



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**

April 8, 2010



CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Peter Crosby at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, April 8, 2010, at Spenard Recreation Center.

I. Roll Call

Roll call taken by John Rodda, Director of Parks & Recreation:

Commissioners Present:

Chair Peter Crosby
Commissioner Jon Dyson
Commissioner Dan Frank
Commissioner Michael Frederick
Commissioner Kathleen Plunkett
Commissioner Carl Propes
Commissioner Vito Ungaro
Commissioner David Wigglesworth

Commissioners Excused:

Commissioner Tim Benintendi
Commissioner Sara Boario
Commissioner Joey Caterinichio

There was a quorum.

Staff Present:

John Rodda
Holly Spoth-Torres
Chris Conlon
Elizabeth Stanley
Scott Stringer
Diana Cramer

II. Director's Comments

Director Rodda requested his comments be heard by the Commission as the first item on the Agenda as he had to attend another meeting this evening. Mr. Rodda thanked his staff and the Commission for its support during the reorganization of the department. He gave an overview of projects and activities of the Department, including the Municipal Light & Power/Heritage Land Bank Muldoon/Centennial Park land exchange that is under discussion, discussions surrounding efforts to obtain 60 acres of land in the Campbell Creek Estuary located west of Campbell Lake from the Greatland Trust; the request by an adjoining landowner for a view easement in the Fish Creek Estuary, the Hilltop Ski Area lease agreement, the 2010 budget, 2011 budget, and efforts to obtain approval from the Environmental Protection Agency to "close" the Kincaid Project site and move the construction project forward during this construction season.

III. Consent Agenda

A. **Approval of the Agenda:** As noted above, the Agenda was changed to hear the Director's Comments as the first item on the Agenda.

B. **Approval of the Minutes:** No changes or amendments to the March 2010 Minutes were made.

C. **Old and Unfinished Business**

1. **PRC 10-13: Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Improvement Plan**

After the March 2010 meeting, at which meeting the Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Improvement Plan was discussed in detail, Holly Spoth-Torres, Commissioner Jon Dyson, and Commissioner David Wigglesworth met with Brian Gutzwiller, president of the Alaska Disc Golf Association (ADGA), and toured the disc golf course site. As a result of that meeting, the plan put forth by the ADGA was modified and presented to the Commissioners here. Upon motion made by David Wigglesworth, and seconded by Jon Dyson, Resolution No. 2010-02 Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Improvement Plan was unanimously approved as follows:

**Resolution No. 2010- 02
Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf 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 the existing conditions and course layout of the Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Course create an unsafe environment for park and trail users; and

WHEREAS, the existing conditions and course layout of the Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Course create impacts to the turf, vegetation and water quality of the lagoon; and

WHEREAS, the South Addition Community Council has approved a resolution supporting the disc golf course improvement plan; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Disc Golf Association is dedicated to fundraising and providing volunteers to implement this plan,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Municipality of Anchorage pursue Westchester Lagoon Disc Golf Improvement Plan.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 8th day of April, 2010.

2. PRC 10-14: Title 21 Rewrite: Park Master Plans and Park Development Projects

At the March meeting, Commissioners made recommendations regarding changes in the language of the Title 21 Rewrite as it pertains to Park Master Plans and Park Development projects. The changes to the previous draft were (1) removal of the language stating that discrepancies from the master plans need to be described and justified; (2) reinstatement of the requirement that development projects be consistent with an approved master plan if the park has such a plan; and (3) removal of level of public interest as a basis for director's discretion to move from public hearing review to administrative review. Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Wigglesworth and seconded by Commissioner Frank, Resolution No. 2010-03 Amendments to AMC Title 21 Regarding Park Master Plans and Development Project Review and Approval, was unanimously approved as follows:

**Resolution No. 2010-03 Amendments to AMC Title 21
Regarding Park Master Plan and Development Project Review and Approval**

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 Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code provides for the review and approval of major park planning and development projects among other land use issues; and

WHEREAS, the a proposed amendments of current code language would help clarify the process for review and approval of park-related projects, would provide for meaningful public involvement, and would facilitate efficient use of limited public resources in planning, improving, and managing municipal parks; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission recommends adoption of the attached draft amendments as prepared by the Anchorage Planning Department, dated March 1, 2010, as amended in the attachment.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 8th day of April, 2010.

