

EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS AND RECREATION
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Regular Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on March 11, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. Chair Stephen Romanelli called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Carol Perkins, Birchwood Community Council
Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council
Stephen Romanelli, South Fork Community Council
Pauline Tise, Eagle River Valley Community Council
Mark Littlefield, Mayoral Appointee
Ruth Armstrong, Eagle River Community Council

Staff Present:

Mike Braniff
Kellie Jorgensen
Jeffrey Urbanus

III. MINUTES

February 12, 2024, minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments

V. Director's Update

Kellie Jorgensen gave the following updates. The Request for Purchase (RFP) for McDonald Center Operations and Management Contract is flowing through purchasing, and the review panel committee members have been identified. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) will be kept abreast of when the RFP date of proceedings becomes official and all associated timelines. Hiring for seasonal staff as well as full time is in full swing. The maintenance team has been light through the winter season so it will be a welcome change to have more staffing. Hiring for the General Foreman that will be the lead for the maintenance team is also occurring. The Master Plan for Mirror/Edmonds lake had their first meeting which was very productive with numerous insights, ideas, and innovations. Meetings will continue going forward and a master plan should be in the works this time next year. Peter's Creek Dog Park had a public meeting last week. The next step will be the UDC application with public comment still available. The Chugiak Pool is awaiting installation of a heat exchanger for pool. Gutter supports, joint seals, and other items for this closure period have been

completed and went smoothly. More information on the status of the heat exchanger timeline will help to discern when pool will open, hopefully by end of April. The FLAMI board is seeking nominations for board members, with nominees being presented before this board for consideration. Loretta French park construction bidding for scoreboard installation and batting cages is being finalized as well as fixing the fence behind home plate fixing tension wires.

Mark Littlefield asked about the General Foreman position and what new position it replaced. Mike Braniff described it was an 18th month old position and nothing was sacrificed to create it. Mike also stated there may be more changes to the organizational chart and stated there is a plan in place and it will take 9-12 months for the total reorganization to take place and that the board of supervisors would be informed as progress is made.

Kellie presented the newest version of dashboard draft for review and comment.

FLAMI Board Member Nomination

Tony Bonetta (FLAMI President) commented on the new nomination for board candidate, John Decaro. Tony discussed a little of his background as noted in his resume given to board members. Kellie reminded the board of the 2017 amendment to the contract that BOS is to nominate two members to be appointed to the FLAMI board. Tony stated the two BOS nominated individuals will ending their 6th and final year. Tony met with another potential candidate who he will be bringing forward for consideration as well. The second resume for consideration will be received from Tony and forwarded to BOS for consideration prior to the next meeting.

BOS letter of support for Chugiak-Eagle River Pathways

Will Taygen stated that AMATS is proposing to cut funding to Eagle River Chugiak and redirecting funding to Anchorage. That funding was designated to complete the Eagle River Road Rehab project that started 15 years ago. We are requesting those funds stay in Chugiak-Eagle River. There are a couple of options talked about at the AMATS meetings. The first option would be to redirect funds to Artillery Road which is supported by the Eagle River Community Council although it was indicated this may not be possible in this way so it would be requested \$60 million in funds be retained but the scope of project would be reduced looking at mile 5.3 and working backwards. The other proposal was to build only the bike path portion of project and split the combined project back out. The deadline for comments is 15th April. Will explained he believed it is important as board to empower Parks and Rec staff to advocate for trails. Will proposed a resolution to ask to for support of the extension of non-motorized path of Eagle River Road and ask for Parks and Rec staff to advocate for. Mark stated Eagle River Community Council resolution was totally opposite of what Will stated. Mark stated that Eagle River Valley Road is at the top of the priority list for Eagle River Valley Council followed by the highland interchange and then the Artillery interchange. Mark stated that AMATS is pursuing Artillery and bringing back in Eagle River Road as the entire project with some changes that fall into the criteria. Mark stated the Board should push for the whole project. Mark made a Motion that the BOS supports through

AMATS the continuation and funding of Eagle River Road and Pathway however it gets dissected- that it gets back on agenda on AMATS, Will seconded and requested an amendment that Parks and Rec staff advocate for this since they are on the AMATS advisory committee. Stephen motioned to approve; the resolution passed.

Oberg Park Field Drainage Improvements Project

Jeff Urbanus stated that Oberg Fields being some of the nicest fields in the Anchorage area have many user groups that utilize the fields to include for example Chugiak Soccer Club and many other organizations. He stated that 5 years or so of utility and seasonal extremes have made it where the drainage system needs some repair as ditches has filled up over time creating drainage issues. He requested additional funding for ditch restoration that includes drainage, regrading, and seeding as well as layout differentiation from the current and increased pathways to field itself. The cost estimate is based on figures obtained last summer which was \$110,00.00. A motion to approve was made by Mark and Pauline seconded. Mark requested to explore more options with Jeff as well with fields iterating that we want to make a more permanent solution beyond reconstructing every 10 years even if it costs more money upfront.

