



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

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING**

**March 13, 2025**



The **March 13, 2025**, meeting was held in person at the Spenard Community Recreation Center

**CALL TO ORDER**

The **March 13, 2025**, regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Brian Looney at **6:02 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present:

- Commissioner Edwin Blair
- Commissioner Rob Earl
- Commissioner Brian Looney
- Commissioner Lilia Lundquist
- Commissioner GeorgeAnne Sprinkle
- Commissioner Scott Wamsganz

A quorum was achieved with **six** members present.

Staff present:

- Shanna Gamble
- Taylor Keegan
- Melanie Hess
- Tanya Hickok
- Nicolette Dent
- Stephan Stonerock
- Desiree Wilson
- Jennifer Mayer
- Ellen Devine

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Upon a motion duly made by **Commissioner Wamsganz** and seconded by **Commissioner Earl**, the Agenda for the March 13, 2025, meeting was unanimously approved.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion duly made by **Commissioner Blair** and seconded by **Commissioner Wamsganz** the Minutes of the February 13, 2025, meeting was unanimously approved.

## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Director's Comments section was provided by Taylor Keegan, Park Superintendent & Shanna Gamble, Acting Director

1. **Mike Braniff Resignation:** Shanna will be Acting Director
2. **Parks and Rec taking over Mountain View Recreation Center:** Used to be run by Boys and Girls Club. Will be run like Fairview and Spenard
3. **Shoulder Season:** Internal work
4. **Intro of new Admin staff:** Jennifer Mayer, Land Administrative Coordinator & Myranda Walso, Contract Administrator
5. **Project Approvals:** Mountain View with a focus on Davis Park, Richardson Vista Playground

## **ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION**

There was no Anchorage Park Foundation report

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**PRC 25-04: Nunaka Valley North**  
**PRC Resolution 2025-04**  
Presented by Melanie Hess

Melanie, Anchorage Parks and Recreation Park Planner, presented the Nunaka Valley North Park (NVN), playground, and athletic court upgrade. Acquired in 1974 5.4 acre neighborhood park. Proposed to add new equipment (some will stay that is in good condition) within existing footprint with accessible surfacing, add pickleball striping on two existing tennis courts (painting done by volunteers, paint paid for by parks an rec). Funding from SOA legislative grant and from voter approved bonds for inclusive play. Existing conditions: Large composite wood structure that has been partially decommissioned because it has been deemed unsafe. Had assessment in 2018 State of Play analysis of all playgrounds in Anchorage to see how inclusive and assessable

they are to people of varying abilities. NVN was assessed at a 4, which is the lowest. Started out with public online survey (Nov 24-Jan 25) , kicked off at Community Council. Proposals from 4 playground designers to stay in budget and footprint. Results of Survey outcome: overall preference Zip and Dip, Zipline, spinner, extend assessable surface to swings, and add port-a-potty. Concept presented at community council. The goal is to finish this summer.

## **Appearance Requests**

### **David Weber – NECC**

- Melanie did a great job collaborating with the community. NECC wanted to add an assessable swing chair, plant more trees. NECC has a visceral love for parks in the area. Project was very community involved, wants more rules of engagement for how want community involvement. STREaM Academy area parks and wants more participation to approve the parks in the area for STREaM Academy.

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Blair**, seconded by **Commissioner Wamsgaz**, and approved unanimously by commissioners present resolution PRC 25-04: Nunaka Valley North was passed.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **PRC 25-05: Report on Oulu and Helsinki Urbanism Master Class**

Presented by Nicolette Dent (Planner), Tanya Hickok (Civil Engineer & Planner), Desireé Wilson (Parks Foreman), Stephan Stonerock (Operations & Maintenance General Foreman)

Nicolette Dent, Anchorage Parks and Recreation Park Planner, along with a group that included someone from every aspects of planning, building, and maintaining trails went Cycling Superhighway in Finland.

Why: 1997 Areawide Trails Plan-Updating w/funding from AMATS (Federal Highway Admin) - Create modern guide on how we build, manage, and maintain trails in the MOA. Includes funding for update and training.

Plan Goals: Connectivity, Safety, Quality, Wellness, Variety of user groups

Training Overview: Internationally known for cycling superhighway design and similar to Alaska climate. Helsinki-Urban Oulu-Suburban (similar size to Anchorage)

Des: Oulu lives revolve around cycling, well-lit trails, multi-use (cycling and pedestrian only), world's largest underground bike parking next to train station, Rode on Baltic Sea. Ski trails are only ski trails. Maintain trails similar to us.

Cycling Superhighway Design (Tanya): 6.6m wide superhighways....about double ours. Two directional cycling lane. Lane width are based on traffic counts, typically located away from arterial roads. In Helsinki, they have grade separations between pedestrian and cycling lanes.

Winter Maintenance Process (Stephan): Summertime-Oulu is broken down into 10 zones; each has its own private contractor. In winter there is an 11<sup>th</sup> crew that maintains entire superhighway (6 maintenance routes, 6 drivers). 150 volunteers rate trail conditions and this directly informs contractor bonuses. Contractor is required to host public pop-up event for feedback. As well as the city. Trails are split into three classes: Super, 1. Class, 2. Class. Super is top priority and must be cleared within 3 hours once 2 cm snow and cannot exceed 4cm. All routes use carbonite front blade and snow blower, blade teeth provide traction. Did not ride fat bikes.

Takeaways for Anchorage Trails: How does this apply to Anchorage? Perfect time, in the midst of updating our trail plan. Think about where we need to widen our trails. Through our surveys and trail workshops we hear people are concerned about increased traffic, e-bike speeds, Westchester, Coastal Trail. Will be updating our trail classifications and trail design standards. We have the opportunity to see what a wider trail would look like in Anchorage. how our greenbelts need to evolve over the next 20 years to accommodate all users. Maybe try out new blades and see how users like it. Improving trails improves the health of residents.

## **NON-AGENDA APPEARANCE REQUESTS**

### **Emma Marsh – Self**

- New Diver Arctic Diving Club. Bartlett High School diving boards. Recruited to dive for West Point. Needs 1-meter and 3-meter boards to compete for diving scholarships. Wants to keep the 3-meter board. Needs equal time and access to facilities as swimmers. Please consider the diving community. Also wants to be able to host diving comps.

### **Commissioner Comments:**

- **Commissioner Lundquist: Have you been able to dive from 3-meter boards at Bartlett?**

Emma-I have not been able to dive the 3-meter boards at Bartlett.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

There were no commissioner comments.

## **UPCOMING MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at the Spenard Community Recreation Center.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Lundquist** seconded by **Commissioner Looney** and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at **7:32 p.m.**

MINUTES APPROVED this 10 day of APRIL, 2025:



Brian Looney, Chair  
Parks & Recreation Commission



ANDREW KASNING  
ACTING



Shanna Gamble, Acting Director  
Parks & Recreation