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Inside Today Alaska legislators approve update for data sharing between hospitals • **A2**

FAST Planning awards \$19K for community grants

By Jack Barnwell

The Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation Planning Policy Board approved about \$19,000 to several local organizations during a special meeting on Friday as part of its pilot community grants program.

Jackson Fox, FAST Planning's executive director, said a scoring committee recommended eight applications from a pool of 10 applications. Overall, FAST Planning received \$26,760 worth of grant requests for a pool of \$20,000.

- \$5,000 to Festival Fairbanks for supplies to paint artistic crosswalks and sidewalk at First Avenue and Lacey Street to enhance the Lacey Street Starter Block (old Polaris Building site) for summer community use.
- \$3,000 to Ester Volunteer Fire Department and Ester Community Association for a bicycle rack and repair station at Ester Community Park.
- \$5,000 to the North Star



JACK BARNWELL/NEWS-MINER

A number of grants provided by FAST Planning will benefit the Lacey Street Starter Block in downtown Fairbanks, including a movable skate park, funding for the FairBikes program and supplies to paint the Lacey Street sidewalks around First and Second avenues.

Community Foundation and Fairbanks Skatepark Coalition to build a mobile skate park in the Lacey Street Starter Block. The skate park on will be on closed off section between Lacey Street between First and Second avenues.

- \$1,000 to the Randy Smith Middle School PTSA for reflective tape for at

least 300 students to put on backpacks and jackets.

- \$5,000 to Festival Fairbanks and FairBikes Starter fleet expansion and repair program.

"I think these are really cool projects," said City of Fairbanks Mayor Mindy O'Neill, a Policy Board member. "Three to five thousand dollars makes a

big difference in getting a project over the line."

Fox said the Lacey Street/First Avenue intersection crosswalk and sidewalk painting are subject to approval from the Fairbanks City Engineer. While he said he doesn't see problems with the sidewalks, the FAST Planning Project Enhancement Committee acknowledged there may be some safety concerns with painting crosswalks.

Fox added that some applications requested a lower amount and the committee increased the amount over concerns it might not be sufficient.

FAST Planning launched the Community Transportation Grant Program to fund community transportation-related projects and initiatives. The grant program's provides a large scope, covering everything from purchasing bicycle helmets and reflector vests for school-aged children to

FAST » A2

GVEA elections include two seats, bylaw changes

By Jack Barnwell

Two Golden Valley Electric Association Board of Director seats have two candidates each this year as the utility opened up voting today.

Candidates for District 1 include incumbent Dave Messier and James Strickland, a retired airline pilot and Haystack resident.

Messier has served on the board for nine years and advocated for practical energy solutions, including renewable energy projects. He is a project manager for Tanana Chiefs Conference and owns and operates Daylight Energy Services, an energy efficiency and solar panel installation company.

Messier said he's spent his 17 years in Alaska devoted to "developing locally-sourced energy that won't skyrocket our electric bills when global conflict erupts."

Messier cited his experience drafting federal energy legislation, serving on state and federal groups and installation of megawatts of solar power.

"We need committed, informed board members to help our utility make decisions," Messier said in a recorded candidate

GVEA » A3

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Some sun early on, then cloudy

High today66

Low tonight42

Sunrise: 4:34 a.m.

Sunset: 11:01 p.m.

WEATHER » A3

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NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL MOVES MEETING TIMES INTERIOR Page A2

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FEDERAL GAS TAX HOLIDAY SEES GROWING SUPPORT AMID PAIN AT THE PUMP NATION Page A5

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SOURDOUGH JACK: "Congratulations Malemites!"



Alaska Legislature considers exempting some Native corporations from public disclosure

By James Brooks

ALASKA BEACON

A late amendment to a bill nearing final passage in the Alaska Capitol would exempt some Alaska Native village corporations from public financial disclosures required by state law.

On Monday afternoon, the Alaska Senate's labor and commerce committee voted to amend House Bill 126 with a new section that reduces and caps the number of Native corporations required to share information annually with the Alaska Division of Banking and Securities.

Sen. Jesse Bjorkman, R-Ni-kiski and chair of the labor and commerce committee,

declined to answer questions when asked Tuesday about the change.

In Monday's committee hearing, Bjorkman said, "I think members of the media might be interested in information therein, but at the end of the day, I don't know that information is their business because it happens within the confines of a Native corporation."

State law currently requires corporations with at least 500 shareholders and \$1 million in assets to provide financial documents to the state, which treats them as public records.

Because Native corporations are exempted from federal disclosure requirements, existing state law provides the only free public avenue for non-share-

holders to inspect their work.

Of the state's 200-plus Native corporations, 59 are currently required to file reports with the division, and the number is growing over time because shareholders are splitting their shares and passing them to their descendants, pushing more corporations over the 500-shareholder limit.

The new definition would limit disclosures to corporations with 500 shareholders when they were created, regardless of how many they currently have.

That change would exempt at least seven village corporations — the division isn't sure of the exact number and is reviewing

EXEMPT » A2



ALL PHOTOS ANNA LIONAS/NEWS-MINER

Lathrop graduates wait to walk across the stage on Monday.

Lathrop High School Malemites leap into the future

By Anna Lionas

After a stroll across the stage and a flip of their tassels, 135 Lathrop High School Malemites graduated on Monday night.

The ceremony began at the Carlson Center at 7 p.m. with Lathrop staff and district personnel walking into the purple and gold decorated arena. Lathrop Jr. ROTC Color Guard followed up with a posting of the colors.

Graduates processed in two by two, blushing and smiling at the ground as family members cheered and yelled their praises. The Lathrop Sym-



Lathrop Jr. ROTC Color Guard posts the colors during graduation.

phonic Orchestra, led by directors Sunnifa Deehr and Tristan Hovest, set the mood with "Pomp and Circumstance No.1 in D Major."

"You have put in countless hours of work to make it

here, we welcome you to the Lathrop Class of 2026 graduation," Senior Class President Remi Hinde said to kick off the festivities.

Numerous speeches followed, beginning with valedictorian Joaquin Carosso who

Senior Class President Remi Hinde enters the Carlson Center.

pontificated on the importance of asking "dumb" questions, even asking his peers and the crowd to turn

LATHROP » A5



JACK BARNWELL/NEWS-MINER

GVEA District 2 board candidate Margaret Matheson (left) speaks with Steve Haagenon on Tuesday.

City Council rejects downtown cabin lease

By Jack Barnwell

The old Yukon Quest cabin on First Avenue won't be a cafe or coffee shop this summer after the Fairbanks City Council rejected a lease in a 1-5 vote on Monday.

The vote followed testimony from residents and downtown business owners at Monday's council meeting about the process in which the lease was arranged.

Mayor Mindy O'Neill issued an Request for Information to solicit ideas on how to use the space. The Yukon Quest Alaska opted not to renew its lease after 20 years in the space.

However, according to city staff, the initial two submissions didn't meet the RFI's goals. O'Neill said Monday night that she had approached both the Co-Op Market Grocery and Deli and Jonathan Huff of Alaska Universal Productions/8 Star Events Center about the opportunity at a Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Both expressed interest, but the city initially moved forward with a lease agreement with Huff. Huff planned to turn the cabin into a cafe, coffee shop and gift shop, renovate the interior to add a kitchen, along with landscaping.

However, some residents cited they weren't aware of the

LEASE » A3

