



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**

August 9, 2018



I. Call to Order

The August 9, 2018 meeting of the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission, held at Spenard Recreation Center, was called to order by Chair Jon Dyson at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken by John Rodda, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Commissioners present:

Commissioner Catherine Bodry
Commissioner Kelly Chang
Commissioner Jon Dyson
Commissioner Grace Johnston
Commissioner Erin Kirkland
Commissioner Shannon Kuhn
Commissioner Eric Milliken
Commissioner Alison Smith

Commissioners absent:

Commissioner Jim Winchester

A quorum was present.

Staff present:

John Rodda
Josh Durand
Steve Rafuse
Diana Cramer

III. Approval of Agenda

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chang, the Agenda for the August 9, 2018 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Kirkland noted one needed change to the Minutes of the June 14, 2018: one page 3, in the Anchorage Park Foundation paragraph on second line, the word "exclusive" needs to be changed to "inclusive." Upon motion made by Commissioner Kirkland and seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Minutes as amended were unanimously approved.

V. Director's Comments

John Rodda, Director of Parks and Recreation, provided updates on the following Parks and Recreation matters:

Homeless camp cleanup efforts continue. Major cleanup efforts have been conducted along major trail corridors. Despite these efforts, we have only touched the surface of the problem.

The operating and capital budget are now with the Office of Management and Budget.

Parks and Recreation is working with Solid Waste Services (SWS) to obtain boulders for park maintenance projects. SWS is currently undergoing a huge landfill project which results in them having a stockpile of boulders. Park Maintenance will be obtaining those boulders to use as barriers to stop vehicles from driving onto trails and park land, and for landscaping projects.

A dog park at Pena Park to be located in an unused little league ballfield has been proposed. After presentation to and approval by the community council, the proposal will come to this Commission for consideration.

Parks and Recreation is working with the Municipal Attorney's Office and the Administration to appoint a Code Enforcement Officer dedicated to Parks and Recreation encroachment issues.

Josh Durand, Park Superintendent, shared the contents of an email received from Marc Grober regarding the construction of single track trails at Russian Jack Springs Park,

which was approved by this Commission as part of the proposed Youth Employment in Parks projects presented by the Department at the May 2018 meeting. Mr. Grober alleged impropriety with the department planning process, public involvement and presentation of information to the Commission. Mr. Durand addressed the points raised in the email *seriatim* and each was found to be invalid, misrepresented or a misstatement of fact. A natural resources plan and the master planning process for Russian Jack Springs Park has already begun.

Commissioner Smith raised two issues: First, she asked about removal of trees in the Coastal Trail easement by private property owners that she witnessed. Mr. Rodda asked her to provide specific details and photographs so that the incident could be investigated. Second, she stated she had a friend who would like to volunteer to donate paint to paint yellow lines on the curves on the Coastal Trail. Josh Durand discussed the feasibility of this suggestion and the reasons why this has not worked in the past which include that the paint is quite costly and comes off easily.

VI. Appearance Requests

There were no public appearance requests for non-agenda items.

VII. Anchorage Park Foundation

There was no report from the Anchorage Park Foundation.

VIII. Action Items

A. PRC 18-22 South Westchester Lagoon Bridge

Resolution 2018-16

Presented by Maeve Nevins, Park Planner

For the past year park planning has been working on the design for the new South Westchester Lagoon Bridge. The bridge is well used and was originally built in the 1980s. In 2014 it was identified to be one of the trail bridges in need of replacement. In 2017 residual funds were used to initiate the project and in 2018 a bond was approved which will fund the project further. Parks and Recreation proposes to replace the existing wood bridge with a corten steel truss bridge structure. Most of the existing pilings can be re-used. The bridge will have an expanded viewing platform. Surfacing will include asphalt on the main trail corridor except at the viewing platform where brushed concrete will be used. The platform will include fibergrate decking and an angled wood top railing for viewing comfort. Existing benches will be replaced.

Impacts to the community during construction are a concern, and late fall and/or early spring has been identified as the optimal time for construction to reduce impact to trail users. Detours will be identified on social media, the project website and additional signage. Once a contractor has been selected, a finalized schedule and detour route will be shared with the community.

Community-wide input was collected during various bridge and trail improvement projects and those recommendations have been incorporated into this project. The project has been presented to and approved by the Turnagain Community Council and the South Addition Community Council during their spring meetings in 2018. As the renovation of this bridge will improve safety, access, and minimize maintenance for this part of the Coastal Trail, Parks and Recreation recommends approval of this project.

There were no public appearance requests for this action item.

