



**Municipality of Anchorage**  
**Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission**

**A G E N D A**

**Wednesday, December 20, 2023**  
**12:00 Noon – 1:30 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting (*Hybrid format*)**

**In-Person Physical Location**

or

**via Microsoft Teams**

Planning Conference Room 170  
Planning and Development Center  
4700 Elmore Road  
Anchorage, Alaska

[Click here to join the meeting](#)  
[Download Teams | Join on the web:](#)  
Meeting ID: 237 476 913 329, Passcode: bwiHpa  
Or Join by Conference Call:  
Dial-in Number: **907-519-0237**  
Conference ID: **479 457 853#**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

- A. Establishment of Quorum
- B. Disclosures

**II. MINUTES**

- A. September 27, 2023

**III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. The Potter Marsh Wetlands Park  
– Emma Giboney, Heritage Land Bank
- B. Rules of Procedure Draft
- C. Girdwood Land Use Plan Discussion

**V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (3-minute limit)**

**VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT**

- A. Wetland Program Status

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Next Meeting: January 24, 2024**



**Municipality of Anchorage  
Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Wednesday, September 27, 2023**

**12:00 Noon – 1:10 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting  
(Hybrid format)**

***Planning Conference Room 170, 4700 Elmore Road***

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Establishment of Quorum**

Members	Staff	Guests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Emily Creely</li> <li>• Vice Chair Tamás Deák</li> <li>• Maddie Halloran</li> <li>• Holly Kent</li> <li>• Nic Kinsman</li> <li>• Kevin Jackson</li> <li>• Matt Nemeth</li> <li>• ABSENT: Luke Graham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daniel Mckenna-Foster, Senior Planner, MOA</li> <li>• Ryan Yelle, Long-Range Planning Manager, MOA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kristi Bischofberger, MOA PME, WMS</li> <li>• Kyle Cunningham MOA PME, WMS</li> </ul>

**B. No Disclosures**

**II. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**A. Election of Officers:** Commissioner Creely nominates herself to be chair, unanimous support. Commissioner Kent nominates Commissioner Deak to be vice chair, unanimous support.

**III. MINUTES**

**A. Commissioner Kent** moves to approve past minutes, Commissioner Jackson seconds. No discussion, minutes approved.

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Campbell Creek Watershed Master Plan:**

**Kristi Bischofberger** talked about the Campbell Creek Watershed Plan, showing the Chester Creek Watershed Plan as an example. This is a skeleton document, just a start. Pluses and minuses.

**Kyle Cunningham** talked about some interesting products that came out of this. Assessment from existing storm drain systems. Look at assessment of current conditions and this produced some cool maps, one related to flooding and surcharged pipes, as well as superficial flooding. Also looked at condition assessment. The plan is to switch from a qualitative method to a more quantitative, proactive approach to predict where failures might occur in advance. The other big data product of this is current condition of pipes and risk of failure from those pipes. This considers pipes at major intersections, other impacts, etc. (weighted variables). Review of the map which shows risk and conditions. No questions from the group.

## **B. Introductions**

**Commissioner Deák:** One of the founding members of the commission, got reappointed this spring. Background in design—architect, landscape architect.

**Matt Nemeth:** (Matt) Lives near Service, masters in natural resources. Worked exclusively in Alaska, designing fish and wildlife studies for a variety of clients. Now working in the public sector, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)).

**Nic Kinsman:** Background in geo science, coastal hazards, flooding and erosion. PhD in flooding. Working for federal government.

**Maddie Halloran:** Masters in natural resources (fisheries biology) works for Alaska Wilderness League.

**Commissioner Kent:** Founding member of the commission from way back when. Live in the Campbell Creek watershed. Former director for the Anchorage Waterways Council.

**Chair Creely:** Been in Anchorage nearly 30 years. Lives in the Fish Creek watershed. Works in private sector doing permitting for water projects.

**Kevin Jackson:** Working for Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOTPF) for 28 years, chief of Preliminary design/environmental Section at ADOTPF. MS4 coordinator. I think I can bring the department's perspective to some stuff. We are struggling with the conditions of our storm drain pipes. ADOTPF is way behind on analysis; these plans are fantastic.

**Nic Kinsman**—point of clarification---everyone representing their own agencies?  
Chair: yes.

**C. Discussion of rules/procedures**

Coming back to master plans—any discussion?

