



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

REGULAR MEETING

April 9, 2009 Minutes



I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2009, at the Spenard Recreation Center.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call taken by Director Jeff Dillon

Commissioners Present:

Chairperson Kathleen Plunkett
Commissioner Allyson Beischer
Commissioner Zareena Clendaniel
Commissioner Peter Crosby
Commissioner Dan Frank
Commissioner Meagan Krupa
Commissioner Eric McCallum
Commissioner Victor Mollozzi
Commissioner David Wigglesworth

Commissioners Excused:

Commissioner Tim Benintendi
Commissioner Sara Boario

Staff Present

Beth Nordlund, Deputy Director
Holly Spoth-Torres
Joseph Gallagher
Chris Conlon
Diana Cramer

III. Consent Agenda

No changes to the Agenda or the Minutes of the March 2009 were recommended. Commissioner McCallum moved to approve the Consent Agenda and March 2009 minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Mollozzi
Motion to approve passed unanimously.

IV. Director's Comments

Director Jeff Dillon congratulated Commissioner Plunkett on her election to the Anchorage School Board. He then discussed the failure of the bonds proposition in the municipal election, the changes in the administration the Department is facing, and the park construction project season. Mr. Dillon then turned the meeting over to Deputy Director Nordlund.

V. Information Items

A. PRC 09-17 Section 36 Master Plan Update

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Development & Natural Resources Manager, gave an update on the Section 36 Master Plan. Section 36 consists of 600 acres on the Hillside area of Anchorage. It is a sensitive, valuable natural resource, with scenic vistas and potential for outdoor education and trail-oriented recreation. A Master Plan needs to be completed before Heritage Land Bank will turn the property over to Parks & Recreation. A site inventory memo has been completed, two Citizens Advisory Committee meetings have been held including a group site walk-through, and stakeholder and content expert presentations have been scheduled that include Alaska State Parks, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, outdoor education specialists, and other agencies and park user groups. It is expected that there will be plans in place by this fall to take to the public for input.

B. PRC 09-18 FNNP Draft Trail Improvement Plan Project Presentation

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Development & Natural Resources Manager, and Kevin Doniere of Dowl Engineers gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Draft Trail Improvement Plan Project. They gave a thorough explanation of the process taken to arrive at the draft plan, information included in the plan, public comment that has been received to date, and a project time line. Deadline for written comments on the plan is April 29, 2009, and the plan is slated to be an Action Item at the May 2009 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting.

VI. Action Items

A. PRC 09-19 Trail Naming (Far North Bicentennial Park and Kincaid Park)

Michael Johnson from the Mayor's Office discussed the proposed naming of trails in Far North Bicentennial Park and Kincaid Park. The municipal naming process has been initiated to sanction the trail names historically used in the two parks. A 4-person panel has been created to provide a recommendation to the Assembly. A public meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room. Parks & Recreation staff recommends approval of a resolution supporting the naming of the trails.

Public Comment

This item was opened for public comment.

Janice Tower, representing Single Track Advocates (a challenge grant recipient), spoke in support of the trail naming and signage to be put in the parks.

Discussion then continued amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner Molozzi moved to approve Resolution 2009-19.

Commissioner Wigglesworth seconded the motion.

Motion to approve passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009- 19

In Support of Naming Certain Trails in Far North Bicentennial Park and Kincaid Park

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly and has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system for all residents of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission recognizes the importance of park naming to add meaning, significance, and uniformity to public places; to minimize conflict and lend continuity and a sense of community; and further recognizes that the selection of a name that is purposeful, suitable, and symbolic can generate opportunities for community impact, create sense of place, promote public relations, express appreciation, and educate, in addition to facilitating wayfinding; and

WHEREAS, trails in Far North Bicentennial Park and Kincaid Park have been built and used over many years by homesteaders and a variety of volunteers and trail users, forming complex trail systems serving many needs; and

WHEREAS, although some of the subject trails have been named through a formal naming process, other trails have names that exist by tradition, convention, and convenience and merit adoption on a permanent or long-term basis, and still other trails are newly constructed and are currently unnamed; and

WHEREAS, Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission finds that the proposed names, listed on the attached maps, convey an association with the surrounding area, history, or character, and therefore meet the appropriate criteria of the Municipal Code relating to historical, cultural, or geographical significance, and considering location, function, and natural features; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Parks and Recreation Commission supports the proposal to name, or reaffirm the name, as appropriate, of the subject trails, including seven new trails, as described in the attached maps, subject to clerical and cartographic editing.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th day of April, 2009.

B. PRC 09-20 Van Buren/48th Avenue Potential Land Swap

Commissioner Plunkett excused herself from commenting on or participating in any discussion on this Action Item or voting on that issue due to a potential conflict of interest stemming from her new position on the Anchorage School Board. The Chair

was turned over to Peter Crosby during the Commission's deliberation and consideration of this item.

