

EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS AND RECREATION
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Regular Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on February 13, 2023, at 7:00 pm. Chair Peter Panarese called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Barbara Trost, Birchwood Community Council

~~Alexandra Hill, Alternate Birchwood Community Council~~

Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council

~~Jackie Welge, Alternate for Chugiak Community Council~~

Camilla Hussein-Scott, Eagle River Community Council

Pete Panarese, Eagle River Valley Community Council

Ruth Armstrong, Alternate for Eagle River Valley Community Council

Stephen Romanilli, South Fork Community Council

Jasmine Carter, Mayor's Appointee

Mike Braniff – Parks and Recreation Director

Tanya Lieberman – Parks and Recreation Deputy Director

Karen Richards – Parks and Recreation, Principal Administrative Officer

III. MINUTES

January 9, 2023 minutes were approved unanimously

IV. APPEARANCES

A. Introduction – Tanya Lieberman – Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

Mike Braniff introduced Tanya Lieberman as the Parks and Recreation Deputy Director just starting her third week with the department. Mike described the Deputy Director position as essentially being the Director in a sense here in the Eagle River/Chugiak service area and described her as bringing an impressive background and resume to the department. Tanya introduced herself as a native of South Dakota who recently moved to Alaska in January of 2023. She went to school for a major in landscape design and horticulture with a minor in business administration. Cooler temperatures in the summer with less wind brought her family to Alaska and they now live near the Eagle River nature center so she could be close to work and build relationships with the community.

Mike Braniff proposed a new meeting time of 6:30 to 8:30 pm for the board to meet.

- B. Sam (last name not identified) is here on behalf of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Great Alaska Council and would like to talk about getting BSA camp at Mirror Lake on some kind of general road maintenance plan.** Conversations with Mike Braniff and others indicate that there was some kind of gentleman's agreement many years ago that identified BSA would take care of the road maintenance but BSA has found nothing in writing that solidifies any of that and they are here to try and identify the means to keep that road up as needed because they cannot and would prefer not to have the liability associated. BSA would like local government to keep their roadway cleared, plowed and maintained from year to year. He has personally worked on this road with the scouts for many years and admits that the scouts have been performing maintenance on this roadway in the past and they want to make sure the road is kept safe for their users. Sam estimates that 500-800 kids utilize the facility as well as various community groups. It is his understanding that the Municipality of Anchorage owns this road (Gorsuch Road) that they have been maintaining in the past. Some major concerns with the roadway is potholes that develop when the snow melts and the major amount of snow fall this year.
- Connor Redwine is the private property owner who owns what was known previously as Camp Carlquist off Gorsuch Road and he seconds the BSA concerns for maintenance coverage needed along this road.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on 2023 Operations/CIP budget request:

- **Summary of \$4.5 million fund balance transfer request? How was it affected by the Assembly action on January 10, 2023?**
Peter asked Mike Braniff how the assembly actions on the 10th affect the 2022 CIP Projects and the money we have been accumulating for repairs to things like the Chugiak Pool? Mike Braniff explained that the CIP fund transfer request before the assembly was unanimously voted to postpone indefinitely and what this did in essence was say no to the department that they weren't willing to approve as presented and sends us back to the drawing board to present to the assembly our capital projects in a way they will approve of the fund transfer. Since then, he, Tanya, Dan Hagarman (aquatics superintendent) and two assembly members took a tour of the pool and he thinks that if we tackle these projects one at a time they will find support from Assembly members. He plans to submit at the next Assembly meeting (3/9/23) the same \$1 million dollar pool project request and that will be the approach forward with each of the 4 projects on the list.
- **The engineers cost report on Chugiak Pool repair.**
The pool assessment report was provided to the members for review. Will asked if there is an actual amount identified for repairs at the pool? Mike Braniff said \$2 million is being budgeted at this time and working with

Maintenance and Operations will have engineers' costs identified by the next board meeting.

- **Balance of operating funds held in reserve.**

Mike Braniff was not clear on what was being asked.

Peter asks Ruth Armstrong to clarify what she meant by this topic when requested that it be added to agenda. She clarified the board as a group needs to know what funds are held in reserve that can be put towards capital improvement projects. Mike Braniff identified that the balance of 2022 Operating budget that will transfer to Fund Balance is estimated at \$1.2 million. Mike Braniff explained that to digest that answer it's important to know how our budget works. He explained that the budget is split by 90% going to Operating and 10% going to CIP, however any unused Operating balance transfers into Fund Balance savings that can also be used at that point for future CIP projects. Most of the operating balance remaining comes from the challenges of unfilled labor positions and residual effects to business operations from the pandemic. The department has been operating with short staffing and doing the best they could under the conditions. The good news is that we are beginning to fill these positions and in government things take awhile but Tanya is here now and he's very excited about that and adding a landscape architect to the team. The department recommended a hire to HR last week and is waiting to hear if the candidate is coming aboard. Barbara asked what the average rollover amount has been in the past? Mike Braniff does not have that answer but suspects that it started increasing with the pandemic but will provide some information on that.

