



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**



**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING**

March 10, 2016

**I. Call to Order**

The March 10, 2016 regular meeting of the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Jon Dyson at 6:00 p.m., at Spenard Recreation Center.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken by Josh Durand, Park Superintendent:

Commissioners present:

Commissioner James Balamaci  
Commissioner Jon Dyson  
Commissioner Michael McCambridge (telephonic)  
Commissioner Peter Murphy  
Commissioner Richard Mystrom  
Commissioner Levi Robinson  
Commissioner Alison Smith

Commissioners absent/excused:

Commissioner Harlow Robinson  
Commissioner James Winchester

A quorum was present.

Staff present:

Josh Durand  
Tom Korosei  
Steve Rafuse  
Maeve Nevins  
Diana Cramer

### **III. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Agenda**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Richard Mystrom and seconded by Commissioner Peter Murphy, the Agenda for the March 10, 2016 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

#### **B. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Peter Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Alison Smith, the Minutes of the February 15, 2016 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission were unanimously approved.

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

Josh Durand, Park Superintendent, spoke to the Commission about recent communications received from the public regarding the Community Garden Program. Current garden program participants were recently sent a letter from Parks & Recreation that purported to change the terms of the rental agreement between garden ploholders and the Municipality. The Department admits that it jumped the gun by making new management policies without any public process and thus decided to keep the present policy, as is. The Department intends to provide more active management of this year's program, and monitor the gardens closely. After the 2016 program ends, the Department will collect feedback from the public and, along with information gained from observation and management of this year's program, will draft a new management plan. The new policy will come before the Commission for more public input and for resolution by the Commission prior to its implementation.

The park construction project season is beginning and it looks to be a busy season.

Hot mopping is still continuing on the ice rinks.

### **V. Appearance Requests**

There were no public appearance requests for non-agenda items.

### **VI. Anchorage Park Foundation Report**

There was no report from the Anchorage Park Foundation presented.

## VII. Action Items

### A. PRC 16-06: Phase 1 Development of Muldoon Town Square Park PRC Resolution 2016-05

Presented by: Steve Rafuse, Park Planner

#### Presentation

Muldoon Town Square Park was recently dedicated as a Community Use Park. It is located in east Anchorage on the southeast corner of the intersection of Muldoon and DeBarr roads. The recently approved Master Plan identifies the community's priorities and provides a framework for future development. The development of Muldoon Town Square Park will occur in several phases over time, as funding becomes available.

Phase 1 will focus on development of the area of the park that fronts Muldoon Road. This area is highly visible and the project will provide an attractive, welcoming gateway for the park. It will also complement development in the Muldoon/DeBarr neighborhood and support the "town center" concept identified in the East Anchorage Plan. Included in this phase will be an all-inclusive playground, an event space for farmers' markets and events, a paved ribbon for skating in winter and children's bike riding in summer, open spaces, landscaping, a picnic pavilion, restrooms, and a parking lot. Although 39 parking spaces were planned, after a meeting with and input from other Municipal agencies the number of spaces was changed to 28.

Funding for Phase 1 comes from two state legislative grants totaling \$1.5 million. After the master plan process and administrative costs, \$1.2 million is available for construction. The design and engineering process has been fast tracked in order to capitalize on state funds that will expire in June 2016. Parks and Recreation wants to ensure that these funds are encumbered and under contract before that deadline.

Public involvement has been a continuation of the master plan process and includes meetings and communication with the Parks Committee, the Northeast Community Council, and the Mayor's office.

#### Department Recommendation

Development priorities for Phase 1 are based on public input gathered during the master planning process. All proposed developments meet or exceed Title 21 requirements. The Site Plan has been reviewed and is supported by the Parks Committee. Therefore, the Department recommends that the proposed resolution be passed by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

#### Public Appearance Requests

There were no public appearance requests for this action item.

Discussion and Resolution

After discussion, and upon motion duly made by Commissioner Jim Balamaci, and seconded by Commissioner Richard Mystrom, Resolution No. 2016-05, Muldoon Town Square Park Phase 1 Development, was unanimously approved as follows:

PRC RES NO. 2016-05  
Muldoon Town Square Park Phase 1 Development

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the recently completed Muldoon Town Square Park Master Plan identifies and prioritizes improvements for future development; and

WHEREAS, the improvements proposed for Phase 1 are based on community and stakeholder input and have been vetted by the Parks Advisory Committee through deliberation and consensus; and

WHEREAS, Phase 1 development will provide a mix of year-round activities, community event space and an attractive gateway to the park, complementing new development in the Muldoon/DeBarr area and supporting the "Town Center" concept identified in the East Anchorage District Plan; and

WHEREAS, Phase 1 development will include a destination "inclusive" playground, a parking lot with 39 spaces, community event space that can support the Muldoon Farmers Market and Spirit of Muldoon Picnic, flexible open space, a pavilion, restrooms, and a ribbon to be used for ice skating in the winter and a community event space and kiddie bike loop in the summer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the master plan submitted by the Department and the advisory group for Muldoon Town Square Park.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of March, 2016.

