

EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS & RECREATION

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Regular Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/ Chugiak Parks & Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on July 13, 2020 at 7:14 p.m. at 12001 Business Blvd, Suite 170, Eagle River, Alaska. Chair Brian Fay called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Brian Fay, Mayor's appointee
Ms. Alexandra Hill, Birchwood Community Council
Mr. Josh Ream, South Fork Community Council
Mr. Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council
Ms. Camilla Hussein, Eagle River Community Council
Mr. Pete Panarese, Eagle River Valley Community Council

Karen Richards, Manager
Tanya Iskra, Administrative Officer
Josh Durand, Parks and Recreation Director (via computer - micro soft teams)

III. MINUTES

The June 2020 minutes were approved as corrected.

IV. APPEARANCES - (none)

A.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Harry J McDonald Center – Update
Finis Sheldon is here to talk about a new PA system at the McDonald Center. He has been working to raise funds. The current system is 34 years old and you can't understand anything that's said over it. He raised \$18,000 which was the amount that IMIG had originally bid; they have now raised their bid to \$28,000. Finis talked to Reid today, who thinks that he has the funds available to add the needed funds. Brian expresses our appreciation for Finis' efforts and expresses confidence that we'll be able to move forward. Jamie Allard has comments: her concern is bringing the MOA into the issue, which would give the MOA some say over the Center. She isn't happy with Parks & Rec communication with the community and she thinks we're making it difficult. Brian explains that the Muni involvement is necessary because the Mac Center belongs to the Muni and we're responsible for it. Many aspects have to follow Muni processes and some need Assembly approval. Karen explains her role in making sure the system will work, quotes are properly obtained, etc., etc.
Karen fills us in on her conversations with Reid. She's asked him for the Brenda Rogers estate donation paperwork; he let her know that he was planning on using part of the bequest that they had received. Karen is concerned about the legal aspects of the gift, and whether it was to Fire Lake Arena Management, Inc., (the private nonprofit that has a contract with the Muni to operate the McDonald Center) or to the Mac Center itself (and thus the Muni); and she also needs to know what restrictions might apply to bequest expenditures.

B. Park/Trail Oversight – Update.

Homestead Park encroachment issue– We can't put a fence up right now due to lack of local supplies – only barbed wire is available. Karen wants the fence up before making any test holes to see if there is contamination. Josh Durand notes that aside from the risk issues around barbed wire, they are extremely bad optics. Pete suggests that we might prefer to just get rid of this property– it's not usable as a park. Brian explains to Josh D that the big headache with this park is around enforcement (problems that he thinks Josh is aware of). Josh D explains that with code enforcement, instead of the police showing up it becomes a legal battle. And parks don't fall under the purview of Code Enforcement. He recalls one case on the coastal trail that Conde Enforcement helped with, but the issue still had to go through the courts. He also notes that if we wanted to sell it, we wouldn't give it to HLB, but would ask them to sell it for us. Brian responds that when park staff try to enforce, they are abused, which they shouldn't have to deal with. For things like fires, police theoretically respond, but they also triage to decide what's most important to respond to. Brian notes that our problem seems to be that parks fall outside code enforcement, and it might make sense to ask the Assembly to change that. Josh D agrees, but also notes that IGCs would apply. Will asks about having CCs send resolutions; Josh notes that it might be more effective for him to approach assembly members and see if one of them would take it on.

Firehouse Lane: Karen has issued a permit to the pickleball folks for Firehouse Lane tennis courts; they are not at Schroeder because those courts need some work – but eventually they will move there.

Bear Paw contacted Karen today. They hope to hold the festival over Labor Day weekend; the plan is to spread out across a several block area, and only Golden Wheel would be in the park. Golden Wheel has a COVID plan. This seems feasible now, but as we move forward, we will continually reevaluate. September.

Mirror Lake: Karen has had several complaints that Mirror Lake users aren't practicing social distancing, and we should do something about it. Brian notes that he was there just after July 4 weekend, and saw Parks staff cleaning up –they had a lot to do. Brian asks Josh D if he has input on the role of parks in Covid-19. He does – parks are really important as a way to have connections while social distancing, and also to be outside and exercise. They have put safety reminders in the park.

