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**Minutes Final**

**Girdwood Trails Committee**

**Regular Monthly Meeting -- Tuesday, November 5, 2019**

**Girdwood Community Room 7PM**

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors, its committees, and subcommittees are subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act as found in Alaska Statute 44.62.310 and Anchorage Municipal Code1.25 - Public Meetings.  
**Call to Order**   
Approval of November 5, 2019 agenda CH/BC   
Approval of October 1, 2019 Minutes CH/MT  
  
**Announcements:**  
Girdwood Trails Committee and Girdwood Land Use Committee are scheduled hold elections to designate officers at their January 2020 regular meetings. GTC has a vacant seat as Treasurer. Nominations for all seats will be accepted in January.   
  
HLB 1 and 5 year work plans are open for public comment through Dec 8, 2019: <http://www.muni.org/Departments/hlb/2014%20Docs/2020_HLBPlan_20191025+Appendices.pdf>  
  
Brian Burnett: Alyeska Resort is laying hoses and charging up power lines for snowmaking. Hiking on the mountain is now closed until the end of winter ops in spring 2020.  
 **Introduction of Guests/Presentations:**Trail Towns, Jessica Szelag & Lia Slemons, KMTA: Trail Towns program began on the East Coast for towns related to the Appalachian Trail and the program has now expanded to include the Pacific Crest Trail and water trails in the Midwest. Concept is that there are towns with trails nearby that are interested in providing infrastructure and amenities to trail users. Trail Towns project can help the community review their existing infrastructure and self identify what they want to do in the future to achieve the community’s goals with respect to being a trail town. This is the initial conversation regarding Trail Town with GTC; GTC members who are interested in participating in future conversations are encouraged to contact Jessica or Lia:   
[liaslemons@kmtacorridor.org](mailto:liaslemons@kmtacorridor.org); [jessicaszelag@kmtacorridor.org](mailto:jessicaszelag@kmtacorridor.org)  
  
**Old Business:**  
*Trails Issues:*

* Request for GTC recommendation for GBOS Resolution of Support for RTP Application for Phase 2 from the Industrial Park to Karolius Rd. $75,000 grant 90/10 matching for STIP 1 projects, ie no new trail. Grant writing is under way, received letters of support and authorization letter from HLB as the project is on HLB land. Survey of the trail will occur after completion of this work.

GTC motion:

Girdwood Trails Committee moves to recommend that the Girdwood Board of Supervisors write a Resolution of Support for the Recreation Trails Program grant application for Phase 2 of the Girdwood Lower Iditarod National Historic Trail.

Motion by Christina Hendrickson/2nd by Barb Crews  
20 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstaining

Motion carries

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 3, 2019**

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

* Girdwood Trails Plan: Review and vote to recommend GBOS approve Huddle AK scope of work and Sole Source contract award @ $48,465 to be paid for through the Parks and Rec capital improvement fund  
  Christina Hendrickson has been working on having this presented under term contract and now as sole source. Huddle AK has experience in Girdwood and cost of using Huddle AK will go directly in to the project, rather than some going to start up and project initiation. Scope of work requires that all tracking and notes are handled by Huddle AK. Christina believes that with Huddle’s experience in Girdwood and crossover with the Imagine! Girdwood (GAP) project, the trail plan can be completed in about a year. Trail plan is a component of GAP, but GAP deals with other areas of recreation as well. Trails Management Plan, which addresses significantly the maintenance and future goals of existing trail complements the trail plan, but there is more work to do in identifying where future trails go, what non-existing connections are desired among existing trails, parking, etc.

Group discusses the overlap between this project and the GAP, Mike Edgington encourages written clarification of the goals of the Trail plan compared to GAP section on recreation/trails. Amount of funding involved for this project is more than what has been allocated to GAP, which is grassroots but largely funded through Anchorage Assembly grants, at one time.

Motion:  
Girdwood Trails Committee recommends that the GBOS write a Resolution of Support for assembly approval of sole source contract to Huddle AK to be paid through the Girdwood Parks and Rec capital account.

Motion by Barb Crews, 2nd by Carolyn Brodin

9 in favor, 1 opposed, 6 abstain  
Motion carries

* Summer 2019 volunteer appreciation (moved forward in agenda)  
  GTC held 3 formal trail work parties over the summer and several other projects at the Hand tram. The following individuals provided time at a number of these events and are awarded GTC T shirts to thank them for their time and hard work: Carolyn Brodin, Amanda Locke and her son Liam, Barb Crews, Paul Crews, Mark Jonas, Brian Burnett, Eric Tiexman, Garrett Swygman.

Collectively, all three parties included 40 volunteers and 80 hours of work completed on Girdwood’s trails in 2019.

* Motion to approve expense of up to $7000 for up-front costs associated with Beaver Pond Trails Signage, to be paid from the GTC Girdwood Inc account and reimbursed through the approved KMTA matching grant.

GTC application with KMTA is for reimbursement up to $5650. KMTA grant is a 1:1 match for interpretive signs and waypoint signs on the Beaver Pond Trail complex. Matching funds will come from the GTC Girdwood Inc account.

