. Second: Lisa Behrens

Dan Mayfield: Verifies that there was a 4-way stop at that location in the past.

Audience member: What about raising the grade of the road in that area?

Bill Gamble: That question was raised in the past and determined to be cost-prohibitive.

Audience member: It makes sense to support the RSA resolution to place the 4-way stop, at least as an interim measure, in the interest of safety.

Call for vote of the membership to write letter of support for RSA Resolution 23-06: Failed

5. Valley Recycling (Steve Hawk) Reintroduced the organization and reminded BLCC membership of the recycling program. Notified that the recycling area has been moved to an area below the Big Lake Transfer Station, which is working out. Also, reminded of “Free Dump” days this month. Clarification: “Free Dump” days only apply to the 49th State St. central landfill. Please everyone: “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” and now “Repurpose.” Recycling days at the Big Lake Transfer Station are Saturday/Sunday from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm. Keep an eye out for a winter hours change.

9.) Correspondence

- 1. Limited marijuana cultivation facility application – Theodore Buzby and John Minnick, High Hat LLC
- 2. Limited marijuana cultivation facility application – Jolyn and Robert Jillson, RCJ Legacy LLC

10.) Unfinished Business

- 1. Committee Updates:
 - Bylaws – will commence Fall 2023
 - Grants – (Update, Terry Gorlick) Grant process has been completed for 2023. Documentation will be completed and forwarded to BLCC secretary for distribution to the membership.
 - Capital Improvements
- 2. Lake setback ordinance – work group update, if available? Update from Bill Gamble: Summarized ordinance proposed to reduce setback from 75’ to 25’. Has been set aside and sent to work group for the time being.
- 3. Terry Gorlick: Introduced need to re-evaluate and update the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan.

11.) New Business

- 1. Annual BLCC Elections – November 7, 2023
 - a. Elections Committee / Nomination Process – Invitation to the membership to participate in the nomination/election committee – please contact Jodi Riddell if interested. Will discuss further during the October 10 meeting.
 - b. 2023 Membership Renewals by October 10, 2023 (for voting eligibility)
 - c. Reminder: Please check the Voting Member sign-in sheet on the back table for voting status
- 2. Big Lake Ice Roads – AK DOT Program: Safe Ice Roads for Alaska (SIRA)
 Al Bolea is spear-heading the DOT application process – info provided during Al’s presentation earlier in this meeting. Al’s draft BLCC Resolution 23-03 defining purpose of completing the DOT application process passed by vote of the membership. BLCC members are encouraged to participate in a committee to continue this application process. (Note: 8 member sign-ups received during this meeting)

12.) Persons to be Heard (3 Minute Maximum time per person)

Keith Lipse: I spoke about Burma Rd / W Susitna Pkwy earlier – we also need passing lanes in that area.

13.) Announcements

Bill Haller: Trunk or Treat is coming up, and Big Lake Lions needs donations for candy for participants.
Robin Gamble: We need extra trunks this year, because teachers are going to be in Anchorage on October 31 for teachers’ in-service event

14.) Board Member Closing Comments

Terry Gorlick: Hopes that all reflected yesterday on the 22nd anniversary of events on 9/11/2001

15.) Adjournment

Motion: Terry Gorlick Second: Jodi Riddell Time: 8:40pm

Signature – Bill Gamble, President – Big Lake Community Council Date

(Note: There may be a quorum of RSA / FSA members in attendance at the meeting)