- **Update on CIP projects including the addition of the \$60K for Loretta French ball field improvements and the \$12.5K for Nordic ski trails at Beach Lake, and progress on CIP's: Maintenance Facility, Peter's Creek Dog Park.** Mike Braniff said that the first two projects are on track for this summer and will have the formal resolution for the ski trails ready for the next meeting. Will thinks that there is funding identified in the 2022 CIP budget identified for the ski trail expansion and Peter agreed. Karen identified to the board that the 2022 CIP list approved in February 2022 no longer exists without the Fund Balance transfer that was recently rejected by the Assembly indefinitely. The funds associated with the Fund Balance project transfer had associated funds that made the 2022 CIP list possible to obtain and fund. Without the Fund Balance transfer that was just rejected there are now no 2022 CIP projects funded as they were intertwined and dependent on Fund Balance use and approved by the board in whole. If the fund balance use is not approved, then the projects listed and approved in the February 2022 CIP are essentially defunded now unless the Fund Balance transfer is re-established. Peter acknowledged that had he known the impact that pulling the fund balance transfer would have on the approved projects he would not

have voted for it. Mike doesn't feel that this will prevent the projects from moving forward but there is work to be done now before that can happen.

B. Staff update Beach Lake Multiuse Trail Crossing, costs, and design.

Mike Braniff introduced Josh Durand as the project manager representing the department on this project as previously identified in the board work session from December 12, 2022. Josh is representing the department as consultant and volunteer attending the meeting and presenting project scope and estimated costs via remote Teams meeting. Josh presented two trail options with estimated costs and three mushing trail crossing options.

Concept A Trail Option costs estimated at \$574,780

Concept B Trail Option costs estimated at \$534,950

Trail Crossing Option costs were presented as follows:

Multi-Plate Pedestrian Underpass costs estimate \$566,270

Multi-Plate Mushing Underpass costs estimate \$1,497,140

Prefabricated Bridge costs estimate \$1,077,390

Josh identified that the department would like to continue moving forward with realizing this multiuse trail with seasonal access while taking into consideration potential savings for grade separated crossing by financing and developing this trail without a bridge which will position us to observe the use, observe conflicts and better position the department to manage this trail and if it is decided that a bridge is needed we could make that decision at a later date.

Barbara asks what the public process looks like at this point. The stakeholders and Musers need a chance to digest this information. Josh indicates that additional funding will be needed to realize this development. Will clarified that Board members will need to take this project proposal back to their councils for approval with recommendation from the department to move forward with a seasonal trail that will be closed for safety during mushing season and department would like direction from the board to fund this project and retain the option for building a grade separated crossing in the future. Mike Braniff estimates that 80% of the use would be in the summer months.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. CDMA Presentation by Deanna Partow

CDMA is presenting a request for funds from the club for trail additions and improvements to the Beach Lake mushing trails adding 2.5 miles of new trails and improvements to existing trails which will create a ten-mile loop to maximize the use of Beach Lake land. The total estimated cost associated with their proposal is \$82,950 and they are asking that Parks and Recreation provide these funds. Peter clarified that a resolution is anticipated at the next meeting to provide support.

VII. ACTION ITEM

- **BOS Resolution 2023-1 CERNSC Beach Lake Trail Improvement proposal – *The department does not have this resolution available***
- **Approval of Mirror Lake Connecting Trails Proposal – CMBR has \$5000 remaining from previous project funds and is presenting a proposal for additional short trail section connects within Mirror Lake single track trails and some hardening of multiuse trail areas. He is requesting additional funds from the department in the amount of \$33,125. *Peter made a motion to approve CMBR’s trail proposal and was seconded by Barbara. This motion passed unanimously with the anticipation of a Resolution***

VIII. DISCUSSION

New Beach Lake Trail design should accommodate “adaptive hiking and biking”.

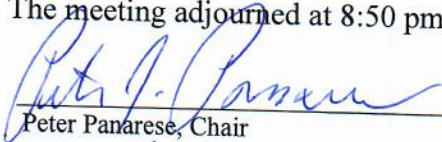
Will would like to see future trail designs be more inclusive and adaptive in design as opposed to ADA.

Barbara Trost inquired about the status of Wi-Fi installation at the Beach Lake Chalet. Mike Braniff estimates that it will be approximately 8 months to install Wi-Fi working with MOA IT Department.

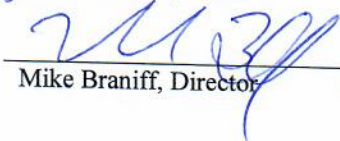
Barbara asked about the current status of the Cemetery. Mike Braniff has no new information on the cemetery and could not get it on the 2023 bond but seems possible for 2024 consideration.

C. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm


Peter Panarese, Chair

3/13/2023
Date


Mike Braniff, Director

3/13/23
Date