

EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Regular Meeting Minutes, Eagle River Community Room – January 13, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on January 13, 2025, at 6:36 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 December 2024 minutes were not available for approval. Pauline Tise motioned to table the approval of the December meeting minutes until February. Will Taygan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Rodda inquired about the Executive Session on BOS Agenda for this evening's meeting. The Board responded clarified that there will be a 15-minute executive session as part of the Old Business agenda item. A vote will take place and the rationale for the Executive Session will be discussed at that time.

Eleanor Harrington from Peters Creek stated that she loves the Mirror Lake Bike Park and is happy to have such a great amenity so close to home. She has an interest in learning more about how the Loretta French Park operates and how use of the facility use might be expanded. Several other members of the public also indicated that was why there were attending this meeting. They are all interesting in learning more about how park management and budget decisions are made. The Board clarified that the use of the horse park will be an agenda item for the February BOS meeting.

V. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mike Braniff noted the abnormal winter weather and the impacts on park operations. The new skating area at Mirror Lake continues to be popular. The process of reaching out to user groups for scheduling and permitting the use of park facilities has begun. Downed trees from recent windstorms are keeping the maintenance crew busy. Dan Hagarman had partnered with Fire Lake Elementary in an effort to try and give every student at the school the opportunity to learn to swim. Barbara Trost asked about the status of the vacant Deputy Director position. The Department is not actively recruiting currently for the position. The department is taking some time to assess what is the best structure moving forward.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Stephen Romanelli put forth a motion to change the order of the agenda, so that Old Business would follow New Business, the FLAMI Update would be moved to New Business, and the BOS Executive Session would be moved to Old Business. The motion was seconded by Pauline Tise and passed unanimously.

A. FLAMI Update

The Anchorage Assembly has approved the extension to the FLAMI contract for operation of the MacDonald Center. Live Barn will be installed in February. This will allow for the live streaming of events. The MAC has created a new membership program for homeschool families. The membership will have a monthly charge versus a per use, per head charge to use the facility. A new contractor is in place for the MAC webpage. Yoshiko Flanagan introduced Chloe Edmondson. Chloe is largely responsible for front desk daily operation.

VII. Old Business

A. BOS Executive Session

Will Taygan put forth a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss past accounting actions taken by the Department. The need for the Executive Session is because the discussion will involve the actions of specific individuals. The Board clarified to the public that no budget decisions will be made during the Executive Session. Pauline seconded the motion and the motion passed without objection. A fifteen-minute Executive Session commenced

B. Board Budget Discussion

Karen Richard provided a summary of the budget worksheets that the Department provided to the Board prior to the meeting. The worksheets outlined the history of Board project approvals that have occurred since 2022. The worksheets also outlined instances during the same timeframe when Board-approved projects were initiated from existing project accounts when the new projects had not yet been set up in the

SAP accounting system. The intent was to “pay back” the existing projects from the new project balance once it was created. There were several instances where this charge back never occurred, even though months or years had elapsed. There were two instances where the Department moved money from multiple Board-approved projects that were inactive and transferred those funds to either the Undesignated Project Fund or the Northwest ¼ SAP account. The intent by the Department was to clean-up and simplify existing SAP project balances but the Board should have been notified of these transfers. Pauline Tise offered a motion that acknowledged that incorrect budget transfers had occurred, clarified the Board’s request for budgeting practices moving forward, and presented a requested timeline to for the Department to make Board-initiated budget changes. The motion also offered a means to resolve the past project account transfers. After Board discussion, the motion was withdrawn because of how it addressed past budget transfers. In the alternative, after much discussion, the Board passed five resolutions to address past project balance transfers, BOS 2025-001, BOS 2025-002, BOS 2025-003, BOS 2025-004, and BOS 2025-005. Collectively, these resolutions create a setpoint for project funding decisions, moving forward

C. 2025 Capital Project Discussion

The Board discussed the remaining 2025 Capital Projects, ahead of the February meeting. No action was taken with respect to the projects. Specific projects discussed included the proposed Loretta French Park softball turf infield installation, Beach Lake Lodge repairs, and the CDMA grooming request.

D. Additional Board Discussion

Barabara Trost stated that she believes that it is sometimes challenging when Board Members interface directly with staff, rather than having Department communication involve all Board Members. Stephen Romanelli requested that all Board communication with the Department be through the Chair. Stephen also clarified that, per the Board bylaws, the Board will be drafting meeting agendas moving forward. Mike asked for clarification as to whether the Department can request items be added to the agenda. It was clarified that the Department will have the ability to have items added to the agenda.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Stephen Romanelli adjourned the meeting without objection at 8:58.

Stephen Romanelli, Chair

Date

Mike Braniff, Director

Date