

Memorandum 11-135 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Support for Construction of a New Track at Homer High School

Memorandum ID: 11-135

Memorandum Status: Information Only

Office of the City Clerk 491 E. Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603-7624
Jo Johnson, CMC, City Clerk (907) 235-3130

(907) 235-8121
Melissa Jacobsen, CMC, Deputy City Clerk II Extension: 2227
Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk I Extension: 2224

Fax: (907) 235-3143
Email: clerk@ci.homer.ak.us
MEMORANDUM 11-135

TO: MAYOR HORNADAY AND CITY COUNCIL
THROUGH: WALT WREDE, CITY MANAGER
FROM: PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
DATE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2011
RE: RECOMMENDATION AND SUPPORT TO INCLUDE CONTRUCTION OF A NEW TRACK AT THE HOMER HIGH SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

At the September 15, 2011 Regular Meeting the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission heard from Mr. Bill Steyer, Coach at Homer High School and a city resident. He was seeking support from the Commission to be included on the City of Homer Capital Improvement Plan. Below is an excerpt of those minutes.

VISITORS

A. Lance Williamson, Save Our Track Committee

Chair Bremicker confirmed with the Clerk that visitors scheduled have ten minutes unless the Commission agrees to suspend the rules and allow longer.

Mr. Bill Steyer, a city resident and Homer High School Track Coach spoke to the commissioners on the horrendous conditions of the high school track and was requesting the Commission to express support for repairs and replacement of the track. Mr. Steyer opened his appeal recognizing that the City of Homer has no responsibility regarding the conditions of the track. He also informed the commissioners that a Save Our Track Committee was formed and has had a few meetings. The committee was informed by Borough and State officials that it would be extremely beneficial to have the support from community, the city and any other organization that could benefit from the construction of a new track. Specifically if the City would include this project on the Capital Improvement Plan as one of the top most priorities.

Mr. Steyer stated that the track is 25 years old and has never been maintained. He noted the disparity in the high school tracks on the peninsula. He observed that Nikiski High School has a new rubberized track; even Skyview High School has a rubberized track, even though about ten years old, due to regular maintenance. The most important issue is that without a new track the principal has threatened to discontinue the track and field program if no funding is received this year. He has already stopped any events being hosted by the high school due to the poor conditions. This means that 25 students must travel to participate in any events. The P.E. classes use that track also in their normal curriculum and the Principal has stated he will not allow any students on the field to train. Mr. Steyer noted that not having a track has an impact on the community by losing revenue. Since they cannot host track and field events students, parents and visitors do not come to Homer where they can visit shops, restaurants and lodging. The loss of the track also affects local residents as they use the facilities for other events such as Relay for Life and as just a safe place for their children to ride bikes or jog/run themselves.

Some officials have commented that a track is a luxury and not a necessity. Mr. Steyer disagreed with that statement.

Chair Bremicker asked what the last repairs were to the track as seen in the pictures provided by Mr. Steyer. Mr. Steyer stated that was when the creek flooded and was the last work maintenance or otherwise done on the facilities.

Commissioner Brann stated he would support sending a recommendation of support to council on getting this done.

INGRID/CUMMING - MOVED TO SEND A RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL TO INCLUDE THE REFURBISHMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HOMER HIGH SCHOOL TRACK FACILITIES AS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

There was a brief discussion on the reason for appealing to the Commission since this was addressed by City Council in a Resolution not that long ago.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

RECOMMENDATION

To include the refurbishment or reconstruction of the track at the Homer High School by listing as a top project on the Capital Improvement Plan.

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