

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

Regular Meeting Minutes – May 27,2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Eagle River/Chugiak Parks and Recreation (ERCP&R) Board of Supervisors convened on May 27, 2021 at 7:05 pm in person. Chair Pete Panarese called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Alexandra Hill, Birchwood Community Council
Mr. Josh Ream, South Fork Community Council
Mr. Will Taygan, Chugiak Community Council
Ms. Camilla Hussein-Scott, Eagle River Community Council
Mr. Pete Panarese, Eagle River Valley Community Council
Ms. Ruth Armstrong, Eagle River Valley Community Council Alternate
Ms. Jasmine Carter

Karen Richards, Manager
Tanya Iskra, Senior Officer
Josh Durand – Parks and Recreation Director

III. MINUTES

There are no previous minutes to review for the evening.

IV. APPEARANCES

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Dog Park Development

Maeve begins by honoring all military members before the Memorial Day Weekend. Since December she and her team have worked with ERCP&R and assessed historical information about a previous park study which resulted in no preferred site. There are now 2 preferred sites: Firehouse Lane and Peters Creek Park South Section. There have been people who are not particularly in favor of the Peters Creek site. Through Title 21 we are only required to do public process through the community council. There is a petition opposing the project. At this point Maeve has shared a draft memo explaining the project and the process and has shared draft resolutions and it is now in the boards hands of what to do moving forward. After a decision is made the next step would be working on the site design. A timeline has been updated, after design development starts it would be approx. a 6-month process. Karen states that at this point we have mitigated all concerns and at this point it belongs to the board.

Peter opens the floor to the public where individuals are allowed 3 minutes and groups 5 to voice any questions or concerns.

Karin McGrath: Raises concerns over the lack of knowledge the homeowners on Lace Rd. had about the dog park. She states that zero people were aware, and the survey had not reached or accurately represented them. She also raises questions about the parking lot gates being locked due to drug use and vandalism mentioned in previous minutes that occurs at Peters Creek Park. She asks if the dog part would be gated and if these issues would follow.

Amanda Adams: She is representing her property owner. She raises awareness on that there is no traffic study. She believes that this location is not ideal because of the overlap with Lace Road there are certain blind spots with road traffic. There is also school traffic that goes down Lace. Where the parking lots are suggested to go is where the snow is put by the city when shoveled as well as visitors park along the street. She states that the area is already cramped, and the Peters Creek may not be the best fit and believes that a traffic study should be warranted. She also points out the cost difference between Peters Creek and Firehouse Lane and suggests Loretta French as an alternative.

John Graham: John reads a letter written by Liz Shannon where she asks what the documented need for a dog park is. The dog park is not supported by the neighborhood. He brings up what Will Taygen at the Chugiak Community Council meeting that the need for the dog park was to justify revisions to the leash law. The neighborhood adjacent to the proposed Peters Creek Park site has a petition against the site. In his opinion Parks and Rec should defer action on the Peters Creek site today and allow the Chugiak Committee Council to properly acknowledge a more accurate assessment of the council members desire with regard to the site and reconsider all these trails from the animal control stance of Title 17.

Audrey Burke: Audrey wants to add onto Amanda's previous concerns in regard to the traffic issues. The intersection at the bottom of Lace Rd. is a bus stop where the kids then walk up the road. She states that there are many kids in elementary and middle school walking home and is concerned with the traffic.

Sharon Baldwin: She is in favor of the dog park and believes that we do need one and it would be a real asset to the community though she does understand the issues that have been raised at the meeting.

Amanda Adams reiterates that the neighborhood is not nefarious, it is nice and quiet. She also adds that the Peters Creek area would create a burden as a landlord as tenets are there for peace and quiet and are threatening to move out if the dog park with all the traffic and noise if put in place. She also states that a standard rider on insurance policies of landlords is breed restrictions and she could become personally liable if something

were to happen. John Graham suggests finding a neutral spot if both Eagle River and Chugiak do not want the dog park. He also asks why Chugiak cannot get out of a dog park, but Eagle River is able to and reiterates that no one was aware of any of the planning. Pete answers his question stating that perhaps they were not aware previously but that it is a process that is just getting formed and they are involved now. He uses the skateboard park that was moved to Loretta French as an example. He encourages the community to keep in mind that things are not finalized and are just getting going. John Graham asks if it could be put to a vote by the community council. Lexi states that they are able to work with their community council leadership but suggests learning as much as they can as the process moves forward. Jamie Allard states that she has known for about a year about the dog park and has heard it in the community council meetings and has been hearing a lot of positives about the dog park.

Peter thanks the public for their input and closes the floor for public discussion in order for the Board to discuss how they want to proceed with this matter and address some of the concerns that have been mentioned. He thinks that the use of this land is probably best suited for a dog park. Will appreciates what Amanda said about design issues but feels that it is very separated from the neighbors and as part of the design process the two need to be separated. He does want to find a situation where they can listen to both the neighbors and the largest community but believes Peters Creek is the best site option. Pete addresses the concern about drug use and states that the activity can be displaced by bringing the good users in to push out the folks who are just hanging out. He is concerned about the traffic problem that was mentioned. Josh R. mentions that when viewing the site there was a lot of leftover squatting and trash and the property is not being used as its intended to as a public asset and no matter what would like to see the parcel cleaned up. He asks if the Chugiak Community Council had the opportunity to formally take action. Karen state that yes and no and that they have had this on the agenda for years and the community is not using the avenues available to them to work through the process.