After discussion, upon motion duly made by Commissioner Johnston and seconded by Commissioner Smith, PRC Resolution No. 2018-16 South Westchester Lagoon Bridge Replacement was unanimously approved as follows:

PRC Resolution No. 2018-16
South Westchester Lagoon Bridge Replacement

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the South Westchester Lagoon Bridge is located along the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail which is located within the Turnagain Community Council side of the Westchester Lagoon and significantly impacts residents of both the Turnagain and South Addition Community Councils; and

WHEREAS, the Bridge structure was designed and constructed in the late 1980s and per the structural engineering assessment in 2014 it was identified as being in need of replacement; and

WHEREAS, due to congestion, and opportunities for sightseeing and birdwatching at the lagoon, the design includes an expanded bird viewing platform; and

WHEREAS, the design aesthetic is similar to the vernacular of other recent trail bridge replacement projects, including the modification of railing height to 42” to accommodate improved viewing into the lagoon; and

WHEREAS, the residents of both the Turnagain and South Addition Community Councils provided design input on the bridge structure and surfacing materials during Spring 2018 Community Council meeting; and

WHEREAS, the project was identified by the Park and Recreation Department as a maintenance priority and was included in the 2018 Parks Bond, which was approved by voters.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposal to replace the South Westchester Lagoon Bridge.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th day of August, 2018.

Voting record – Resolution 2018-16

Yea: Commissioners Bodry, Chang, Dyson, Johnston, Kirkland,
Kuhn, Milliken, Smith

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioner Winchester

B. PRC 18-23 Ruth Arcand Park—Lake Otis Connector Trail

Resolution 2018-17

Presented by Steve Rafuse, Park Planner

This is an update to PRC 18-08, which was presented to and approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission in March 2018. Since that time, the Pacific Northern Academy has moved to new location, which changes access needs. The school's new location west of Lake Otis Boulevard is near an access tunnel under Lake Otis. The updated project proposes the development of a soft surface access trail between the tunnel and Ruth Arcand park which will improve access for students and residents, and relocation of the obstacle course equipment to an area south of its original location.

The project has been presented to and received the unanimous approval of the Abbott Loop Community Council.

Also presenting information on this action item was Elise Huggins, a landscape architect who has volunteered her expertise to develop the proposed project.

There were no public appearances requests for this action item.

After discussion, upon motion duly made by Commissioner Chang and seconded by Commissioner Johnston, PRC Resolution No. 2018-17 Ruth Arcand Park—Lake Otis Connector Trail was unanimously approved as follows:

PRC Resolution No. 2018-17
Ruth Arcand Park—Lake Otis Connector Trail

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long-term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Arcand Park is a 602.31 acre park located in South Anchorage and is classified as a Special Use Area in the 2006 *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements are the result of a collaboration between the students at Pacific Northern Academy, the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Anchorage Schools on Trails Program, the National Park Service, and the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the improvements proposed would improve access to the park for students and residents west of the Ruth Arcand Park; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements are consistent with the Section 16 Trails Master Plan and are supported by the Abbott Loop Community Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed improvements submitted by the Department for the Ruth Arcand Park – Lake Otis Connector Trail.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th day of August, 2018.

Voting record – Resolution 2018-16

Yea: Commissioners Bodry, Chang, Dyson, Johnston, Kirkland,
Kuhn, Milliken, Smith

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioner Winchester

IX. Information Items

PRC 18-24 Campbell Creek Trail Phase 3 Improvements

Presented by Maeve Nevins, Park Planner

Phase 3 of the Campbell Creek Trail Improvement Project is part of a multi-year plan that began in 2013 to improve safety and the user experience on Parks and Recreation trails. Funding began with a legislative grant in 2013 and has continued with bonds and a grant from the State of Alaska. The Department will continue to address rehabilitation or replacement of asphalt, bridge transitions, amenity upgrades, and improved signage and wayfinding. Community feed back has been collection through the previous years, comments from user groups, and site visits with users and state and federal agencies to identify priorities. Phase 1 and Phase 2 included the trail from West Dimond Blvd. to the west side of C Street. From mid-August 2018 through Spring 2019, Phase 3 continues from West 76th Avenue at the Taku Park north parking lot to Lynnwood Park to repave and reconstruct the existing trail, add two feet of soft-surface shoulders on each side of the trail, rehabilitate and/or replace cracked and heaving asphalt, restore streambanks, repair bridges, upgrade amenities and improve improved signage and wayfinding. The project has been approved by the Taku Community Council.

X. Commissioner Comments

There were no commissioner comments.

XI. Upcoming Meeting

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Thursday, September 13, 2018, at Spenard Recreation Center.

XII. Adjournment

Upon motion made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Bodry, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2018:

Chair
Parks & Recreation Commission

Director
Parks & Recreation