

**EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS AND RECREATION
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Regular Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on September 09, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Chair Stephen Romanelli called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council
Ruth Armstrong, Eagle River Valley Community Council
Stephen Romanelli, South Fork Community Council
Pauline Tise, Eagle River Community Council
Barbara Trost, Birchwood Community Council (~~Alternate~~)

Staff Present:
Mike Braniff
Kellie Jorgensen
Jeffrey Urbanus

III. MINUTES

August 12, 2024, BOS minutes were approved unanimously. Ruth Armstrong motioned to approve; Barbara Trost seconded.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No persons wishing to speak were present

V. Approval of Appropriation of Funds from 2018-2021 Sound System at Harry J. McDonald Center

The Department presented Resolution 2024-05 for approval. Will Taygan submitted a motion to approve; Vice Chair Tise seconded. It was noted that this item was presented to Board Members via email. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of use of Additional Funds from Undesignated Project Fund to Batting Cages at Loretta French

The Department presented Resolution 2024-06 for approval. Vice Chair Tise submitted a motion to approve; Barbara Trost seconded. It was noted that this item was presented to Board Members via email. A spelling error in the agenda and resolution was noted. Will Taygan asked for more information about why the resolution was being presented. Jeff Urbanus clarified that the request was for additional funding for a project previously

approved by the BOS. It was clarified that the project would be completed this year. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

VII. Dates of Workshops for CIP Scoring and SAP CIP Projects Review

Kelly Jorgensen directed the Board's attention to capital improvement project (CIP) project list and proposed scoring criteria for project funding. The department's intention is that board members will take this information back to their community councils for discussion. At a date to be determined, the BOS will use that feedback and scoring criteria to determine which CIP projects will need be funded.

Some of the projects in this list have been approved in the past but have not moved forward. In many cases, the money that has been set aside may not be enough to complete the intended project. Part of the exercise of prioritizing these projects overlaps with the effort Kellie has been leading to clean up SAP CIP Project Funding.

Will Taygan remarked that he was not familiar with many projects on the list and was concerned about being able to speak informatively about all of these projects with his community council. He has concerns about exactly how this is supposed to work. Barbara shares some of Will's concerns. She does not have enough knowledge to speak about these projects with her community council.

Kellie offered that there is a Municipal Code requirement that Eagle River Chugiak Parks and Recreation have a multiyear capital plan. It is unclear to her whether this requirement is being followed. She stated that there is no current plan and it is unclear whether one ever existed. Her goal is to have a 6-year capital plan.

Ruth Armstrong requested the code reference and clarification about whether it applied to the Eagle River Chugiak Park Service Area specifically. There was a brief discussion about applicability between Ruth and Kellie Jorgensen. Mike Braniff said that the department would work on providing a definitive answer.

Stephen Romanelli asked whether the intent was to fund everything next year or whether projects could be identified as future funding needs.

Ruth Armstrong asked where did this scoring form and criteria come from. Kellie stated it was from other jurisdictions. Ruth some concerns that the Board is being presented the criteria to use without their input on its use. Kellie responded that that is why it is being presented.

Will appreciates the work that has been submitted. He offered that there are two ways of prioritizing projects in use. With an organization like AMATS, scoring/prioritizing is provided by staff scores and the board adjusts funding priorities. RTP works the other

way. The funding board scores potential projects. Will thinks the priorities should come from staff. He has concerns with some of the criteria; doesn't match some of stated goals of the board. i.e. fundraising, stewardship, improvement to public resources, recreation opportunities for public. Stephen requested follow up of Will's priorities by email. Will supports exploring a formal criterion that matches BOS informal criteria, this current proposal needs more work. Pauline offered that perhaps this is a good jumping off point. Kellie suggested October for a workshop date. Jeff Urbanus was asked if this timeline will work with project construction timelines. Jeff was asked to follow up with project descriptions to bring back to community councils. Will asked can we handle in two chunks, projects for next year and another chunk later. Pauline agreed. Barbara would support this.

Mike offered that building a 6-year plan is a work in progress. Jeff reminded the BOS that a 5-year CIP plan was submitted to the BOS last year and as part of that, it was always understood that it would be more fleshed out on the front end. Chair Romanelli confirmed that this 5-year plan was submitted.

Ruth provided a reminder that, without bonds being a reality, identifying projects and provided funding over time is a necessity.

