

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

Regular Meeting Minutes, Eagle River Community Room – February 10, 2025

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on February 10, 2025, 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  
Kelly Willet, Chugiak Community Council  
Ruth Armstrong, Eagle River Valley Community Council  
Lexi Hill, Birchwood Community Council  
Sarah Davenport, Mayoral Representative

Staff Present:

Mike Braniff  
Jeffrey Urbanus  
Karen Richards  
Dan Hagarman

**III. AGENDA**

The meeting agenda was approved without objection with a modification to include a discussion of the Loretta French Horse Park

**IV. MINUTES**

Lexi Hill noted that there were several grammatical errors in the January meeting minutes. A motion to adopt the amended minutes was adopted without objection

**V. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Jeff Urbanus has been appointed Acting Deputy Director. Mike Braniff stated that he feels that it is important to have a person from the community serve in this capacity. Jeff should fit well in this role.

Dan Traxinger's and Pauline Tise's nominations to serve on this board are scheduled to go before the Assembly on February 11<sup>th</sup>.

A variety of maintenance positions with the Department currently open. The Department is still working on replacement of the loader and purchasing a skid steer. Particular focus has been directed at government surplus/purchasing network such as Sourcewell.

The pool will hopefully go out to bid at the end of the month. The anticipated period of construction is November to May. The pool just completed a successful Kids Don't Float Program with Fire Lake Elementary. The pool anticipates being able to offer swim lessons starting next month. This is after a several year hiatus and starting them back up should be very well received by the community.

Weather conditions have returned to somewhat normal, allowing the Mirror Lake skating area to be used again. This has been very popular this winter. Windstorm cleanup is ongoing. There are many downed trees and limbs to cleanup throughout the parks, especially at Mirror Lake and Beach Lake.

## **VI. FLAMI UPDATE**

Ice hockey season is winding down. The MAC Attack Tournament will be held in March. Baseball teams are practicing on the turf. The MAC staff continues to work to finalize the details of the new monthly pass for turf rentals

Yoshiko Flanagan and other MAC staff will be meeting with Eagle River Parks and Recreation to discuss the format and scope of the outstanding financial reports for the facility.

Two bids have been received for the replacement of the HVAC system. The software and hardware are very old and it is becoming difficult to service.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Approval of 2025 Capital Projects**

The deferred maintenance items that have been mentioned previously do not need to be addressed through the capital budget. Primarily, they reflect short staffing the last few years. Now that the size of the crew is closer to normal and with a working foreman to help direct work, the Department can address the backlog. Under the existing budget this work for this can be accomplished with operating funds. If a larger project requires capital funding, the Department will make a request to the Board.

The Board returned to the subject of the list of 2025 Capital Projects the Department presented in August. There was board member discussion about the amount of funding remaining from previous years as well as the funding that would become available for 2025. The Department identified three projects that would benefit from funding and starting now. The Board passed a resolution approving funding for three additional projects in 2025:

- Firehouse Lane Tennis Court Repairs - \$120,000

- Peters Creek Dog Park Construction - \$150,000
- Mushing Trail Grooming - \$15,000

Jeff presented the monthly financial report for capital project funding.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **A. Loretta French Horse Park**

Stacey Brown represented a group of local horse owners with questions about how the existing equestrian facilities at Loretta French Horse Park might be used more frequently. She requested that more information be made available on the ERC Parks and Recreation webpage. Horse owners have specific questions about online booking, insurance requirements, and fees. Jeff Urbanus offered to set up a meeting to have the opportunity discuss and questions or concerns in detail. Stacey will reach out to Jeff.

### **B. Turf Infield for Loretta French Softball Fields**

Dan Traxinger from Arctic Heat Softball led off discussion of this issue with making note of the softball club's past contributions to improvements to these fields. These contributions have been in the form of both volunteer labor, as well as financial. Dan summarized past presentations to the BOS and local community councils. There was discussion of the parallel funding request to the Alaska State Legislature. A motion was put forth to fund artificial turf installation on Loretta French Fields 1 and 2 in the amount of \$1,000,000. The motion was adopted by the Board without objection.

## **IX. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

The Board discussed the status of several potential future projects including, Gorsuch Road Improvements, Mirror Lake Toilet Repairs, Mac Donald Center Repairs, and the new Maintenance Building. The Department will continue to develop scope and return to the Board with a funding request if these projects progress to the point where they seem feasible to implement. This was an additional item of discussion about whether existing models for trailhead improvements - such as the planned improvements in Mt. Baldy or what is being done on the Anchorage Hillside could be used to address trailhead concerns in South Fork Eagle River Valley.

The Board asked for additional clarification on the status of the chipper. As was the original intent, now that the CARES Act Funding has expired the chipper is permanently located in Eagle River and is being used by the maintenance crew during the ongoing windstorm clean up.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Stephen Romanelli adjourned the meeting without objection at 8:33.

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Stephen Romanelli, Chair

Date

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Jeffrey Urbanus, Acting Deputy Director

Date