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**MINUTES**

**Girdwood Trails Committee**

**P. O. Box 1154, Girdwood, AK 99587**

**Regular Monthly Meeting -- Tuesday, January 5, 2016**

**Girdwood Community Room, 7pm**

**Call to Order**

Approval of Agenda

Approval of December 1, 2015 Minutes

**Introduction of Guests/Presentations**

* Christina Hendrickson, Alaska Railroad

Christina is introduced to the group, conversation deferred until the Iditarod NHT portion of the agenda.

**Old Business**

* Girdwood Trails Committee Election of Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer)

No new volunteers came forward offering to serve in the officer roles.

Motion:

Girdwood Trails Committee moves to re-elect all officers for another year in their current positions.

Motion passes 7-1

Gary Galbraith asks if it would be good to review operating procedures and change cycle so that not all positions expire at the same time. Committee decides to take this up in February regular meeting

* Alyeska Ski Club Adopt-A-Trail

Adopt-A-Trail has produced draft contract. Trails also has copy of draft contract and is asked to provide comments/edits. Main element for Trails Committee is that direction of the work to be performed is at the discretion of the Land Manager (eg trails and Girdwood Parks & Rec).

Brian Burnett adds that this program can inspire trail work at a local level, involve youth in the programs. Girdwood will be one of the first to try it in Alaska, but it will eventually be a state-wide support system for trails.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 2, 2016 at the at the Girdwood Community Room, 7:00 pm**

Girdwood Trails Committee Agendas and minutes are available on line: http://www.muni.org/gbos

Kyle Kidder seeks clarification on who is responsible land manager if the trail is part of an MOU between agencies. Kyle Kelley says that it should follow the MOU and land manager in charge of the trail as designated by the MOU would be responsible.

Alison Rein asks about motorized equipment to be used for trail work. Brian Burnett says this is an item that should be added to the document, as motorized equipment may be approved for trail work in some circumstances.

Kyle Kidder asks how groups will be recognized for their work. This is currently in the agreement, stating that they may have signage placed at trailhead acknowledging their work, as well as in the AK Trails Newsletter.

* Interagency Land Management Agreements (Kyle Kidder/Kyle Kelley)
	+ California Creek Trailhead (Chugach State Park land on Crow Creek Rd)
	+ Beaver Pond Trail/Abe’s Trail

 There hasn’t been time yet, but Kyle and Kyle will be working on this soon.

*Trails Issues:*

* DOT/Airport Upper Valley Trail Access

Vicky Swain is out until January 8. No apparent progress on this project from DOT.

* Alyeska Highway Pedestrian Safety Corridor

Kyle called Sean Holland to follow up. Polishing design work and getting ready to put out to bid in March. Bid cycle is 3 weeks, and then 3 weeks for review. Late May is estimated time for start of construction, with project taking 2 ½ to 3 months to complete.

Marcus Ackerman asks about invasive weed mitigation. Policy of DOT is to use clean soils with Alaska indigenous plant seed mix. However, additional concern is disposal of existing soils, which have invasive weeds already.

* USFS Iditarod Lower valley improvements (Alison Rein)

Alison has been working on finding the best route for the Iditarod NHT. Broke project from railroad/Alyeska Highway trailhead into phases. Discovered that there is an island of dry land that is within the easement but not currently on the trail. It may make sense to re-route California Creek crossing to enter that dry patch as this may lower amount of fill needed by about 1/3.

Phase 1 includes elevating the trail, getting the tread above the water table. Largest cost in bringing in fill.

Christina Hendrickson with the Alaska Railroad addressed the Trails Committee. Railroad has been approached to help with the transport of material to the trail work site. Possible to do this with work trail and side-dump cars. There may be other projects in the early spring that this could piggy-back on, although there are no guarantees.

Railroad easement is 100’ on each side of the center line of the tracks. Some of the likely access is also on Enstar Right of Way, so additional permits would be needed and likely matting to protect ground surface. In addition, there is a steep grade from the railroad tracks down to the area off their easement. Until gravel is off railroad property, there must be a flagger stationed there.

Associated costs/elements related to AK RR for fill:

 Work Trail @ $7500/day

 Flagger @ $150/hr with 8 hour minimum

 Plus: equipment, material, spreader

 Permit to be within 20’ of the track, with flagman

Other options to railroad access for bringing in gravel is to use dump trucks and bring in gravel from Portage.

Brian Burnett: Very excited to have dialog open with Alaska Railroad. Thank you for information and coming to the meeting.

Christina continued with topic of trailhead and depot improvements:

Girdwood Depot and parking are under review by AK RR for transit improvements, passenger enhancement, and access to Bird/Gird trail. Need for bus turnaround, possible redesign of the depot. Working on land use study for larger building, parking, signage. Overall goal is to improve the area for all users.

Christina Hendrickson: 265-2217 work/575-4184 cell/hendricksonc@akrr.com

Will Brennan mentions that for trail alignment in Cooper Landing, they built a chute from upper area to lower and dumped trail fill in the chute, then moved it where it was needed. This would require a staging area off of Alyeska highway.