**Commissioner Kent:** Is there a public process in the development of this master plan?

**Kristi Bischofberger:** Not really, but we would like to develop a green infrastructure program out of it eventually. We are rushing the Campbell Creek qualitative plan because it must be done by 2025. There will be a public process for that. For Chester Creek we are aiming for a draft of that for this spring (2024).

So, there's a Chester Creek Watershed Plan and a Chester Creek Watershed Plan.

Campbell Creek is kicking off both at the same time. Going into the future, staff would like to combine these two things together.

**Chair Creely:** Who is the primary user of this data?

**Staff:** Designers figuring out how big pipes need to be—AMATS, ADOTPF, etc. This incorporates ADOTPF data.

**Chair Creely:** Was this a stipulation for compliance with a permit?

**Staff:** It was not. This is a leap into the future related to a stormwater utility and put as much technical information out there as possible with the technical info we have.

**Commissioner Kent:** Years ago, there were discussions about how we didn't even have an accurate map, but it looks like now we do. I wonder if this map could be used by the public to investigate problems in their neighborhood.

**Staff:** In the past, we had a large number of maps that were not all combined/digitized, and then the Street Maintenance Department did a lot of work to map all nodes, manholes, etc. in the system. This provides for a more accurate representation of where facilities exist. We add data all the time, but we are still behind on getting DOTPF's more recent projects into the system. We have the data now and have a more collaborative process with DOTPF as they have new projects coming online; then we incorporate that in our mapping. Also, a lot of this was making sure we knew all the mapping projects that were out there and all the players involved. You can be much more confident now that you are looking at the official city layer.

**Commissioner Deák:** Just wanted to make sure that the mapping you can access through the municipal gallery is what you are talking about?

**Staff:** Yes

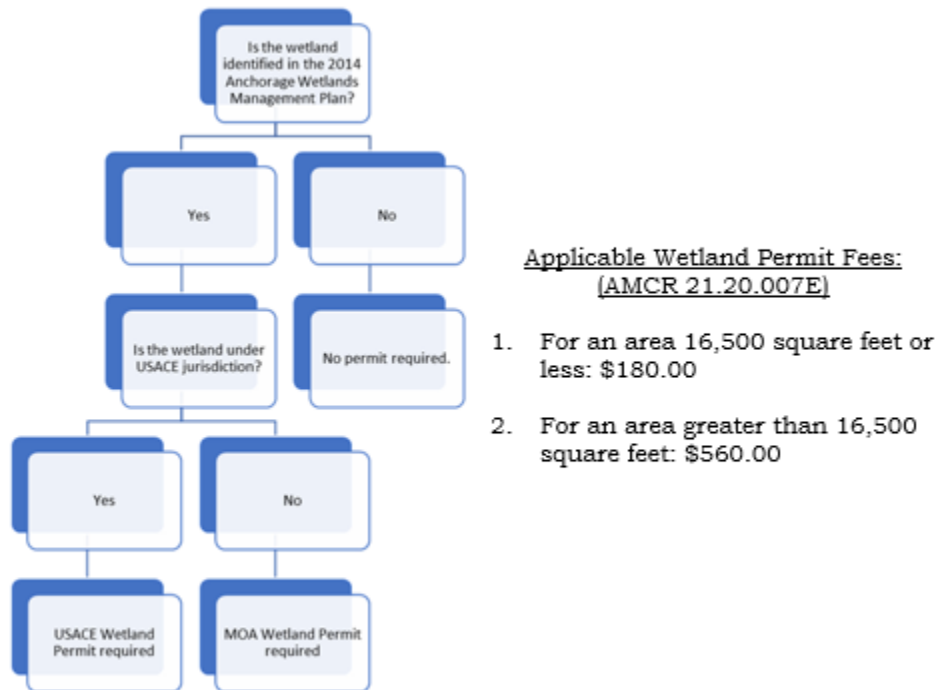
**VI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (none)**

## VII. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT

### Other Business/Staff Report: Wetlands Program

There was discussion of the Wetlands Program Status.

Former program has not been renewed. Discussion of the new process:



**Staff:** We are currently working through what this permitting process looks like—as is, the permitter would be the Planning Director. But there are some issues with existing wetlands (Strawberry Bog, etc.) which have previous designations but now may be open for development. We’d like to lean on this Commission so that the collective expertise can help find a path forward. Staff is still working through this; stay tuned. Any thoughts are welcomed.

