

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

Regular Meeting Minutes, Eagle River Community Room – December 9, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on December 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. Chair Stephen Romanelli called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Stephen Romanelli, South Fork Community Council
Pauline Tise, Eagle River Community Council
Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council
Ruth Armstrong, Eagle River Valley Community Council
Barbara Trost, Birchwood Community Council
Sarah Davenport, Mayoral Representative

Staff Present:

Mike Braniff
Jeffrey Urbanus
Karen Richards
Dan Hagarman

III. MINUTES

The November 18, 2024, BOS minutes were approved unanimously

IV. DIRECTOR's UPDATE

Winter Wonderland Event on the December 6th was a success. Parks and Recreation assists the Chamber of Commerce with the event each year. The MOA tree contractor was recently out at the archer's range completing beetle kill removal work. Staffing for the permanent and seasonal maintenance positions is nearly full, higher than it has been for a several years. The new skating area at Mirror Lake has been very popular this winter. Dan Hagarman stated that lifeguard staffing is also high. This will allow for some weekend programming at the pool. The Department has been partnering with ASD on the Kids Don't Float Program. Karen Richards stated that the pool construction project is expected to advertise in February. Barbara Trost asked Jeff Urbanus about the status of the safety-related signs on the new multiuse trail. All signs are in place.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A) FLAMI Update

The MacDonald Cetner hosted the Hocket Turkey Tournament just after Thanksgiving. Winterfest figure skating was held this past weekend. One-hundred twenty-one skaters came out for the event. The MAC participated in the Chamber's Merry Munch last week. There will be an upcoming holiday show for figure skating next Saturday. There are several big high school hockey games coming up. Final bids for the HVAC upgrade have been received and passed on to Parks and Recreation. Two bids were received, with one non-response. There is also a need to replace the doors and upgrade lighting. The doors were damaged by the earthquake in 2018, so there may be different sources of money to pay for that work. The plan is to postpone the lighting work and better assess the need and see what other money might be available to pay for the needed upgrades. Kelley Willet offered that she had received positive community feedback about the improvements at the front entrance.

B) Operating Budget to Date

Karen Richards distributed budget summary documents to the Board and provided a summary of the operating budget to date. The Department is on budget with an anticipated surplus of approximately 575K dollars. This amount is predominantly unspent labor from unfilled positions. Mike Braniff hopes that this information will be helpful to the Board in trying to determine the operating/capital budget split for the coming year. Karen mentioned that with many unfilled positions over the past several years there is some deferred maintenance work that will need to be completed. Stephen Romanelli asked whether the deferred maintenance was considered in the 2025 budget. Staff responded that a zero-change budget was presented to the Assembly. How much funding is needed on the operating side to go to things like deferred maintenance is a decision still to be made by the Board. Ruth Armstrong stated her belief that the department budget, even a zero-change budget needs to be presented to the Board before being presented to the Assembly. Staff responded that this is not how the budget process has operated in the past. The information presented to assembly in the fall at the beginning of the budget cycle is to initiate the municipal budget process. All the budgeting responsibilities laid out municipal code for the Board of Supervisors are still available for their action before the final numbers are given to OMB in March. Dan Traxinger presented the Department with a list of budget-related questions that he thought would be helpful to have answered by the next meeting. This information would aid the Board in their budget oversight role. Dan also requested that perhaps a budget workshop could be scheduled for after the new year. This would also help the Board in their decision-making process. As part of the discussion on this issue, Ruth Armstrong requested that the meeting minutes reflect that the Board recognizes and congratulates Karen Richard for thirty years of employment with the Municipality of Anchorage.

C) 2024 Capital Projects Update

No additional work has been completed on the 2024 Capital Projects. All construction has been completed for the season.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mirror Lake/Edmonds Lake Park Master Plan Approval

Lucy Wittlinger from Huddle presented the Board with the final public review draft of the Mirror Lake/Edmonds Lake Park Master Plan. This document had also previously been shared with the Board prior the tonight's meeting. Lucy delivered a presentation that summarized the process that was followed to create the completed draft plan. The presentation highlighted how input from solicited from the community, how that input was used to create the plan, and the opportunities the public had to comment on interim drafts of the plan. The next step after Board approval would be a public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Kelley Willet offered and motion to approve the draft plan. Barbara Trost seconded the motion. The Board adopted Eagle River Chugiak Parks and Recreation Board Resolution 2024-08, approving the draft Mirror Lake/Edmonds Lake Park Master Plan

B. 2025 Capital Project Approval

Kelley Willet requested at the outset of the discussion that the department identify projects that involve "use it or lose it funding." Jeff Urbanus identified the following projects as having time-sensitive needs in terms of funding or permitting: 10-Mile Mushing Trail, Oberg Playground, Mirror Lake Single Track 2025, and the completion of Phase 1 of the Mirror Lake Multiuse Trail. The Board discussed funding of these projects and the remainder of the projects on the list proposed 2025 list. Kelly Willet offered a motion to bifurcate the decision to fund the 2025 Capital Projects and to fund a portion of the proposed projects- 10-Mile Mushing Trail, Oberg Playground, Mirror Lake Single Track 2025, completion of Phase 1 of the Mirror Lake Multiuse Trail. This was seconded by Ruth Armstrong. A friendly amendment was offered by Sarah Davenport to include the Park Maintenance Equipment. The was accepted and approved. The amended motion was approved by the board.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Public Comments

John Rodda offered his opinion, that over the last couple of years, an accounting process has been in effect that is different than what was followed when he was director of Parks and Recreation. He believes that the Board needs a better understanding of the current budget and past accounting practices for the Board to make decisions about funding capital projects.

B. Board Discussion

The Board discussed possible dates for a budget work session. The department discussed possible conflicts with year-end reporting. Mike requested more information following this meeting about the specific information that will be helpful to the Board. It may be difficult to get all the requested information by January 6th , the potential workshop date, but the department will make that effort and try to supply as much information as possible by email ahead of time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Kelly Willet offered a motion to adjourn. Stephen Romanelli seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:06PM

Stephen Romanelli, Chair Date

Mike Braniff, Director Date