Joseph Gallagher, Parks & Recreation Planner, and Aaron Christie, Dowl Engineers, gave a presentation regarding the Van Buren/48th Avenue potential land trade and the Van Buren Street/48th Avenue Circulation & Access Improvement Project. The purpose of the project is to improve safety for the Spenard neighborhood, as well as for two Parks & Recreation Department facilities in the area – Sisterhood Park and Spenard Recreation Center. Phase I of the project will create a new access road for shipping trucks accessing American Fast Freight, the Anchorage School District and Sourdough Express. Phase II seeks to alter Van Buren Street by eliminating its connection to American Freight and the southern bays of the School District facilities, which will improve safety and parking issues for both Spenard Recreation Center and Sisterhood Park. The land trade involves a 2.5 acre parcel owned by American Fast Freight that is adjacent to Northwood School and a 1.8 acre parcel of park land. Because the park land in questions, Sisterhood Park, is dedicated park land, approval of the land trade requires Assembly and voter approval. Parks & Recreation staff recommends approval of a resolution in support of the proposed land trade and in support for the project team in developing a Sisterhood Park site plan.

There was no public comment on this item.

After discussion amongst the Commissioners:

Commissioner Wigglesworth moved to approve Resolution 2009-13A.
Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion.
Motion to approve passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-13A
Proposed Land Exchange Involving Sisterhood Park for E. 48th
Avenue/Van Buren St. Upgrade

Whereas, the Municipality of Anchorage Project Management and Engineering Department proposes alterations to West 48th Avenue and Van Buren Street to improve traffic safety and circulation in the vicinity of Sisterhood Park, Northwood Elementary School, and certain businesses; and

Whereas, to facilitate the proposed road improvements the multiphase project proposes a land trade between the Municipality and an adjoining business known as Alaska Fast Freight; and

Whereas, the proposed land trade would give the Municipality approximately 2.5 acres of new park land and additional park improvements and amenities including replacement soccer field and new off-street parking facility, all of which would be incorporated into a new park site plan prepared as part of the project, in exchange for 1.8 acres of land within Sisterhood Park; and

Whereas, Sisterhood Park was dedicated for permanent or long-term park or recreation purposes under AO 84-199 and AO 90-71(S), and under Municipal Code and Charter conveyance of dedicated park land as proposed would require approval by the Municipal Assembly and by a majority of voters in a general election; and

Whereas, the Community Council and neighborhood support the proposed road improvements and associated land exchange; now, therefore:

THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION RESOLVES:

The Parks and Recreation Commission supports the proposed land exchange for the public purposes described above, subject to further planning and public review, and recommends that the Assembly adopt ordinance(s) to support the land exchange and to present on a ballot for approval by the eligible voters of Anchorage.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th Day of April, 2009.

VII. Staff Reports

A. PRC 09-21 Superintendents' Report

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Development & Natural Resources Manager, spoke briefly about her new role in that position and praised the Park Development & Natural Resources team.

Commissioners were referred to the Superintendents' Report for an update on park maintenance, horticulture and forestry.

Chris Conlon, Recreation Superintendent, reported on the current Activity Guide and the programs being offered by Parks & Recreation for the spring and summer, and the Department's focus on marketing those programs to the public.

B. Anchorage Park Foundation Report

Beth Nordlund, Deputy Director, reported on the neighborhood park improvement projects slated for this summer and about volunteer participation and funding for these projects. The Commissioners' involvement in these projects was requested. Ms. Nordlund also gave a status report on the Youth Employment in Parks Program was given and Ms. Nordlund asked for the Commissioners' participation in this program as mentors. Funding for the YEP programs was also discussed.

The Commissioners requested an overview of the Anchorage Park Foundation and its relationship to Anchorage Parks & Recreation and the Rasmuson Foundation, which Ms. Nordlund will provide at a meeting in the near future.

VIII. Appearance Requests

There were no appearance requests.

IX. Committee Reports

Commissioner Crosby reported on the status of the repairs and closure of Service and Bartlett High Schools. Repairs are underway.

X. Commissioner Comments

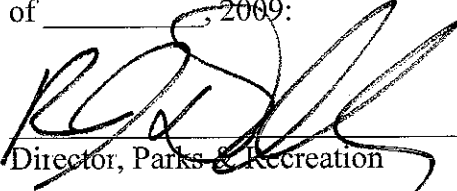
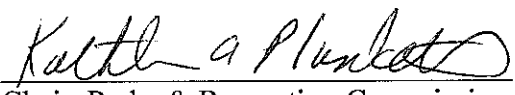
There were no commissioner comments.

XI. Next Commission meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m., May 14, 2009, at Lidia Selkregg Chalet. A Commission Tour of the Municipal Greenhouse will be held at 4:30 p.m. prior to the Commission meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this ___ day
of _____, 2009:

 _____ Director, Parks & Recreation	 _____ Chair, Parks & Recreation Commission
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