

EAGLE RIVER/CHUGIAK PARKS & RECREATION
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Regular Meeting Minutes – October 12, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/ Chugiak Parks & Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on October 12, 2020 at 7:05 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 (via internet)
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 internet)

III. MINUTES

The September minutes were approved.

IV. APPEARANCES - (none)

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Harry J McDonald Center – Tony Boneta and Pat McCormick speak about contract. Reid McDonald resigned as of Sep 19th. They have hired a new manager, Steve McSwain. He has managed the Palmer Ice rink for 15 years; has a related degree and an (old) recommendation letter from Harry McDonald. He is a hockey guy, but also a recreational guy. Second, they have requested another 5-year sole source contract from the Municipality. With only one year left on the contract, it was difficult to recruit a good pool, but they got lucky. Updates (1) Audit – 2019 is closed out, Karen has the report and a check for about \$16,000 (the profit); and the audit had no findings. On the (2) Brenda Rogers donation – they got about \$84,000 from her estate. All they were told was that she had left had left 1/13 of her estate to the Fire Lake Arena Management Board. While it came to the board, they are committed to using it for the good of the arena. They like having some financial ability to do things for which the city doesn't have funds. (3) Loan – they did borrow \$84,000 from the CARES act PPL program. The portal is not open for them to confirm how much will be forgiven. They are pretty confident of being forgiven \$60-64,000, and the money is there to pay back the rest. Right now, they are about \$47-48,000 below where they should be because of the closure in March & April. They were open in the summer, but that's a money-losing period anyway. He believes that with the PPL money (with expected forgiveness) will bring the budget to break-even or slightly profitable, depending on events. For example

ASD is delaying 10 days, which will take \$10,000 out of this year (but put it back in next year). Brian asks Josh D. about the management of the other arenas. The Administration is looking at other similar agreements, and is considering extending them another year. Lexi notes that we'd like to meet the new manager once he gets settled. He starts November 5th, so could perhaps come to our December meeting. Brian asks if Steve is a numbers guy, good with budgets, and non-ice facilities. We will let him speak to that. Brian has some concerns still about the Brenda Rogers bequest, and that the two boards haven't always agreed. Pat says he believes we should always be able to get to agreement. Lexi notes that even when they are spending their own money, if they are making changes to the facility, because it's a municipal facility, they need to follow municipal policies. Karen elaborates with an example. Brian has one more item –their Articles of Incorporation listed Reid as contact point, and they may want to fix that. Karen reports on the sound system. The engineer is reviewing the amplifiers. We know they need replacement. The engineer notes that putting great equipment in will still sound bad because the surfaces are not designed for good acoustics. He will bring back information on what we would need to do to get a system that works. He also looked at the bids, and they are not consistent with each other, but there will be an opportunity to bid again once the specs are complete and the project goes out to bid. Karen has no idea how much the final bids will be. He is also fast-tracking the 480V power supply (needed for the new Zamboni). Karen also went to facility maintenance about earthquake repairs that were never accomplished. They will prioritize it now and she should soon have a timeline and schedule for the work. Brian asks if anyone has been communicating with Finis about the money he raised; and where is it now? Tony B believes that he still has it. Karen thinks it's in the Eagle River Chamber bank account. Pat's last comment is that he hopes we won't look at this bequest as a first source, but only when there truly isn't money in the budget. Karen notes at the end of the meeting that looking at the materials provided tonight from the Mac Center, there is an after-audit report that is \$20,000 lower in profit than the original numbers. The original report was \$100,000 of profit (including \$80,000 of bequest), and the after-audit report was \$80,000 profit (so, after bequest, no profit).

B. Park/Trail Oversight – Update.

Tree cutting at Beach Lake – staff have been taking down beetle killed spruce in immediate proximity of facilities (and also a few birch trees that were dangerously weak). The birch we're using; the beetle kill is stacked in the parking lot at the lake opposite the lodge, and it's available for firewood. Josh D's woodcutting crew is doing it; they will be moving to other parks soon. Cares Act funding will pay for some contractors to work in more high profile areas as well. The new driveway asphalt is in – Karen has not done final inspection yet. We do not know the final price tag, but it will be \$70-\$80,000. They were welding on the extra bars on the dock last week, and hopefully all will be finished this coming week. Maeve had a person out last week from Veteran's Affairs, and we put him up at the lodge. He was assessing places for VA retreats. He loved his 3 days at the lodge and wants to hold events there in the future. We have not yet done the roof, nor have we straightened the deck sonotubes. Likely the bid for that will be issued this fall, for work next spring.

Lexi notes there may be an encroachment into the NW quarter near the end of Almdale, and some confusion on the boundary between the NW quarter and Eklutna property.

Firehouse Lane: Our vision for a dog park brought up much opposition, which included

concerns that there are no lights, no sidewalks, etc. But it turns out Street Maintenance will be upgrading Firehouse Lane with a sidewalk and lighting, which removes some of the safety issues. Pickle ballers are using the park and enjoying it; they will move to Schroeder Park once it is ready for them. Josh R notes that his community council heard about a complaint about brush clearing in that park. Karen had a crew clearing brush in there as periodic maintenance. When her crew started, one of the residents came out to physically block the work, and call everyone possible with complaints. Karen went out to listen to the complaints, and asked her to leave so the crew could continue. Josh D. had to be involved as well. However, the brush clearing was accomplished.