Will states that he added to the comment on Maeve's presentation there was no motion made or offered so the CCC proceeded forward to this meeting. He says that is has been published and has been out there, but it will be a long process with public involvement through all of those steps. Camilla says that the traffic issue did get her attention and moving forward they have to see if they can get the information, they need to address it effectively in order to move forward reasonably. Josh Ream asks how dog parks in Anchorage have affected local homeowner insurance policies and what the breed situation. Josh D. states that he is unaware of any impact in Anchorage as it relates to anyone's insurance policy. He says that the feedback is different in Anchorage than in Eagle River. He thinks that the biggest concern is safety, traffic, visibility, and the parking lot. He wonders if there is an opportunity to mitigate many of those concerns through development. Karen asks why the unsafe conditions have not been approached with the community council before. A member of the public states that those in the neighborhood know it is a problem area and drive more responsibly because of that but

the concern is of those that do not live in the area and not aware of the dangers. Karen makes suggestions such as safety signage or putting a lower speed limit may help mitigate some of these problems. Maeve points out that the potential outward positive effects could be a strong relationship between Parks and Rec and the neighborhood. She says that maybe the first step could be to connect the Old Glenn sidewalk from the North End of Peters Creek Park maybe we could get a sidewalk down Lace. Camilla asks if there a process to change the bus stop to somewhere safer. Karen says that would come up in the design phase and would be discussed with the School District.

Pete would like for the board to take some action to move things forward in terms of putting in the process to design and plan this facility with more detail to incorporate a lot of what the public has given. He would like to focus on the board activity and see if they would like to entertain a motion on how they should proceed. Lexi moves that we move forward with further design of the Peters Creek dog park site focusing first on traffic and safety issues to be followed by a public meeting to present the results. The motion is then withdrawn. Will believes that the way to move forward into the design process is to pass this motion. He motions that the resolution 210-02 should be moved. Lexi thinks this resolution would be improved by adding that the study will focus first on traffic and safety and adding a public meeting for the process. Karen says she is not sure if the very first thing that is part of the design process could be a traffic study. Lexi puts in a request for a friendly amendment to focus on the safety issues. Josh R. would support the amendment. He does ask how the timeline aligns if this is moved to the front of the process. Maeve says that a traffic study is possible, but it would change the process. Lexi's friendly amendment "the board intends that safe access be a priority in the process". Will would like to get the recommendation from park staff on wording. The motion is seconded, and it is noted that with the amendment the cost will be a little more. Will approves the friendly amendment, and the motion passes unanimously.

Josh R. thanks the public for their input and encourages them to join other community council meetings. Lexi encourages the public to find someone who can inform and share agendas with them and make the community council a priority so that word can get out to members better.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Pete suggests that the Board considers doing a summer recess and he would entertain a motion to that effect. Josh R. likes the summer meetings but wishes to confirm with Karen that there are no needs at the Parks Department have for the Board in the summer. Karen says that not at the time, but they could call a meeting if something were to come up. A motion is made to take June off. The motion passes unanimously.
- B. American Rescue Plan Funding
Josh Durand discusses the funding that is coming to the municipality and some things that are important to Eagle River and Chugiak is beetle kill. We have \$3.5 million and

have until 2024 for it to be spent. They will be sending troops up to Alaska that will be contractors and will get a lot of people back to work and teaches new trades. There is also a permit relief program for public events outdoors in the parks. Parks and Rec will do their best to give a discount and have a program with \$800,000 to help entities, non-profits, races etc.

C. Harry J McDonald Center


Miss Allard got \$200,000 for the McDonald Center which will be beneficial for the facility. Josh R asks the chairman to lean a little bit more to the McDonald centers financial situation since the last meeting. He would also like to know in applying for the PPP loan is there any involvement that this board has in that process. Karen says that the PPP loan process has been done strictly through FLAMI. The money is separated and doesn't match physical dollars. The additional subsidiary is not needed due to the two PPP loans. They still have \$80,000 donation. Karen did meet with Steve recently to talk about programs for the turn. The sound system is in and was considerably more than previously thought. Karen is trying to get them back to meet with the board to explain their intent with the funding. The contract expires in December and will have to be discussed in the future.

VII. TABLED ITEMS

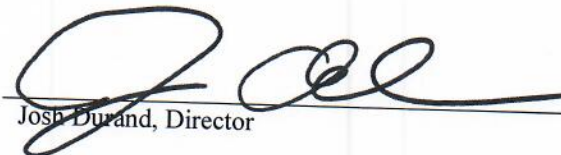
- A. MT. Baldy Parking
- B. Chugiak/Eagle River Cemetery
- C. AMATS Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.


Pete Panarese, Chair

8-6-2021
Date


Josh Durand, Director

7/12/2021
Date