



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION



**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**

April 10, 2025

The **April 10, 2025**, meeting was held in person at the Spenard Community Recreation Center

CALL TO ORDER

The **April 10, 2025**, regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Acting Chair Andrew Kastning at **6:04 p.m.**

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

- Commissioner Andrew Kastning
- Commissioner Lilia Lundquist
- Commissioner GeorgeAnne Sprinkle
- Commissioner Mary Vollendorf
- Commissioner Scott Wamsganz

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

Staff present:

- Shanna Gamble
- Taylor Keegan
- Tanya Hickok
- Jennifer Mayer
- Ellen Devine

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion duly made by **Commissioner Vollendorf** and seconded by **Commissioner Wamsganz**, the Agenda for the April 10, 2025, meeting was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by **Commissioner Wamsganz** and seconded by **Commissioner Sprinkle** the Minutes of the March 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. Bond Passed-Biggest bond in recent history**
Fish Creek/Town Square Park
No Improvements 2025 (limbing for sight lines)
- 2. AK Summer Night Market w/Veg Fest/Biker buddies/Live at 5**
- 3. Recreation after school program big success-increase in attendance**
- 4. Moving into construction season**

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

Beth Nordlund-

20th year in service to Anchorage.

Highlights: Film Festival May 22 Bear Tooth /Chugach State Park, 4 Challenge grants from Rasmuson Foundation and APF, plus about 10 different Challenge grants with community match and can use volunteer time, Summer Project: 13 signs w/Indigenous place names, Celebration at Flat Top w/Southcentral Foundation End of June, Raised all money needed to raise for Taku Lake Playground, Park of Year Scenic Park, APF has \$2 Million grant with Forest Service 5 year grant...proceeding with caution in case it gets frozen, working with senators to support us.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old business

ACTION ITEMS

PRC 25-06: Downtown Connector Trail
PRC Resolution 2025-05
Presented by Tanya Hickok

The Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Downtown Connector Trail Project will connect the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail and the Ship Creek Trail in Downtown Anchorage to form a 14-mile continuous non-motorized, multi-use corridor. This over one-mile-long connection will complete the most high-profile missing

link identified in the Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan (1997) and is supported by the MOA Non-Motorized Plan. The Project will provide ADA compliant non-motorized access to the small boat harbor and maximize utility and safety. Construction anticipated to start in 2026.

The small boat harbor is not getting an overhaul in conjunction with the trail.

Most of the project is on land owned by Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC).

The project is planned to present to the ARRC Real Estate Committee on June 4th and the ARRC Board of Directors on June 25th.

Construction is planned for 2026.

MOA received funding from Federal Highway Administration through Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation and will be required to match 9.03%, which was approved by Anchorage voters with the Municipal Park Bond.

Commissioner Lundquist asked about the legality of public on the mudflats.

Taylor Keegan: We will not be directing any public to the mudflats.

Commissioner Wamsganz asked why not route close to parking lot instead of going down boat launch?

Tanya Hickock: To get people to where there are more culture items on the stretch of the boat launch.

Appearance Requests

None

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Sprinkle**, seconded by **Commissioner Lundquist**, and approved unanimously by commissioners present, resolution PRC 25-05: Downtown Connector Trail was passed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

PRC 25-07: CIP Presentation

Presented by Taylor Keegan

1. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Budget (CIB): We get a lot done with a little bond relative to other departments. Today we blend yesterday's strategies of spreading out capital improvement projects to engage voters, leverage outside funds with APF, grants, and AMATS, community engagement such as volunteers with PM&E's scoring matrix model to facilitate transparency and record need. Going forward the matrix will include not only our staff but also staff from APF and PM&E. Eleven categories for prioritization in the matrix include public support, external funding or partnerships, environmental impact, and severity of need to name a few. How to get on the scoring list? Community Council CIP survey, Challenge Grant application, Mayoral priority, Health, safety, welfare

issue, Park Improvement Proposal. New process, open to suggestions, progress relies on adaptation and participation.

2. State of Play: Evidence Based Strategies: Inspired by 2006 Park Plan, Inclusive Play Guide, evolved into The State of Play in the MOA: A Strategic Play for Inclusive Play in 2018. Goals: "We aim to have all community use playgrounds be inclusive, every community council have an inclusive playground, and all playgrounds rank a final park score of seven or below by 2030. Final park score formulated to rank parks in need of improvement. Many of the parks above 7 are on the CIP in the next five years. Completing Forsythe, Bob and Arlene Cross, Charles E. Smith, Carlson, and Taku Lake Park would qualify that every community council has an inclusive playground. These documents are not static; they grow and improve through iteration and insight.

PRC 25-08: Innovative Readiness Training Briefing

Presented by Mike Grunst- With Alaska Army National Guard, Chief of Protections from 2002-2012

Program Started in 1996 when President Clinton asked why are we training overseas building roads and bridges, why not US?

Built a road in Metlakatla 7.2 miles to prepare them for possible medical evacuation.

Gives opportunity to organizations to request military training on non-military land. 4

types of projects: Engineering (vertical and horizontal), medical (arctic care) and

veterinary, transportation projects (move stuff) w/ helicopter, etc., dive program

(underwater construction. Must start 18 months in advance, must be in US or territories,

not military land, can't compete with private sector. Can not do law enforcement, or

disaster response, but can-do recovery. Helps with training (soldiers from Lower 48 as

well), fulfilling. Does smaller projects as well. They provide personnel and equipment;

the customer provides materials and a venue. Partners with Non-Federal entities.

Purpose is to open a conversation to see how they can help us meet our

goals...building bridges, trails, etc.

PRC 25-09: Far North Bicentennial Park Shaded Fuel Breaks

Presented by Jon Glover w/Steve Mendive

Provide update on wildfire strategies. With onset of 2025 wildland season presents

unique opportunity to receive work from State of Alaska US Department of Forestry to fit

strategic plan within the MOA. Especially FNBP. This year work from Potter Valley to

Eagle River to work center mass and out, but this project focus is east west connector

from the curve at Abbot Road and Hillside Drive to Prospect Heights Trailhead. 3

primary fuel breaks they want to prioritize, Campbell Airstrip Road, Gasline, Abbot

Road. Decision making: Historically had fires, access challenging to fight fires, put

breaks adjacent to areas trying to protect and this is inline with State of Alaska

Department of Forestry. Hand treatment instead of mechanical, minimal ground

disturbance, timeline is tight. One of three firefighter crews in Alaska. May 5- May 24

Work to completion. Benefits: Trained wildland fire crew on location during wildfire season, offered SOA PIO, SOA is funding, saving us ¼ million dollars. Plan: hand-thin 200 feet in length, 20ft relief off property line, treat all live dead trees 6" in diameter will remove, larger than that they will prune up to 6-10ft.

Commissioner Sprinkle Concerned about invasive species. Is there a mitigation plan for that? Boot washer?

Program a retreatment every ten years, having a hand crew has less impact to kick up invasive species. They will only be in that area the whole time.

Working with homeowners with Firewise program to make sure they are following protocol.

NON-AGENDA APPEARANCE REQUESTS

None

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, May 8, 2025, at the Mann Leiser Memorial Greenhouse.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Wamsganz** seconded by **Commissioner Sprinkle** and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at **7:50 p.m.**

MINUTES APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025:

Brian Looney, Chair
Parks & Recreation Commission

Taylor Keegan, Acting Director
Parks & Recreation