C. FEMA / Quake repairs

The new Beach Lake dock is almost complete. We worked with TBC, and unfortunately, due to a design error, the dock landing at the driveway is 10" too high to meet ADA standards. The only way to fix it is to bring the driveway up; The quote that Karen has is \$50-\$75,000. She is working with Street maintenance to get a quote from them. Josh R asks if there is nothing we can do to enforce against the designer. Josh D wonders if TBC can develop a lower cost alternative. Karen did talk to Jacques, and his low cost alternative looked bad, and still cost \$45000. Josh D notes that he would have to look into the terms of the contract and what our options might be. Karen notes that she'll want Josh D's guidance before signing off on the project later this week. One small thing that could help is that Karen has savings in her operating budget that she could put towards this fix.

D. Parks & Rec Maintenance Storage Yard Site (Old Glenn)

hopefully we will be able to go to bid by the end of the year, for next year's build.

- E. Mt. Baldy Parking
Adding the width to the road for (properly done) angle parking would cost over \$300,000. We discuss that a better option is to go with their original plan, but simply not stripe it.
- F. Fire Lake Public Access
Jamie Allard has some concerns about Fire Lake. She asks about the jersey barriers. Karen lets her know that the gap is 20' wide. John had narrowed access in the fall; in the winter access is narrowed further to prevent motorized access; in the spring it's opened up again to its current 20'. Ms. Allard understands that there are several entities with jurisdiction. She's concerned that children are playing at the boat launch, and it should be signed to forbid this. She understands winter restrictions but doesn't think it should be narrowed in the summer. She thinks we shouldn't have barriers up unless we've followed a process through the community council to request barriers. Brian explains how our responsibilities to manage the park include putting up barriers and managing access. Also, he notes that the issue arose with the change in management and was an issue we hadn't dealt with before. Josh Durand weighs in. It's a state-owned lake, but there's a memo that puts management authority on parks and rec for many state-owned lakes in the municipality. Josh believes there was a public safety issue around the boat launch. The launch is not Parks property, it's a street R-O-W. When the safety issue was identified, John and Street Maintenance identified the jersey barriers as one solution. Josh D. sees now that there was not a good process, which we should initiate at this point. Jamie asks Will about the other access – he notes that it's undeveloped and is currently used as someone's yard. If we can't agree on how to fix the current access, we would have to go to the legal access, which would be much more intrusive. Josh weighs in that we should consider that other access. An alternate access might help with the safety mitigation, giving access to children and others at a different spot. We discuss how to generate options and different possibilities for moving forward.
- G. Carrol Creek Property Development:
We have not heard anything new – Karen will try to have an update for the next meeting.


VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. NW Quarter.
Lexi asks staff to verify the status of the NW quarter of Section 25 – is it dedicated park land?
- B. CIP Project List
Brian asks Josh D to explain how the funds to be used for design services were almost exhausted without Eagle River Parks and Recreation being able to use the portion that we had requested for our projects. Josh D explains that when they put the term contract out, they used past years' experience to determine the amount. But there was a lot of work, and also the funds were split between two firms, so it was almost all spent before our projects got in the queue. At the moment, we do have access to TBC through their contract with AWWU, which still has \$600,000 capacity. And Muni is working on establishing a new contract. Next year's contract will have a higher capacity. Brian is concerned because we missed out on projects because of lack of access to the engineering services that occurred because Anchorage used all the capacity.

C. Dog Park

Camilla reports that the Eagle River Community council is asking us to develop a dog park within walking access of Eagle River, - perhaps at Schroeder Park? Brian reminds us that if AWWU does the work that they were planning, that would affect the lower part of the park, perhaps making it unusable for the current Frisbee golf course. If that is the case, perhaps that part could be remade into a dog park. We could also consider Firehouse lane as a second park. Josh R reminds us that we had decided to move forward with Peters Creek park, since the downtown Eagle River ideas had such controversy. He wants to be sure we're still talking about moving forward with Peters Creek Park first, which Karen confirms. The board is interested in moving forward if we can.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Brian Fay, Chair

9-14-2020

Date



Karen Richards, Manager

9-14-2020

Date