Motion:   
GTC moves to approve up to $7000 in costs associated with the Beaver Pond Trails Signage to be paid for through the GTC Girdwood Inc Trails account, understanding that $5650 of this will be reimbursed through the KMTA matching grant.

Motion by Carolyn Brodin, 2nd by Barb Crews  
7 in favor, 0 opposed, 4 abstain

* Hand Tram review of fall net and railing system designs and costs

2 major accidents in 2019, one resulting in fatality and the other in major injuries. Previously a toddler had fallen from that side. Following that incident, the existing fall nets were installed.

2019 falls occurred when people helping pull the rope were pulled over the edge of the fall net on the hotel side. Hand tram has been closed since the 2nd incident in 2019 to review safety features and discuss management structure and maintenance of the hand tram. Originally the tram was installed for adventurous backcountry users. Improved trail on both ends have created a high-demand high volume adventure experience accessible by most. Tram users are stacked up on both ends and operate the tram at a much higher volume of ridership and faster desired pace than it is designed to go. Rope was replaced twice in summer 2019, reflecting this much higher use and friction on the system.

This discussion is only on the proposed safety features to keep people from the embankment when they using the tram. Discussion of the management and maintenance of the tram will take place at a future meeting. Past discussion included possibility of paid attendants helping manage the hand tram. This increases liability and is no longer under consideration. This is an unmanned activity, similar to a pool with no lifeguard on duty.  
  
Physical improvements under discussion (see handout):

Addition of railing to the lower platforms where the tram enters the dock w swing gate  
Addition of “caution striping” on the lower platform   
Railing between the lower and upper platforms with a swing gate  
Swing gate on the entry to the hand tram  
Increase net size from 4’x8’ to 8’x11’

Most of this would be built on-site with speedrail system.   
Estimate is around $10-$15,000 for these additions.

Goal is to still make the hand tram accessible with bikes, one bike hook is likely to be removed. Considering that some of these gates/railings may create friction points or create new problems for tram operation. Perhaps pinch point potential at entry swing gates can be eliminated by having the opening of the rail match the door of the hand cart width.

Other ideas mentioned:   
Research other methods to pull the tram across:

pull the cart across from inside the tram cart only

move haul mechanism farther back so that those pulling the cart aren’t gripping the rope and/or close to the edge

Clutched wheel (governor) to limit wheel and rope velocity  
Bridge

Inaccessibility of the hand tram for those with disabilities  
Possible change in trail user numbers if the tram was replaced with a bridge

* Girdwood Trails Management Plan Update

Group met this evening at 6PM. flow chart was provided to MOA planning dept in April, no feedback yet.

Mike Edgington has provide feedback, which will be incorporated  
Group is figuring out where to add the flow chart to the existing Girdwood Trails Management Plan document once it’s approved.

* Other Trails Issues  
  Virgin Creek Falls Trail issues and Improvements: Community, HLB have gathered and created a list of items to work on. Kate Sandberg has worked also with Greatland Trust to loop them in. Greatland Trust is interested in improvement of the trail: discouraging braiding, consolidating the trails into one main corridor. Kyle has recently walked the trail, and envisions currently using metal decking to create an elevated walkway atop gabian baskets. There are good sources of gravel available and significant deadfall to be removed. SCA crew time can be dedicated to this in 2020.  
  Second issue regarding traffic/parking and trail impact on neighbors is separate topic.  
  Alyeska Highway Pedestrian Safety Corridor Sweeps: First round of signage is in place, 2nd set of 8 signs arriving soon and will be placed in the pathway until snow removal season begins. Other aspects of this project will be handled in 2020, including stenciling pedestrian decals on the pathway and re-striping the path route where it crosses the intersections. DOT has recently notified GBOS that DOT will cover the cost of these three improvements. Larger term issue of re-routing the path at the sweeps is on going but there is no funding for this project.  
    
  Pedestrian Flashing Crosswalk Light should be installed in early December. WPD will do some outreach with students to ensure they know how to safely operate and cross the streets. This will also be reimbursed by DOT.  
    
  Airport Access: No report. Mike Edgington reminds the group that DOT has promised a meeting on this; scheduling of it has not occurred yet.
* Financial Report (Carolyn Brodin)   
  Full report is in the meeting packet. Balance of unreserved funds is $16,863. Reimbursement from KMTA for Trail Tools grant is anticipated in next 30 days.
* Grants & Projects Status report:
* KMTA trail sign grant @ $5650 is currently open  
  KMTA grant for trail building tools ($4290 matching) has been closed and reimbursement requested.
* RTP Grant status ($75,000). All but $30,000 has been completed. Likely conclude this with the final portion of trail to the Ruane intersection early spring 2020.
* APF grant for Lower INHT ($5,000). Grant contract complete. This is to be used in 2020.
* ACF grant for power wheelbarrow ($800). Wrap up reporting complete.

*Updates*

* Other Girdwood Trail Partners Updates: GNSC; GMBA; Girdwild; KMTA: No reports
* GBOS (Christina Hendrickson): Update on confluence meeting in Talkeetna. Discussion of “gateway towns” and the need to have trails plans in order to pass funding bonds to work on trails. Full report included in the meeting packet.
* November LUC/GBOS Meeting Representative: Executive Committee will coordinate.

**New Business:**

**Other Business:**

Adjourn 9:15PM