Alison Rein says also considering building elevated walkway, like on Trail of Blue Ice.

Brian Burnett states that work should be 6’ wide and should be surface that can be biked on year-round.

Kyle Kelley states that we have $17,000 grant with Anchorage Park Foundation, need to work on elements of trail, and decide on either this area or farther up the trail, closer to industrial park.

Dwaine Schuldt says he thinks working on the south end will show intent of trails committee to dedicate work and assets to this project to the railroad.

* Girdwood Community Trails Plan

Worked on wish list of trails. Likely bring full document to Girdwood Trails Meeting next month.

* Hand Tram Kiosk Committee (Alison Rein): Review draft content for kiosks

Alison provided photos of the kiosk structures. They’re outdoors, and heavy with water.

Group discussed how to get them to the site for installation. Maybe Helicopter if under 800 lb payload. Need to haul sacks of gravel also.

Planning to have kiosks complete by March.

Kyle Kelley offers to store the kiosk structures in the Glacier City Hall garage from March – installation. This would dry them out and make them lighter to transport and install.

* Moose Meadows/Alyeska Playing Field Survey

Surveyor completed survey. Should have report for February meeting.

Nest step will be to determine what to do with the project.

Original proposed layouts for this area did not consider easements.

* Winter Grooming

No grooming yet this year on Moose Meadow. Before the rain we were still shy of the required snowpack to drive grooming equipment on it.

Nordic Ski Club has been grooming the 5K loop, but warm rainy weather is not helping.

* Discussion of summer trail work for 2016

Kyle Kelley provided priority list that Trails worked on at the December meeting:

1. Tiny Creek Bridge behind Girdwood School

This would be a Trails Committee project, not grant project or SCA project

Replace bridge

Work with school to get permission to do work

Work with Fish and Game as project spans fish passage.

Ask for student/staff help on the project.

1. Beaver Pond Trail

This project would be done with paid SCA help.

Trails Committee would direct the scope of the project

Make the trail bike-able through hemlock forest

Trails to address the areas that are highest priority.

Need to get agreement from Alaska State Parks to work on their land.

Adopt-A-Trail/Alyeska Ski Club would work on brushing and other less intensive trail work on the trail.

1. Lower Iditarod Trail Improvements

Grant project with $17,000 match ($34,000 total) funds

Need to determine scope of work

Advocate for donations.

These projects depart from past year’s trail work plans by not including brushing in SCA contract. SCA will work in Girdwood for 3 weeks in June

Trails Committee will need to decide at February meeting what their priorities will be on Beaver Pond Trail and what work Trails wants to do to work on Anchorage Park Foundation grant.

Kyle Kidder adds that Trails Committee could set up work parties for

National Trails Day on June 4 and for Public Lands Day in September to get community involved.

Diana Livingston adds that Tiny Creek was originally a Rotary project. They may want to be involved in new work also.

* Discussion of change in GTC monthly meeting date

No need to change the date of the meeting, however venue may need to change when Fire Hall construction begins.

* Other Trails Issues

Tree blow downs on trails after last wind storm. Beaver Pond Trail and Virgin Creek Trail. Gary Galbraith is taking care of Virgin Creek Trail.

Gary Galbraith asks about access for non-skiers to complete a loop from Winner Creek Trail to multi use trails across Nordic 5K at Zug’s slide. Brian answers that the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club will not likely agree to pedestrian use on the side or in easement of the 5K loop. However, once Arlberg Extension is complete, adding trail to create such a loop incorporating parking area is a good idea. Adding to Wish List of Trails in Girdwood Trail Plan document.

*Budget and Grants*

* Financial Report (Diana Livingston)

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| January 5, 2016 |  |  |
| Account with Girdwood Inc. |  | $13,154.12 |
| Rreserve for Trail Signs |  |  (500.00) |
| RAC Grant Receivable |  |  1,782.60  |
| Reserve for Forest Fair Fund |  |  (80.03) |
| Balance Unreserved Funds |  | $14,356.69 |
| RAC Grant Funds |  | $7,345.42 |
| Amount Submitted |  |  (1,782.60) |
| Committed for Kiosks |  |  (3,520.00) |
| Uncommitted RAC Balance |  | $2,042.82 |
| Note: No Change from December Report |

* Grants

Margaret and Kyle to work on grant application for American Hiking Society Grant to apply toward Lower Iditarod project.. Need to become a part of the AHS to apply, so will be paying for annual membership.

Kyle Kidder recommends looking in to the Iditarod National Historic Trail Alliance for possible funding.

*Updates*

* Turnagain Times Article

Possible poem about lack of snow.

After trail work established at Feb Meeting, article about the work to be done this year.

Carolyn to contact Kate Sandberg regarding these ideas.

* January LUC/GBOS Meeting Representative

Brian Burnett plans to attend both. He announces that there is a seat available on the executive committee for LUC up for election at the Monday night meeting.

**New Business**

None

**Other Business**

* Public Safety Update

GBOS is working toward draft proposition to place on April 5 municipal ballot. As this is a Girdwood only option, only Girdwood registered voters will vote on it.