

- President: Jodi Riddell
- Vice President: Margaret Billinger
- Secretary: Lisa Behrens
- Treasurer: Irene Crowley
- Member at Large: Ben Tew
- Member at Large: David Haggard
- Member at Large: Lindy Moss



PO Box 520931
Big Lake, AK 99652-0931

**General Membership Meeting – March 12, 2024 – 7:00 PM
Big Lake Lions Recreation Center**

MINUTES

1.) Call to Order/ Determination of Quorum

By: Jodi Riddell Time: 7:01pm

Quorum: Yes Attendees: **22** persons signed in, **6** board members present

2.) Pledge of Allegiance

3.) Agenda Approval

Motion: Irene Crowley Second: Yes

4.) Previous Meeting Minutes Approval (February 13, 2024)

Motion: Dave Haggard Second: Yes Copy signed: Jodi Riddell

5.) Treasurer’s Report

Checking: \$ 37,174. Savings: \$

6.) Membership Report

Voting Members renewed for 2024: **67**

Associates (non-voting) renewed for 2024: **4**

7.) Presentation(s)

1. Tandy Hogate - Common Ground Alaska.

Common Ground Alaska is located in Big Lake, on Susitna Pkwy, and is “A teaching farm that feeds Alaskans.”

Common Ground provides educational classes for gardening, farming, food preservation, etc. The farm also offers “You Pick” fruit & vegetables, plant sales, and tours.

There are three upcoming events for community members to attend: Alaska Homestead Expo (April 27 & 28 at Big Lake Lions Club), the “Abundance Plus Film Festival” (Friday, March 22 at Big Lake Lions Club), and the Great Alaska Farm Tour (Continuous year-round at Common Ground farm location) Shout-out from Tandy for local support: “The Big Lake Library and Lions Club have been AWESOME!” Common Ground is an organization that aims to serve local communities and engage in community building. For more information about Common Ground Alaska, visit the website:

<https://akcommonground.org> -or- YouTube channel: **@commongroundalaska.com** -or- Instagram: **@commongroundalaska**



2. Hugh Leslie, Mat Su Borough Recreation & Library Services – Jay Nolfi Park project.

A few years ago, Big Lake community members brought the condition of Jay Nolfi park and need for improvements to the Borough. As a result, Mat Su Borough has allotted \$250,000 for the project. A significant portion of the allotted funds will be used for paving and improved access to the park. There will, however, be funds remaining for other purposes. Ideas for the rest of the funds, could include developing an area for youth and children’s use. There may be additional funding availability for a pavilion or shelter at the park. Several designs that have been developed to show what the playground area could look like. (Handouts provided during meeting). The Borough is requesting input from a local group of about 6 Big Lake citizens (for web-based meetings) to find consensus, take ownership, and bring recommendations to the borough in the coming months. The committee members need to be identified by the first week of April.

Hugh is available for questions and further information ⇒



8.) **Reports**

1. Legislative (State House & Senate)

Senator Shower: Shonda Erickson for Senator Showers – Today is day 57 of the session. 12 Executive orders were voted on in a joint session. Questions about specifics can be answered by contacting the Senator Shower’s office.

Representative McCabe: Linn McCabe – House of representatives currently taking public testimony, so follow KTOO for specifics and to provide input. The House Bill in support of the rail and port passed. Numerous officials were present at the port recently, to consider utilizing Port Mackenzie as an alternate site (vs Valdez) for moving military supplies, equipment & personnel. There will be a press conference later this week re: STIP road funding applications encountering complications.

2. Assembly (District 5)

Assembly Representative Gamble: Bill provided more detail about the gathering at Port Mackenzie, and items of discussion such as the possibility of bringing in large ships and completing the railroad. There will be a proof-of-concept exercise conducted in the fall – the military will perform an exercise to simulate the type of operations that Port Mackenzie could be used for. Re: STIP, there was a delay in processing Alaskan projects. Applications are being revisited now. Please see handout re: MSB legislative priorities (last page of this document). The budget is the priority for the Alaska legislative session right now. If it passes as it stands, there will be limited funds for capital improvements. The 2024 PFD formula has been proposed at 75/25. 75% goes to government, 25% goes to PFD checks. Arctic Winter Games are in progress. Spectacular events and festivities every day! Question from Irene Crowley: What is being done about MSB crime? Bill reiterated that this is one of the highest priorities possible right now. The Borough and Assembly are considering the VPSO model and addressing at numerous levels of government. (For Bill’s earlier, detailed answer to this question, see the Assembly legislative report from the February 13 BLCC General Membership minutes.)