IV. Anchorage Park Foundation Report

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director of the Anchorage Park Foundation, presented an overview of the Foundation's ongoing projects, current fundraising efforts, the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program and the 2010 Challenge Grants. A YEP Coordinator, Amy O'Connor, has been hired and has already started working. The "scope-of-work" agreement has been signed for the Russian Jack Park project and Corvus Designs is beginning the public involvement process. The 2010 Challenge Grant applications are being accepted until May 14, 2010 and the grantees will be announced later in the month.

V. Appearance Requests

There were three appearance requests: Abigail Plunkett, Amber Groff and Deanna Marsingill. These young ladies are students at Romig Middle School working on a school project, the subject of which is "How to build a park." They asked questions of the Parks & Recreation staff and Commissioners regarding the process for building a park – ideas for building a park, community involvement, planning process, and cost. Holly Spoth-Torres suggested they meet with a Park Planner to more fully explore these topics.

VI. Action Items

A. PRC 10-20: 2010 Firewise Project Plan

Sue Rodman, Anchorage Fire Department Forester, discussed the upcoming firewise projects for 2010. Firewise projects are designed to mitigate and reduce the risk and hazard of wildfires brought about by beetle-killed spruce and other conditions. This year projects are scheduled in Cross Park; Chester Creek Greenbelt near Karluk & Orca Streets, Hillstrand Park and Tikishla Park; Russian Jack Springs Park from the soccer fields west to the Cartee ball field; and Little Rabbit Creek Bluff Park. The Commission was requested to approve these projects. Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Plunkett and seconded by Commissioner Frank, Resolution 2010-04 2010 Firewise Projects was unanimously approved as follows:

**Resolution No. 2010-4
2010 Firewise Projects**

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, wildfire mitigation is critical to preventing the spread of wildfire by protecting transit corridors to allow residents to evacuate fire areas, allowing fire fighting equipment access to remote areas and reducing the available fuels for fires to consume; and

WHEREAS Anchorage Parks and Recreation has a partnership and MOU with the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) Wildfire Mitigation Office to mitigate the risk and hazard of wildfire in the neighborhoods and forests of Cross Park; Chester Creek Greenbelt, just east of Eastchester Park, south of the Senior Center; Russian Jack Springs, north section; and Little Rabbit Creek Bluff Park; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approve the Firewise wildfire mitigation projects submitted by the Anchorage Wildfire Mitigation Office in accordance with MOU between Anchorage Parks and Recreation and AFD.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 8th day of April, 2010.

B. PRC 10-21: Neighborhood Park Fix-it Projects

Suzanne Little, Senior Park Planner, presented an overview of the eight neighborhood park projects for summer 2010. These are: (1) Al Miller Park, (2) Cheney Lake Park, (3) Creekside Park, (4) Ira Walker Park, (5) Minnesota Park Phase I, (6) William B. Lyons Park Phase I, (7) Williwaw Park, and (8) Woodland Park. The plans for each park were discussed including the schedule, community council and volunteer involvement, and cost of the various projects. Approval of the projects by the Commission was requested. Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Plunkett and seconded by Commissioner Frank, Resolution 2010-06 2010 Neighborhood Park Fix-it Projects, was unanimously approved as follows:

Resolution No. 2010-5 2010 Firewise Projects

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 Anchorage Parks and Recreation is partnering with the Anchorage Fire Department to mitigate the risk and hazard of wildfire in the neighborhoods and forests of Cross Park; Chester Creek Greenbelt, just east of Eastchester Park, south of the Senior Center; Russian Jack Springs, north section; and Little Rabbit Creek Bluff Park; and

WHEREAS, wildfire mitigation is critical to preventing the spread of wildfire by protecting transit corridors to allow residents to evacuate fire areas, allowing fire fighting equipment access to remote areas and reducing the available fuels for fires to consume; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approve the plans, priorities and schedule, submitted by the Department and VIP Committees for the 2010 Neighborhood Parks projects.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 8th day of April, 2010.

