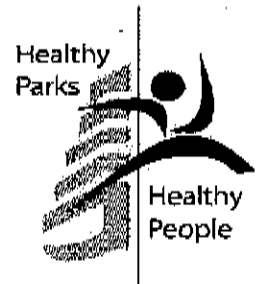




**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**

April 12, 2012



I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Acting Chair Peter Murphy at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 12, 2012, at Spenard Recreation Center.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners present:

Commissioner Marion Davis
Commissioner Jon Dyson
Commissioner Peter Murphy
Commissioner Richard Mystrom (appearing telephonically during Action Items)
Commissioner James Winchester

Commissioners excused/absent:

Commissioner Tim Benintendi
Commissioner Joey Caterinichio
Commissioner Carl Propes
Commissioner Harlow Robinson

A quorum was present.

Staff Present:

John Rodda
Holly Spoth-Torres
Chris Conlon
Tom Korosei
Diana Cramer

III. Consent Agenda

A. Agenda

The Agenda was rearranged to accommodate the late appearance of Commissioner Mystrom. Action Item PRC 12-12, Proposal to Designate Some Parks for Fireworks, was moved after the Information Items and before Staff Reports.

B. Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the March 8, 2012 Meeting was postponed to the May 10, 2012 meeting.

IV. Director's Comments

Parks & Recreation Director John Rodda stated that it appeared that Bond Proposition 3 passed pending certification of the election results.

Mr. Rodda reported that the Municipality's requests have been submitted to the State for inclusion in its capital budget. It is not known whether or not those requests will be approved.

Mr. Rodda also reported that after a long process, the Kincaid lead remediation project is now in its final phases. Remediation is complete; an agreement between the involved parties has been signed; and replacement turf has been ordered and is expected to be installed between June 15 and July 15, 2012.

Mr. Rodda reported that Jason Semler of Alaska State Snow-X Lions Club, who spoke to the Commission in February, has prepared a proposal for his organization to operate the Jodphur Motocross track in the winter months. Mr. Rodda will present Mr. Semler's proposal to the Commission at the May meeting.

The Alaska Soil & Water Conservation has requested a permit to use a 200 x 200 foot area at South Anchorage Sports Park for a wood lot. The area will be cleared and fenced. It will not impact or impede other uses in the park. More information and photographs will be provided to Commissioners in May.

V. Appearance Requests

Lance Powell, President of Mid-Hillside Community Council, spoke about the Council's concerns regarding ongoing encroachment into Far North Bicentennial Park at the Grendahl property located at 7720 Lodge Pole Court. Tom Korosei of Parks & Recreation responded that the Department has been in contact with the Grendahls

about this situation for several years with little success. Encroachment cases are now being handled by the Municipal Attorney's Office. The Grendahls have been given notice regarding the situation and resolution of this matter short of litigation will be attempted. Mr. Korosei also reported that the Municipal Code is being rewritten to allow Parks & Recreation more enforcement authority in these encroachment situations.

Katy Nolan of Huffman O'Malley Community Council also addressed the Commission on the subject of encroachment, specifically at the Rabbit Creek Park Greenbelt by the Dick property. Again, Mr. Korosei responded that the situation is now being handled by the Municipal Attorney's Office who will take appropriate steps to resolve matters.

VI. Anchorage Park Foundation

There was no report from the Anchorage Park Foundation.

VI. Information Items

A. PRC 12-17: Anchorage Trails Plan Update

Erika McConnell, Senior Planner for the Transportation Planning Section, reported on the Anchorage Trails Plan. The Municipality is embarking on developing the Anchorage Trails Plan, the third and final element of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Anchorage Trails Plan, which focuses on recreational trails and trail use, will replace the 1997 Areawide Trails Plan. Public meetings are scheduled as follows:

5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 26, 2012 at Wendler Middle School,
6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 1, 2012 at Spring Hill Elementary School,
5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 3, 2012 at Eagle River Town Center, and
5:30 p.m., Monday, May 7, 2012 at Girdwood Community Center.

Considerable public outreach has been conducted, including outreach to trail user groups through an Anchorage Trails Plan Survey. Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Superintendent, is on the planning team for this project. The Commission will be kept informed as this project progresses.