Jeff gave an update on other projects as well:

- Beach Lake Multiuse trail is being broken up into sections for construction, with the largest element being under contract with camber (money spent this year) and being a couple weeks out. The crossing portion of this project is important and taking careful consideration and engineering. The core permitting and SWPPP is in progress currently.
- The Mirror/Edmonds Lake public workshop will be held on 9th of April. A community survey is currently open, listed on Facebook page for public comment. More workshops will be held throughout the process to support creation of a plan to guide future development.
- Mount Baldy project scope is ready to go and is waiting for SAP build to fund and allocate money from.
- The Peter's Creek Dog Park UDC application will be submitted on Wednesday after a public meeting last Thursday (7 March 2024).
- The scoreboard at Loretta French park was put out to bid.
- The Schroeder Park Pickleball courts just need paint to be ordered. Someone to mark out courts has been identified.
- Playgrounds analysis is further along than thought due to assessment already completed thanks to Taylor Keegan which puts us ahead and hopefully we can move forward to use money towards more improvements rather than planning.

Alaska Long Trails Eagle River/Chugiak Project Support

Will Taygan stated that he didn't know a Resolution passed in the Assembly. He stated that first statement in Assembly Resolution for the Alaska Long Trails is incorrect. Stephen stated there is an AIM and there is uncertainty about where in the process it is at. Will stated an individual (Sean Sexton) in community is wanting a route designated in our community. Will

explained that the BLM has federal funding already to study potential routes and to recommend or not recommend for a national trail or state trail. The current proposed route ends at Eagle River Nature Center and then goes to Mat-Su valley, how it is going to get there is question. Will was advocating that the Chugiak Community Council try and obtain funding to fix the parking situation at the trailhead for Peter's Creek/bear mountain and there was funding offered to do so but ultimately it was declined. Will stated that Neighbors thought the trail was going through neighborhoods but stated this was not true. Will explained that Sean Sexton went through the Birchwood Community Council and got them to adopt resolution stating trail will go from Grand Valley to Ptarmigan Valley and to build a brand-new trail and bridge over Peter's Creek over the canyon. Will approached the Alaska Trails and asked for further clarification on their direction and intent. Will tried crafting a resolution that doesn't pick a route necessarily but rather identifies areas that could build around developed areas. Other options for consideration could include Ptarmigan Valley, Mt. Baldy to Carol Creek, Beach Lake, Thunderbird Falls and Mirror Lake which Anchorage parks foundation is currently working on, or Edmonds lake. Will stated it is our job to identify several options to potentially connect trails that don't end up in neighborhoods. Stephen stated the Resolution sent out does not necessarily state they will go with a route particularly but rather putting forward it is a proposed route and requesting collaboration and inputs to discern if it is a good route. It was mentioned by Jeff Urbanus and Will that the whereas's in the resolution are a concern. Jeff stated that currently a front country path that is not ideal for thru- hikers is being considered. Stephen stated he believes the AIM is rushed, and the Resolution should have come through the BOS on behalf of all community councils. Stephen made mention that the Alaska Long Trails is on 2024 Capsis. Stephen requested we all hold back on this one. Will stated board should be looking at Alaska Long Trails as this will be coming up more this summer and that he is willing to research and suggest alternative routes and options and present going forward. Stephen stated he is passionate about trails going through people's properties. Mark Littlefield mentioned we really need to see more details on the map and have all the community councils give input into trails proposed and truly know what impacts the trails proposed may have.

BOS meeting October 14, 2024 (Holiday)

BOS is scheduled to meet on 14th of October due to iterations. Inquiring if need to move due to the observed holiday. Request to move to the 21st of October if room is available.

VI. DISCUSSION

Mark Littlefield brought up about the Areawide Bond for cemeteries and asked whom would take care of the cemetery. Jeff Urbanus gave POC Kyle Kelly to answer more questions about specifically. It was mentioned that the cemetery in Anchorage is funded areawide and has its own budget, contract for maintenance that is not part of the Parks and Rec budget. It was mentioned that if new cemeteries are to be added to collection, first we look at existing model expected. Since this request did not come from the administration, it has not been thought about internally. It was iterated again that although this is a stated area wide funding for initial build, what would happen with maintenance and funding of after it would be built.

Mike Braniff asked about the summer meeting schedule for BOS and asked if it was desired to take time off this summer as well like the previous year. Mark made a motion that meetings do not happen in June/July/ and tentatively in August unless staff deems necessary. Pauline seconded the motion, unanimously approved.

Kevin Sommer gave an update on the MAC Center on behalf of FLAMI. He stated that the financial health is well above board. He mentioned that the mishandling of funds is still an ongoing process and investigation, and the executive session will have more information as they are working with APD at present. Kevin explained since the incident they have changed a lot of processes in finances and policies. He stated the Audit for 2022 is moving along and they are working on cleaning up 2023 which is being held up by the mishandling. Upcoming events include the Arctic Winter games (speed skating, short track, figure skating) that are occurring up until Friday. Kevin mentioned there is significant miscommunication with Arctic Winter Games team but said the MAC is operating at the highest level able. He stated the concession stand is 50% up and running and he is working on hiring a public relations and concession stand manager. He stated there has been staff restructuring and creation of new positions, specifically creating an admin team lead for front desk staff and area. He stated he is working with Kellie on capital improvement projects identifying. He mentioned specifically looking to update controller software to control the HVAC for entire building as the lifecycle has come to end and wants to update so a company can remotely manipulate reducing operations costs. Kevin answered the question about the last contact with APD as being 20 FEB and said he is currently gathering requested information and hoping to get back to APD soon after Winter Games concludes.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Stephen Romanelli asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mark, Pauline seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM



Stephen Romanelli, Chair 4/8/2024
Date



Mike Braniff, Director 4/17/24
Date



Kellie Jorgensen, Deputy Director 4/8/2024
Date