C. PRC 10-22: 2010 Youth Employment in Parks Projects

Holly Spoth-Torres discussed the purpose and goals of Youth Employment in Parks outlined the park improvement projects planned and funded for the summer of 2010. These are: (1) University Lake Park Bank Restoration, (2) Williwaw Park Trail Project, (3) Westchester Lagoon Rain Garden, (4) Cheney Lake Trail Rehabilitation, (5) Moose Ridge Trail Rehabilitation, (6) FNB Forest Health Project: Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation; and (7) Senior Center Trail Connection to Chester Creek Greenbelt. The Commission was requested to approve these projects going forward. Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Frank and seconded by Commission Dyson, Resolution No. 2010-6 2010 Youth Employment in Parks Projects and Work Plan was unanimously approved as follows:

Resolution No. 2010-06 2010 Youth Employment in Parks Projects and Work Plan

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 Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a program of the Anchorage Parks & Recreation Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation and Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, a program of the National Wildlife Federation, and

WHEREAS the goal of the YEP program is to positively engage a new generation of diverse youth leaders with the environment and the Anchorage community through meaningful training, employment, and outdoor recreation,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the work and project plan for the 2010 Youth Employment in Parks program to include University Lake Park Bank Restoration, Williwaw Park Trail Project, Westchester Lagoon Rain Garden, Cheney Lake Trail Rehabilitation, Moose Ridge Trail Rehabilitation, FBNP Forest Health Project: Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation; and the Senior Center Trail Connection to Chester Creek Greenbelt.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 8th day of April, 2010.

VII. Information Items

A. PRC 10-23: Urban Forestry Update

Scott Stringer, Municipal Forester, gave an update on the Urban Forestry projects. The Urban Forestry Section's purpose is to guide the Parks and Recreation Department toward the efficient and effective management of our natural resources, provide a framework for future projects, and help set priorities for the Department. Projects in which he is currently involved include the Forest Health Project for spruce bark beetle mitigation, the Invasive Weeds Management Plan to design a plan to deal with invasive plant species, the Invasive Species Inventory to survey for invasive species and treat and revegetate the ground where necessary, and Citizen Weed Warriors which is an ongoing program providing outreach and education to the community.

VIII. Staff Reports

A. PRC 10-24: Recreation Superintendent Report

Chris Conlon, Recreation Superintendent, gave overview of recreation programs and facilities. The Community Garden Program has started and all garden plots are all rented for the season. The Spring/Summer Activity Guide will be available in print and online on Sunday April 11, 2010.

B. PRC 10-25: Park Superintendent Report

Holly Spoth-Torres, Park Superintendent, declined to give an oral report due to time constraints. Commissioners referred to her written report.

IX. Commissioner Comments

Peter Crosby announced a statewide swimming event that is taking place at Bartlett Pool on April 15, and invited everyone to attend.



X. Upcoming Meeting/Agenda Items

A tour of the Municipal Greenhouse complex is anticipated for the commissioners just prior to the May 2010 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, with the meeting to follow at the Lidia Selkregg Chalet.

A briefing of the Campbell Creek Estuary situation was requested as an information item on the next agenda.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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| MINUTES APPROVED this <u>12</u> day of <u>AUGUST</u> , 2010: | |
|  Acting Director, Parks & Recreation |  Chair, Parks & Recreation Commission |