<u>Voting Record</u>	In favor	Commissioner Jim Balamaci	
		Commissioner Jon Dyson	
		Commissioner Michael McCambridge	
		Commissioner Peter Murphy	
		Commissioner Richard Mystrom	
		Commissioner Levi Robinson	
	Opposed	None	
		Abstained	None
		Absent	Commissioner Jim Winchester
			Commissioner Harlow Robinson

**B. PRC 16-07: Request to Name the Scenic Park Playground the Catherine Carte Playground at Scenic Park  
PRC Resolution 2016-06**

Presented by: Tom Korosej, Park Planner

Presentation

Catherine Carte is a former Scenic Foothills Community Council president and board member. In its resolution supporting naming of the playground, the Council states, "Catherine Carte served honorably on the Scenic Foothills community Council as president, board member, or parks committee member for nine years, generously giving of her time, talents, energy, and enthusiasm to help guide our community and improve the quality of life of our residents." This indicates that Ms. Carte has been an active support of Anchorage's parks and for neighborhood children.

Parks and Recreation staff notes that, consistent with the criteria provided under 3.97.025, this proposed naming applies only to one element of Scenic Park, and the park's name will not change. The playground currently has no unique historical or cultural name or name other than the park with which it is associated. The significance of Ms. Carte's contribution to the community is recognized by renaming the playground in her honor. Although the proposed name does not include a geographic, natural or geological feature as part of its name, Staff does not believe that in this case the proposed name would cause unreasonable loss of an identified that is desirable to assist the public in recognizing the location.

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends that the Commission pass the proposed resolution in support of naming the playground at Scenic Park the Catherine Carte Playground.

## Public Appearance Requests

Mark Hill, current President of the Scenic Foothills Community Council, provided details of and praised Ms. Carte's contributions to the Scenic Park community and the Municipality of Anchorage. He stated that the Council supports naming the playground in honor of Catherine Carte and has issued a resolution, which was provided to Commissioner's in their information packet, in support of naming the playground the Catherine Carte Playground.

## Discussion and Resolution

Commissioner Murphy discussed the process of naming a park facility, stating that past naming proposals of which he was aware came to the Commission after the Anchorage Assembly had appointed a Citizen Naming Panel and that panel then presented its proposal to the Commission. He was concerned because this proposal seems to be in reverse of the usual process, having not yet had a citizen panel appointed by the Assembly. Mr. Korosei, as well as Mark Hill of the Scenic Foothills Community Council and Josh Durand, stated that in this case, because renaming only involved part of a facility and not the entire park facility, the process here is in order. A resolution by the Commission will go to the Assembly at which time the Assembly can approve the renaming or appoint a naming panel to work a proposal.

After discussion, and upon motion duly made by Commissioner Alison Smith, and seconded by Commissioner Peter Murphy, Resolution No. 2016-06, Proposed Naming of a Public Facility Catherine Carte Playground, was unanimously approved as follows:

**PRC Resolution No. 2016-06**  
**Proposed Naming of a Public Facility Catherine Carte Playground**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, AMC Chapter 3.97 provides for naming of public facilities, in particular internal areas, fixtures, and features integral to public spaces, in honor of individual citizens identified as outstanding local, state, national, or international civic leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Scenic Foothills Community Council has recognized Catherine Carte for her voluntary service and leadership to the community including service as Community Council President and board member, and for her concern for children, access to, and importance of high-quality recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Scenic Foothills Community Council at its January 7, 2016, meeting voted in favor of the proposed naming of the playground at Scenic Park as the Catherine Carte Playground, in her honor; and

WHEREAS, members of the Anchorage Assembly also recognize the dedication and hard work of Ms. Carte in making facilities of Scenic Park available to the community, and request that the playground be named in her honor; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission acknowledges the above as testimony as to the extraordinary contributions of Ms. Carte, to the benefit of the citizens of Anchorage and its visitors; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that the Assembly name the playground at Scenic Park as Catherine Carte Playground.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of March, 2016.

<u>Voting Record</u>	In favor	Commissioner Jim Balamaci Commissioner Jon Dyson Commissioner Michael McCambridge Commissioner Peter Murphy Commissioner Richard Mystem Commissioner Levi Robinson Commissioner Alison Smith
	Opposed	None
	Abstained	None
	Absent	Commissioner Jim Winchester Commissioner Harlow Robinson

**C. PRC 16-08: 2016 Sitka Street Playground Improvement  
PRC Resolution 2016-07**

Presented by: Maeve Nevins, Park Planner

Sitka Street Park is a neighborhood park located between Merrill Field and Chester Creek, on land that is managed by Merrill Field Airport and permitted to Parks and

Recreation for use as a park. It has a picnic shelter, picnic tables, playground equipment, a sand volleyball court, lighting, parking lot, a sledding hill, and an open field.