3. Fire Service (West Lakes Fire Department)

Chief: Chief Fairchild – 67 incidents in the past months, 8 structure fires responses. Iron Dog occurred “fairly calmly” with minimal problems. Ice safety reminder – we are coming to the end of the ice road season, be alert. Very important to stay away from the channel between the major lakes. Reintroduced Battalion Chief Jim Keel to the council. Still an open seat on the West Lakes fire service board. April 1 – burn permits required. Don’t make us come see you without a permit or on red flag days. May 14, 1100 to 1700 hours – Forestry Awareness and Prevention Day. Firewise, Red Cross, Forestry and numerous other agencies present. June 1 will be clearing and chipping day. A lot going on this time of year – be careful burning, change smoke alarm batteries, let us know if you need alarms or new batteries.

4. Road Service Area: Jill Parson – monthly meeting was yesterday (2nd Monday of every month at 6:30pm here at the Lions Club.) Please come to meetings if you can. Now is the time for the board to work on the RIP list for the Big Lake RSA. We are hoping to develop a new set of standards for road improvements. Last night the board was able to review the FY25 contract for road maintenance. It will be significantly more expensive than it has been in the past.

5. Valley Recycling: No one available

9.) **Correspondence** Public notice and request for comments was emailed to BLCC Board and forwarded to all members re: Luiten request to MSB for water setback and lot line variance, to replace an existing cabin on the property.

10.) Unfinished Business

1. Committee Updates:

a. Bylaws: Ben Tew, Lisa Behrens, Irene Crowley, Jill Parson, Lindy Moss, Margaret Billinger, Michael Dale – in progress, working digitally for now

b. Capital Improvements: Ben Tew, Lindy Moss, Margaret Billinger – need to schedule

c. Community Revenue Sharing Grants: Irene Crowley – need to establish the rest of the membership for this committee. Digital Grants Committee documents provided to BLCC Secretary by Jill Parson (Thank you Jill!) to be forwarded when the committee is ready.

2. Lake Setback Ordinance & Waterbody Setback Advisory Board:

<https://matsugov.us/boards/waterbody-setback-advisory-board>

a. Update: Bill Haller – So far, all meeting activity has been data and informational material

3. Big Lake Comprehensive Plan

a. Update: No new information

4. Bob Fisher remembrance project:

a. Update: Ben Tew and Terry Gorlick – not available

5. BLCC website rebuild with online BLCC membership renewal:

a. Update: Jodi – Go Daddy is the new host, and online dues should be an option in the future.

11.) New Business

1. None for this meeting

12.) Persons to be Heard (3 Minute Maximum time per person) No sign ups for this meeting

13.) Announcements Bill Haller – things are about to get really busy for the Lions Club, with wrestling tournaments coming up, followed by the Houston high school gun show, Mother’s day bazaar and Common Ground Homesteaders expo. After that, the ice rink will be converted to summer activities: mini golf, pickleball, etc. Big Lake Cleanup Day will also be scheduled soon.

14.) Board Member Closing Comments

Jodi Riddell: Snowmachine poker run coming up on March 23 to benefit veterans

Margaret Billinger: Happy St. Patrick’s Day

Lisa Behrens:

Irene Crowley:

Dave Haggard: Drive Safe!

Ben Tew:

Lindy Moss: Taking 14 kids and 3 coaches to Las Vegas for national shooting competition.

15.) Adjournment

Motion: Margaret Billinger Second: Yes Time: 7:58pm

Signature – Jodi Riddell, President – Big Lake Community Council

Date

Attestation – Lisa Behrens, Secretary – Big Lake Community Council

Date