**Chair Creely:** I have a lot of experience with this and I have ideas—should we wait a month or so and provide options, or talk through it? Will there be an update to the Wetlands Management Plan?

**Staff:** There should be a 10-year update, but it is subject to funding and staff resources. It may be a 2025-2026 project.

**Chair Creely:** Could the commission work on any of that to help?

**Commissioner Deák:** Mapping—is it possible for anyone to look at the publicly-accessible dataset and determine what is jurisdictional or not jurisdictional?

**Staff:** The municipal data does not have a feature that shows if wetlands are jurisdictional or not. Part of this is because jurisdictional determinations are only valid for 5 years, and the definition of what is jurisdictional seems to constantly be in flux. The only agency that can make the determination is the Army Corps of Engineers.

**Chair Creely:** The data the MOA provides allows someone to do an analysis to bring to the Corps. It seems that a lot of the changes/definitions will be settled for a while.

**Kyle Cunningham:** Is there a map from the Corps to see if something is jurisdictional or not?

**Staff:** No, and any update to the Wetlands Management Plan might be a bit different as the 2013 version refers heavily to the General Permit. The next plan can be steered into whatever direction people would like.

**Commissioner Kent:** Has the Muni applied for any of the infrastructure funding? I would be happy to help with more information.

**Staff:** MOA LRP has not, at least related to watersheds.

**Commissioner Kinsman:** The funding that was appropriated under the bipartisan infrastructure law is typically flowing into programs that open up opportunities. Not all of it is spoken for. There is a guidebook and compendium, and there are numerous programs that speak to wetland/watershed support. I can provide that information. Year 4-5 might be best.

**Chair Creely:** What was the funding mechanism for the 2013 Wetland Management plan?

**Staff:** Unknown.

**Commissioner Kinsman:** I worked a lot with the federal side stuff.

**Commissioner Kent:** There have been some rough patches about membership, participation, etc. Should we add additional commissioners?

**Staff:** The processes for filling commissions is still in place.

**Commissioner Deák:** New people got hired, and some of the backlog started getting cleared up.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**Commissioner Kent** moved to adjourn; **Vice Chair Deák** seconded. Meeting concluded at 1:10 p.m.

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**WATERSHED AND NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**RULES OF PROCEDURE**

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**ARTICLE I – OFFICERS**

1. The commission shall annually organize and elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at its first meeting in March..
2. The Chair shall preside over the meetings of the Commission and shall exercise all the powers usually incident to the office and shall be a voting member with full right to have their vote recorded in all deliberations of the Commission. The Chair or a designated appointee shall attend Anchorage Assembly and other Municipal Board or Commission meetings at which important Commission recommendations are presented and shall speak on behalf of the Commission.
3. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in their absence. In case of the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the members present may elect for the meeting a Temporary Chair, who shall during such meeting have full powers of the Chair.
4. The Planning Director shall be the Secretary. In the Planning Director’s absence, another member of the planning staff shall act as Secretary. The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the Commission and shall keep such files as may be required.

**ARTICLE II - MEETINGS**

11. Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 12:00 noon, unless notice of postponement is given each member at least twenty-four hours prior to that time. If the regular meeting shall occur on a holiday observed by the Municipality, the meeting shall be rescheduled at the discretion of the Chair or Secretary to a date that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday observed by the Municipality. Should

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- the Commission be unable to complete all the required business at a regular meeting, the Commission shall continue the meeting to a designated date not later than four weeks from the scheduled date.
12. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or Secretary, provided that at least twenty-four hours' notice of special meeting is given each member at their established business or residence.
  13. Meeting of the Commission shall be held at a designated place unless notice of another meeting place is given to each member at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting and a public posting is made at the regular meeting place informing the public of the change of meeting location.
  14. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public, except that any question permitted by law may be discussed in an executive session, which is closed to the public, provided that no final action is taken on any question in that session.
  15. A majority of the membership of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Action by the Commission shall require the favorable vote of a majority of the full membership of the Commission. Full membership means a majority of nine, less the number of Commissioners excused for conflicts of interest.
  16. Any member who has a substantial direct or indirect financial interest in any question being voted shall identify their interest but shall not be excused from voting hereon except with the concurrence of the majority of the other members present.