In 2012 the Anchorage Park Foundation, the 2012 neighborhood park fix-it team, and Airport Heights Community Council worked to raise funds for additional pre-teen and teenage playground improvements at the Park. The original project intended for a skate park to be built but that project was never realized due to lack of funding. In an effort to realize the original goals of providing play equipment for youth, a climbing boulder is proposed.

In 2016 public outreach began with a presentation to Airport Heights Community Council, showing a conceptual design of various climbing boulders. A survey requesting input on the boulder concept was distributed to the community and neighboring homeowners associations. The majority of respondents were favored a natural looking climbing boulder. The concept was refined and again presented to the Council. The Eastridge III Homeowners Association requested the idea of installing adult fitness equipment be explored rather than the boulder. Both concepts were presented to the Council. After discussion, a vote was taken by the Council in favor of the boulder project by a vote for 16 for, none against, and two abstaining, and the Council approved moving forward with boulder concept B. The Eastridge III Homeowners Association and Fairview Community Council were contacted and invited to come to the Park Commission meeting on March 10, 2016 to give public testimony.

The plans of Merrill Field Airport have been considered. At this time the update to Merrill Field's master plan suggests that some airport lands should be leased commercially to generate revenue for airport operations. Those leased areas may include Sitka Street Park, in which case the park facilities would be relocated to other airport lands. The proposed boulder project has been shared with Merrill Field management and if the Commission supports the proposed resolution, staff will seek approval of this playground project by Merrill Field prior to installation. Staff feels that this project is an upgrade to the existing facility rather than a new amenity.

Contract work includes: purchase and installation of new playground climbing boulder; addition of expanded concrete edge for play area; and adding wood fiber fall surfacing.

Volunteer work includes a 2016 volunteer fix-it event to paint bollards around the parking lot and landscape improvements to existing garden beds.

### Recommendation

Because the Department believes that the plan to add the climbing boulder is consistent with objectives identified in the Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and recreation Facility Plan and supports the public process that was undertaken during development

of the plan, it recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission pass the proposed resolution supporting this playground improvement.

Public Appearance Requests

Barbara Karl, President of the Airport Heights Community Council, stated the Council's, and her personal, support of the climbing boulder project at Sitka Street Park.

Teri Penn, member of the Eastridge 1 Condo Association and Airport Community Council member-at-large, spoke in favor of installation of the climbing boulder at Sitka Street park.

Discussion and Resolution

After discussion, and upon motion duly made by Commissioner Peter Murphy, and seconded by Commissioner Jim Balamaci, Resolution No. 2016-07, Proposed Naming of a Public Facility Catherine Carte Playground, was unanimously approved as follows:

**PRC RES NO. 2016-07**  
**Sitka Street Playground Improvements**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation planning staff utilized input from Airport Heights Community Council to guide the improvement of the playground at Sitka Street Park; and

WHEREAS, Sitka Street Park is a large neighborhood park in Airport Heights with an established family activity area including a playground, sledding hill and picnic shelter; and

WHEREAS, there is currently inadequate play equipment for pre-teen and teenage youth in Sitka Street Park; and

WHEREAS, long-range objectives as listed under the first strategy for the *Community Vision and Goals* section in the *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility Plan* address the need to improve existing athletic and recreation facilities so they can sustain increase in activity through better design standards; and

WHEREAS, the improved playground as presented will provide a new climbing boulder playground upgrade and new wood fiber fall surfacing material to improve the park users experience;

WHEREAS, on February 18, 2016, the Airport Heights Community Council voted in support of a youth skate park at Sitka Street Park; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed design for the Playground Improvements at Sitka Street Park.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2016.

<u>Voting Record</u>	In favor	Commissioner Jim Balamaci Commissioner Jon Dyson Commissioner Michael McCambridge Commissioner Peter Murphy Commissioner Richard Mystrom Commissioner Levi Robinson Commissioner Alison Smith
	Opposed	None
	Abstained	None
	Absent	Commissioner Jim Winchester Commissioner Harlow Robinson

### **VIII. Information Items**

No information items were presented

### **IX. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Richard Mystrom complimented the Department on the benches that were installed at the Train Park on Delaney Park Strip.

Commissioner Peter Murphy stated that he has heard from people who use Kincaid Park stating the need to open the park earlier in the day to accommodate skiers who

like to ski early in the day. The present opening schedule does not accommodate those skiers, especially in snowless winters like our current winter where the only snow for skiing is at Kincaid. Mr. Durand will look into this matter.

**X. Upcoming Meeting**

The next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled to be held at 6:00 p.m., April 14, 2016, at the Spenard Recreation Center.

**XI. Adjournment**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Peter Murphy , seconded by Commissioner Levi Robinson, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2016:	
_____ Chair Parks & Recreation Commission	_____ Director Parks & Recreation