B. PRC 12-18: Chester Creek at Muldoon Creek Alignment

Russ Oswald, Project Manager, gave an overview of the Chester Creek Alignment project. Mr. Oswald reported that the plan is still being developed and all options are being considered. The plan will not move forward until the East Side District Plan has been finalized.

C. PRC 12-19: East Side District Plan

Thede Tobish, from the Long-Range Planning Section of Community Development, talked about the planning process for the East Anchorage District Plan (EADP) which began on March 5, 2012. The EADP is a vital plan that will bridge the gap between the vision and goals set forth in Anchorage 2020 and the implementation elements necessary to make that vision a reality. The Plan's purpose is to plan for population growth in East Anchorage and modify existing plans accordingly. An extensive public process will be undertaken. The first draft of the EADP is expected in about 10-12 months. The Commission will be kept apprised of developments.

D. PRC 12-20: Centennial Park Campground Improvement

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Superintendent, discussed the planned Centennial Park Campground improvement project. The purpose of the improvements is to make the campground more inviting to campers and tourists, thus bringing in more revenue for Parks & Recreation. It is anticipated that a contractor will eventually be hired to operate the campground for Parks & Recreation. Parks & Recreation staff will begin working with the community councils next month on this plan.

VII. Action Items

PRC 12-12: Proposal to Designate Some Parks for Fireworks

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Superintendent, presented resolution PRC 2012-02, revised pursuant to discussions on proposed Municipal Ordinance AO 2012-17 Regarding Fireworks in Certain Municipal Parks conducted at the Commission's March 2012 meeting. Commissioner Mystrom participated telephonically during the discussion and voting on this item. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Commission unanimously approved Resolution 2012-02 as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-02

AO 2012-17, Regarding Fireworks in Certain Municipal Park Areas

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 Anchorage Assembly is considering an ordinance to amend AMC 8.75.040, providing, among other things, for the annual designation of certain neighborhood park areas for discharge of lawful fireworks within a limited time period; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance potentially allows use of parks contrary to a number of current policies and rules promoting safe and responsible park use; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance includes provisions that pose potentially significant challenges for implementation and enforcement, and additional unknown effects on department operations as well as the community at a time when department resources for addressing adverse effects are limited; and

WHEREAS, current municipal code provides a procedure allowing the stated activity with reasonable controls; and

WHEREAS, this proposed ordinance would create unreasonable liability and safety concerns for park users and Anchorage residents; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that Assembly Ordinance 2012-17 not be adopted and that personal use fireworks not be allowed in Anchorage Parks without a permit.

PASSED AND APPROVED.

VIII. Staff Reports

A. Park Superintendent Report

Holly Spoth-Torres reported that 46 seasonal parks caretaker positions have been filled for Park Maintenance and 23 seasonal gardeners have been hired for Horticulture. This will give us an increased work force on the ground – the most seasonal employees that Parks & Recreation has had in many years. Interviews for the volunteer coordinator, the assistant park planner, and the senior planner positions are being conducted right now and it is hoped those positions will be filled in the very near future. Despite the fact that those positions are vacant, the summer park projects are ready to go. Work should begin soon on the Coastal Trail resurfacing and work on the new Cuddy Family Midtown Park playground will begin later in the summer. The baskets at the Disc Golf course at Westchester Lagoon will be taken down in the very near future, before park and trail usage begins to increase for the summer.

B. Recreation Superintendent Report

In addition to his written report provided to Commissioners, Chris Conlon, Recreation Superintendent, reported on activities in his division. Hiring for the Youth Employment in Parks program is underway; the field educator and crew leaders have been hired. The opening of the Russian Jack Springs Park golf course will be delayed this year due to the amount of snow still on the ground and the extremely wet conditions. Community garden plots are all rented and additional possible gardening sites are being investigated. Fairview Recreation Center staff received a community service award for their work with children in their neighborhood. The teen room at Spenard Recreation Center has been painted, has new carpet, and new furniture has been ordered.

IX. Upcoming Meeting


The next meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Thursday, May 10, 2012, at Spenard Recreation Center.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this 10 day of May, 2012:

ACTING


5/10/12
Chair
Parks & Recreation Commission
Peter Murphy

FOR 
Director
Parks & Recreation