Will observed that, subtracting the large indoor facility from the list (\$11 million), there is funding for all of the proposed projects.

Jeff will provide a description of projects; Kellie will provide information about how the proposed scoring was developed. BOS will follow up to set up date via email. Jeff suggested that in the future, maybe funding decisions can be done in summer to make it easier to design and construct projects.

VIII. Director's Update

Kellie referred the Board to their packet for more information about the update items. Boo at the Beach is a big part of the focus for operations. Winter Wonderland will be on December 6th. Staffing on the Operations side of the Department has been going well. A new Working Foreman has been hired. Some openings in Maintenance have been created by seasonal staff moving to open, permanent positions. These positions will need to be filled for snow removal, etc. are needed. The Recreation Specialist position will be coming shortly. Ruth asked for clarification about what the duties this position will have. This position will be focused on the recreation side: summer program, special events, etc.

Kellie is working on implementing Active Net for park permits.

Firehouse Lane Tennis Courts will have to be repaired. A sink hole developed beneath on of the courts. The hole was fixed earlier this summer but the problem has returned.

MacDonald Center cooling system computer needs to be replaced. It is an antiquated system at risk for failure. Pauline asked if the contractor would be filled by a local company. The MacDonald Center has provided one quote, two more are needed. There was a short discussion about the desire to have local support/service vs. MOA procurement rules. The elimination of sole service provisions is a barrier. This issue should be discussed in more detail at a future Board meeting.

Chugiak pool is just waiting on a construction date. Stephen requested that these dates be communicated to the public early. The project is being managed by facility maintenance. Kellie is working on a project with staff from Anchorage on a cleanup of SAP. There will be a workshop with the Board at a later date to present the results of this effort. Will requested that Karen be looped into this exercise. Kellie stated that she already has been involved.

In order to move forward with playground improvements, additional work will be needed to survey the condition of existing playground improvements and prioritize replacements.

Work is continuing related to renewal of the McDonald Center contract and the recent RFP. Discussions between FLAMI and the MOA are ongoing.

New soccer goals have been ordered for Oberg Field. A mix up related to the shipping quote has delayed their arrival.

The next BOS meeting will be on October 21, 2024 because of the MOA Holiday. There will be a similar conflict in November because of Veteran's Day.

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) has approached the department about applying for a grant for renewal of our flower beds and other planting areas. The grant seems promising; we will do more research and determine whether it makes sense to apply for funding next year. Will Taygan asked whether this grant requires a match or if this is something SCS will pay for. SCS will provide the funding.

Boo at the Beach will be on October 12th. There is a need for volunteers to help work the event.

The supplied packet includes most of the requested user group information. Information from a couple of groups is missing; the Department will update the provided information as they receive additional contact information.

Ruth Armstrong asked a follow question about how playground improvements will be prioritized. Kellie clarified that much of the playground infrastructure is old, is of similar age, and in many cases, no longer meets current safety standards. Kellie and Jeff have

taken the training courses to perform a qualified assessment. That work needs to be performed. Part of that assessment is determining risk level for keeping equipment in service. That will help determine priority for replacement. We will share the assessment findings with the Boards. Jeff clarified that when the original money was approved to develop a playground plan, we were unaware of the State of Play Report performed by Taylor Keegan of Anchorage Parks and Recreation. The work, while focused on Anchorage also included Eagle River/ Chugiak. The end result is that more money will be available for actual playground improvements. A conceptual design for Oberg Playground was completed this summer. Final design will be completed with a goal for construction next year.

Jeff Urbanus provided an update on the status of the ongoing 2024 Capital Projects:

- The Beach Lake Multiuse Trail is looking fantastic. It will be a great amenity for the community. Work is finishing on the new trail. Work will be complete for the year in October. New mushing trails will be open on October 15. There are great sightline improvements at the trail crossing. Funding decisions about future phases will need to be made this winter.
- The Mirror Lake Master Plan process is finishing up. There will be a public workshop this week to present the public review draft. The final plan will probably be before the Board in November.
- Mt. Baldy was delayed this year because we couldn't secure landscaping blocks for the retaining wall. AS&G could not provide the desired quantity. We will be constructing in 2025. This winter we will be working on a Public Use Easement to turn maintenance of the final road improvements over to CBERRRSA. Stephen Romanelli asked whether CBERRRSA is on board with this. Yes, they have been a partner on the project since the beginning.
- No new update on Peters Creek Dog Park.
- A couple of cleanup items remain on the Loretta French Scoreboard Project.
- The task to complete the Loretta French Batting Cages was issued today. That work will be completed this fall.
- Schroeder Park pickleball paint/surfacing has been shipped. Nets have been purchased. Final pavement prep will occur this week. Ruth Armstrong asked whether the final project will be tennis and pickleball. The department received strong feedback from the pickleball group that Schroeder Park should be pickleball only when the project is finished. Conversely, moving forward Firehouse will be tennis only. Kellie provided additional input that this issue was put out to the public and brought before the board previously. Jeff added that, the original orientation did not provide the ideal amount of space for four pickleball courts. The issue of what space should be dedicated for pickleball vs. tennis has been debated elsewhere in the MOA as well.
- No update for the status of Oberg Field Drainage repairs
- Mushing Staging/Parking Area Improvements will be completed this fall.

- Main Street Trail repairs will not be completed this fall. This project fell behind schedule due to the department's term engineering contract expiring in the middle of the construction season.
- 10-Mile Trail will need to be funded, designed, and permitted this fall/winter in order to meet the schedule required by the grant funding. Will expressed concerns about the scheduling of trail construction projects. Typically, this work is being bid by trail contractors now for next year.

No one from FLAMI was available for a MacDonald Center Update

IX. DISCUSSION

A member asked about whether there will be permanent nets at the new pickleball courts. Jeff Urbanus clarified that there will be nets in place at the new courts. They are not permanent in the sense that they are fixed but users will not have to bring their own nets.

Barbara Trost asked about the length of meeting minutes that would be required if the recordings were posted online. Such as the Anchorage Assembly. Mike Braniff said that you would need time stamp the recordings so that specific items can be found. Stephen noted that detailed notes are helpful when trying to research past items.

Assemblyman Mark Littlefield asked about the status of the repairs to the AV equipment in the meeting room. He noted that it is not being used for this meeting. Mark offered that he does not think scoring is needed because of the small number of projects compared to something like AMATS, with hundreds of projects. Kellie responded that she has submitted a work request for the room repairs. In her opinion, project decisions have not been transparent in the past. Projects were put on lists without all board members being aware. This is her proposed solution to make sure this does not occur moving forward. Mark requested a copy of the code that Kellie referenced earlier requiring capital project plans.

John Rodda noted that, for decades, project decisions about priorities and distribution were made internally, within the department and then presented to the Board and the community at large for their approval. In March of 2022 a great deal of time was spent cleaning up the project list with the intent of this being the foundation for moving forward. John asked about the funding amounts for the two Beach Lake Trail Projects. Beach Lake Multiuse - \$250K department/\$250K ARPA Grant; 10-Mile Trail - \$250K federal/state reimbursable grant with a 10% match. Lastly, John asked about the status of the FLAMI contract, he suggested that a financial reconciliation be required as part of contract negotiations to make future action by the Assembly easier. We need to be able to reconcile funds owed to each entity.

Ruth Armstrong had questions about the status of several pieces of Parks and Recreation equipment. Why has the loader not been replaced, particularly if a settlement check has

been issued? Why does Fleet have the check and not the Department? Mike Braniff and Kellie Jorgensen responded that the replacement process is being handled by Fleet Maintenance. This is typical process within the MOA.

Ruth requested information about the tree removal project at the Cook Inlet Archers Range and how this is being paid. Ruth wonders if the ARPA funds could be stretched further if a chipper was available at the department. It is Ruth's recollection that funding to purchase a chipper for Eagle River Parks and Recreation was approved by the Board. It is her understanding that that piece of equipment is now located in Anchorage. Stephen Romanelli offered that that this is his understanding as well. Kellie asked if Ruth was aware what year the Board took action. Kellie stated that no staff has ever mentioned a chipper to her in the past.

John Rodda asked about the schedule for the pool project. There is a narrow window for construction to avoid impact to the community, summer programs etc.

Stephen Romanelli asked Jeff if he could provide a summary of the capital projects similar to what was done last month. Jeff will provide that summary.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Stephen Romanelli asked for a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM


Stephen Romanelli, Chair

21-Oct-2024
Date


Mike Braniff, Director

10/21/24
Date