C. Cares Act Funding

Contracts are coming on line for beetle kill remediation; there's an additional \$1.5 million for Eagle River Nature Center and 2 smaller projects. Josh continues to present the singletrack project in Mirror Lake, and it's looking more likely. The plan is to put the money in Fund Balance so that we have all of 2021 to spend it. The budget is about \$150,000. Will notes that he just sent out information on the additive alternatives previously approved by the board (not for the parking area development, but other alternatives along the system). Josh R asks about the relationship is between Eagle River Nature Center and the Muni. Josh D notes that there is not much of a relationship– they got on the radar for this money through advocacy from a State Representative. At Will's community council, Crystal was asking the council to oppose the funding extension, but they did not. And now it's done.

D. FEMA / Quake repairs

There are two projects obligated for funding – Beach Lake dock and Town Square paver repairs. She hopes to get reimbursement, the amount of which depends on what FEMA approves/denies. We are still working on the slope issues at Loretta French, negotiating what's the least we can spend, to get them to obligate money. Hopefully street maintenance road repairs (McDonald Center Drive, Beach Lake Road, Mirror Lake boat launch access) will be obligated next..

E. Parks & Rec Maintenance Storage Yard Site (Old Glenn) Nothing new to report

F. Mt. Baldy Parking

Street Maintenance is considering if we can/should transfer management of the property from our jurisdiction to CBERRRSA's. If we did, they would take over the maintenance – just the road and parking area – which would protect any investments they make in the area. They would then be able to include it in their CIP plans. At this point it's just an idea that we're exploring. The question is – for future long-term use of that area, is it better for that to be managed by parks or street maintenance?

G. Chugiak Eagle River Cemetery

No update, other than that Will feels they have not listened to his site-specific input. It's his impression that they want to be near Hiland Mountain Correctional center. DoC is not thrilled with that idea.

H. Dog Park Nothing to report.

- I. Homestead Park Nothing to report.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Eklutna Request for Easement/Access to Mirror Lake Park.
We've been contacted by Eklutna because at the time of the trade that brought us Baldy access they were promised an easement through Mirror Lake to access their property on the Inlet side of the Park. They are working on that now. Will asks if we have any negotiating power about anything other than the route. Our preferred route is just north of the ski trails (and creek). Brian notes that we need to review the language – easement, land swap, other requirements? Also, the cemetery group will be interested in this land, once there's a road. Josh R. asks what municipal processes get triggered by the development of a road, parking lot, etc. Josh D notes that much depends on the details of where wetlands exist, the impact of various developments, etc. Before we go too far on developing that part of the park, we'll want to do a master plan to balance the great undeveloped character of the park with facilities. Also he thinks we don't want to start by being too prescriptive – we want to listen.
- B. Eklutna Brownfield Program access via Kerbow Lane
Eklutna is letting us know they are using Kerbow Lane to access their adjacent land for test well sites. Karen's question is – once you open up that area, how will you prevent general access? She is also having Street maintenance look at it to make sure there is no conflict.
- C. Real Estate Services Land Disposals
There is a plot adjacent to Chugach State Park in Chugiak that HLB is considering selling, and has asked departments if they have comments/concerns. The lot is too steep for a parking lot – it's value is as an access to CSP. We discuss the pros and cons and whether it would actually sell for the suggested price – whether it could sell with a trail easement; whether sale could be delayed. Josh R thinks it might be worth coordinating with the CSP superintendent. He wonders if the board would like to take a formal position. Pete thinks the need for access is a major issue for our area, but probably can't be dealt with tonight.
- D. 2021 Recreational Trails Grant Proposal – Eagle River Nature Center
Pete would like us to support a letter of support for the 2021 Recreational trails proposal to fund \$49,000 for the Eagle River Nature Center. It would fund materials and labor to build a trail from the new parking area to the nature center with switchbacks and steps to reduce the grade, and also to repair bridges and boardwalks. ***Josh Ream makes a motion that the Eagle River/Chugiak Parks & Recreation Board of Supervisors supports the Eagle River Nature Center Recreational Trails Grant proposal for funds to assist with building a new trail from the parking lot to the Center, and repairing existing bridges and boardwalks. Camilla Hussein seconds. The motion passes, unanimously.***
- E. Hunting conflicts on park land
Brian is concerned about hunting conflicts on park land that are simply noted as 'hunnable' in ADF&G regulations. He asks Josh D if we can work with Fish and Game to revise how they express where hunting is allowed. Josh D. thinks perhaps we can.

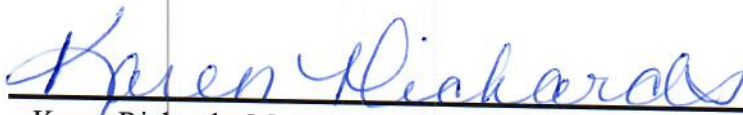
Brian notes that the app being recommended in the regulation identifies land as municipal, but not as a park.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.


Brian Fay, Chair

11-09-20

Date


Karen Richards, Manager

Date

11/9/20