



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**January 8, 2009 Minutes**



**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2008 at Spenard Recreation Center.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Roll call taken by Director Dillon

**Commissioners Present:**

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

**Commissioners Excused:**

Commissioner Tim Benintendi  
Commissioner Dan Frank

**Staff Present**

Jeff Dillon, Department Director  
Tom Korosei  
Brad Dunker  
Diana Cramer

Director Dillon introduced the new Commissioner Meagan Krupa. Ms. Krupa is currently finishing her Ph.D. in Aquatic Ecology and Fisheries Biology at UAA.

### **III. Consent Agenda**

The Agenda and the Minutes of the December 2008 meeting were approved.

Motion by Commissioner Mollozzi

Seconded by Commissioner McCallum

### **IV. Director's Comments**

Director Dillon asked Aimee Wedemeier, Outdoor Recreation Coordinator, to speak about the Get Outdoors Program. Ms. Wedemeier described the Get Outdoors Program and gave a summary of the progress made in the program so far, including the Get Outdoors summit meeting held in December which was attended by municipal, state, federal, private, and non-profit organizations. With this initiative the hope is to implement programs and the ultimate goal is to reach the youth and young individuals in our community and encourage them to get outdoors, and hopefully to make that their second nature.

Director Dillon then described Parks & Recreation's summer camp partnership with Anchorage School District and the YEP program, and discussed other partnerships with Boys & Girls Club and Campfire.

### **V. Information Items**

#### **A. PRC 09-01 Section 36 Project Update**

Director Dillon provided an update on the Section 36 project. Section 36 is a 640-acre parcel of land just above Bear Valley Elementary School, almost contiguous with Storck Park. It is presently Heritage Land Bank land, but will be developed into additional parkland for the community. The planning process is just beginning. The Mayor has appointed a Park Advisory Group that will report to the Park Commission. Commissioner Mollozzi has agreed to serve on that advisory panel. As things proceed, Commissioner Mollozzi will keep the Commission informed of the progress.

#### **B. PRC 09-02 FNBP Draft Trail Improvement Plan Release**

Director Dillon discussed the FNBP trail improvement plan. The development process is now underway with Dowl Engineers. Holly Spoth-Torres is the project manager. She has been working with Dowl for the last 6 months doing trail inventories, looking at existing conditions, and evaluating the bridges. Their task is basically to take the existing master plan and develop a 5-year development plan consistent with that master plan. Director Dillon also discussed the success of the Single Track Trail development this past summer

**C. PRC 09-03      Ted Stevens International Airport–Runway 7R/25L  
Extension Project–Trail Alternatives**

Tom Korosei, Park Planner, discussed the airport runway extension project, specifically, trails that traverse the area and would be affected by the project. In addition to the two alternatives for the trails previously proposed, a third alternative for the trails has been proposed. This item is still under review and it is expected that it will be brought back to the Commission next month for a recommendation. Parks & Recreation has asked its consultant to look at the alternatives. Julianne Hanson, HDR, Inc., provided maps and drawings of the alternatives and discussed each in turn. Also presenting was Karlee Gaskill, Heritage Land Bank, who explained that one of Heritage Land Bank's concerns was the potential clearing of more land. The commissioners asked questions and discussed the alternatives with the presenters and it was noted that this item would be on the agenda again next month.

**VI.      Action Items**

**A. PRC 08-72 Russian Jack Springs Park – Park Improvement Plan**

Chair Plunkett explained that this item is a continuation of PRC 08-72, Russian Jack Springs Park Improvement Plan public comments. This is the second public comment period. The third and last public comment period will be held at next month's meeting to be held at the Anchorage School District. Thirteen individuals gave statements.

Public Comments:

Colleen Hickey, speaking as an individual, would like to see the park preserved and minimal clearing done for safety of the sledding hill.

Wayne Hall, speaking as an individual, tends to support the no action alternative, but also would like to see restoration of the habitat as it existed before the golf course.

Terry Cummings, speaking as an individual, opposes the alternative access road and the cutting of trees to improve the sledding hill. She opposes the driving range. She would like to see the park preserved for future generations.

Nickel LaFleur, speaking as an individual, opposes the cutting down of any trees and the building of an alternative access road.

Gordon Jones, speaking as an individual, stated that he opposes Alternative 4, supports Alternatives 2 or 3, and opposes building of a new access road.

With the permission of the Commission, Catharine Unger's statement was read into the record by Annette Cartier. Ms. Unger opposes the driving range, she appears to

support improvements and moderate changes to the existing golf course but not with a "scorched earth" mentality.

Mick Brogan, speaking as an individual, voiced his support for the First Tee Program and support for Alternative 4, though he conceded that Alternative 3 would offer some latitude for creation of the training area. The commissioners asked many questions of Mr. Brogan, about the program, funding, and the projected use of Russian Jack Park by their program.

Randi Binion Olsen, speaking on behalf of the Boys & Girls Club, gave strong support for the First Tee Program and the changes it proposes. She believes the children in her program would benefit greatly from the First Tee program, that the opportunity to participate in and learn something new is beneficial. The children who have already participated were enthusiastic about it and want to continue. First Tee offered scholarships to the children at Boys & Girls Club to pay for their participation. The children crave new experiences and are ready to try new things. The Boys & Girls Club also uses Russian Jack Springs Park extensively for field trips – sledding in winter, hiking and learning about nature in summer.

Ruth Fahl opposes the cutting of any trees, she stated ways to improve the golf course and the sledding hill without cutting trees must be found. Alternative 3 is a possibility, but with minimal tree cutting.

Edward Crandall, speaking as an individual, definitely opposes Alternative 4. He would possibly support Alternative 3. He believes there's enough cleared, open land in the area that should be looked at for a driving range.

Bill Bankston, speaking as an individual, supports the First Tee program and Alternative 4 with the driving range.

Charles Fahl supports Alternative 3, though he states if there is a driving range at Russian Jack he would use it.

David Evans, speaking as an individual, tends to support Alternative 2 or 3, and supports the safety of the sledding hill. He opposes a new access road.

Discussion then commenced among the Commissioners and Director Dillon regarding a work session on the Russian Jack project, including a review of First Tee's business plan. A work session will be held before the February 12 Commission Meeting. They also discussed the four alternatives and the possibility of a combination of those alternatives or different alternatives being chosen. The advisory role of the Commission and the Commission's process was explained and discussed. There was also discussion about First Tee's requirements for certification, the source of their funding, and First Tee's potential for

generating revenue. Another topic discussed was the amount of acreage in Russian Jack and the percentage of acreage already cleared.

## **VII. Staff Reports**

Director Dillon referenced the staff reports in the PRC packet and asked for questions. There were none. He also noted that there were two new employees in the Planning Department – Suzanne Little, a landscape architect, and Doug Lamkin, construction project manager. There was also an update and discussion regarding Delaney Park freeze project.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

There were no committee reports.

## **IX. Commissioner Comments**

There were no commissioner comments, though Commissioner Molozzi did ask Director Dillon for an update on the park bond. The park bond is expected to be heard by the Assembly on January 20, 2009.

## **X. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.