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17. Any member of the Commission anticipating an extended period of absence from Commission meetings shall so advise the Commission at a prior meeting. A member who misses three consecutive regular meetings without prior excuse shall automatically be recommended to the Mayor and Assembly for replacement.
18. In all matters not covered by these rules, Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern.
19. All recommendations by the Commission to the Anchorage Assembly, or other Municipal Board or Commission shall be made by resolution. Resolutions shall be numbered consecutively within each year, according to the sequence of approval, and shall be signed by the Chair and the Secretary. The minutes of the meeting at which the resolution is adopted shall show the vote of each member.
20. The agenda for each regular meeting of the Commission shall be prepared by the Secretary and shall be distributed to each member at least twenty-four hours prior to the meetings.

The order of business at all meetings of the Commission shall be as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Minutes
3. Special Order of Business
4. Consent Agenda
5. Unfinished Business
6. New Business
7. Persons to Be Heard
8. Committee Reports
9. Staff Report
10. Adjournment

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21. The deadline for adjournment of all meetings shall be as designated by a majority vote of the members present.

**ARTICLE III - CHANGE OF RULES**

1. The Rules of Procedure may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Commission by a majority vote of the membership of the Commission.

Approved:     DATE

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Craig H. Lyon  
Secretary

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Emily Creely  
Chair

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**Anchorage Municipal Code**  
**Title 4 (current 2023)**

**4.90. Watershed and Natural Resources Advisory Commission**

**4.90.10 - Purpose and goal.**

- A. There is established a watershed and natural resources advisory commission.
- B. The commission serves as a technical liaison between municipal departments, the community and state and federal agencies having water quality, watershed and natural resources management responsibilities, programs to restore and improve fish and wildlife habitat and other activities to increase community stewardship of aquatic and other natural resources within the Municipality of Anchorage.
- A. The goal of the commission is to sustain the economic and community benefits of healthy creeks, watersheds and natural resource lands within the Municipality of Anchorage by providing technical advice and guidance to help facilitate coordinated and collaborative local, state, federal and private sector watershed and natural resources stewardship, restoration and protection actions.
- B. This commission is affirmatively continued by assembly reauthorization until October 14, 2023 in accordance with section 4.05.150.

(AO No. 2008-89, § 2, 7-29-08; AO 2011-64(S-1), § 8, 6-28-2011; AO No. 2011-79, § 1, 10-11-11; AO No. 2014-70, § 3, 9-23-14; AO No. 2017-61, § 2, 10-10-17; AO No. 2020-54, § 2, 10-1-20)

**4.90.020 - Composition of commission.**

- A. The watershed and natural resources advisory commission shall be composed of nine members.
- B. When making commission appointments, due consideration shall be given to technical qualifications in the fields of aquatic resources, creek restoration, fish passage, hydrology, land management, engineering, project management and permitting, watershed management, education/outreach and fish and wildlife.

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- C. The director of the municipal planning department, or designee, shall serve as the secretary to the commission. Other municipal departments may provide staff support to the commission for issues pertinent to individual departments.

(AO No. 2008-89, § 2, 7-29-08)

#### **4.90.030 - Powers and duties.**

A. The commission has the following powers and duties:

1. Make recommendations, provide advice, and submit reports to the Assembly, the mayor, and municipal departments on watershed, creek and natural resource stewardship, restoration, and protection matters.
2. Serve as a technical liaison and a point of contact between the Municipality and state and federal natural resource, fish and wildlife management agencies, and other interests involved in the stewardship, restoration, management and protection of aquatic habitat, watersheds and natural resource.
3. Review and make recommendations for such special studies on watershed, creek and natural resource matters as may be requested or designated by municipal departments or boards, commissions, or the assembly.
5. Act in a technical advisory capacity to the parks and recreation commission, Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission, community councils and other municipal boards and commissions on matters related to creeks, watersheds, and natural resource lands.
6. Provide recommendations to the mayor and the assembly on annual capital improvement plans and budgets for natural resource, creek restoration and watershed related activities and projects.
7. Function as the permanent advisory entity for the Municipality's Sustainable Salmon Program and National Fish Habitat Partnership activities.
8. Assist with public outreach and education on topics and issues of interest to the commission.

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8. Provide technical advice, as requested, to the Anchorage School District on curricula and other school programs addressing watersheds, stream ecology, wildlife management and creek restoration.
9. Perform other duties, as requested by the mayor and the assembly.
10. Prepare an annual report of commission activities.

(AO No. 2008-89, § 2, 7-29-08)

DRAFT