

Session 15-13 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on November 19, 2015 at 5:33 pm by Acting Chair Deb Lowney at the Cowles Council Chambers City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, ROEDL, ASHMUN, HART AND BRANN

ABSENT: JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, DEPUTY CITY PLANNER

STAFF: RENEE KRAUSE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Commissioners Archibald and Steffy were not reappointed in time to be seated for this meeting. Commissioner Brann arrived at 5:38 p.m. Acting Chair Lowney turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Brann.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Acting Chair Lowney called for a motion to approve the agenda.

HART/ASHMUN– MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

Robert Archibald, resident, commented on the HART funding that has not been expended and advocated for going before the Council to allocate the existing funds in an appropriate manner. He realizes that more and more residents are biking and walking and he believes that the commission should perform their due diligence to the fund.

VISITORS

RECONSIDERATION

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes for the regular meeting of October 15, 2015

Vice Chair Brann called for a motion to adopt the consent agenda.

LOWNEY/ASHMUN - MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Annual Park/Beach Walk Through – Commissioner Reports on Visited Parks or Beaches

Commissioner Hart reported her findings at the Bayview Park as follows:

- fencing missing slats
- gate is frozen closed
- drainage issues
- stumps

Commissioner Lowney reported that she visited Bayview and Karen Hornaday. She agreed with Commissioner Hart on her Bayview findings. She also attended a MAPP meeting which Julie Engebretsen also attended and explained that the group Best Beginnings who adopted the park, is not responsible for repairs to the park fencing.

Commissioner Lowney also supported submitting a recommendation of support to Council on providing the minimal funds required to perform the repairs, and establishing a work party to remove the stumps. She then reported on the Karen Hornaday Campground and the grant funding; trees and shrubbery needing to be trimmed; the trails going through the alders along the road into the park, she recommended thinning the alders at minimal and removing them totally is preferable.

Commissioner Roedl visited those same parks and reported on the improvements to Calhoun Trail/near Merlin Cordes residence and US Coast Guard housing and spoke about using the funds available to improve that trail to remove alders and smooth/level the trails.

Commissioner Ashmun visited those parks and added that Bayview has an aura of neglect. There is usually no one using the park other than a lone adult sitting in their car in the parking lot. She agreed with remedy regarding the hill along Calhoun Trail.

Vice Chair Brann reported viewing Bayview, which he did not see anything different from the last time, he also visited Jeffery Park and it looked presentable, Bishops Beach did not show any damage or vandalism at the facilities there.

LOWNEY/ROEDL – MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ALLOW INPUT FROM ROBERT ARCHIBALD ON THE BAYVIEW PARK.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Mr. Archibald reported on Bayview Park that the fencing is in dire need of repair but suggested getting some input from the public on what type of fencing would be the best and/or more appropriate for the park. He provided conditions at Ben Walters Park, the lower kiosk is in need of shoring or replacement. Mariner Park is in some dire need of refurbishment and work too.

Mr. Archibald also reported that Karen Hornaday, Public Works has done some recent pruning but believes that alder is too fast growing.

Vice Chair Brann commented on the hesitancy of the city to not build anymore trails because of taking on more facilities to maintain. He believes the city should lean more on the volunteers and then provided some information that the Mat Su Borough does with volunteers as an example.

Commissioner Ashmun spoke about the privacy screening at the campground and how visitors really appreciate that benefit. Then she cautioned removing the alders from the hillside regarding the hydrology of the area.

Vice Chair Brann believes that it would be beneficial to include in the Strategic Plan at the Feb meeting so they can devise a plan to address the needs of those trails and parks.

Commissioner Lowney would like contact the group that has adopted Bayview Park to attend the meeting in Feb and submit a proposal on the fencing. Vice Chair Brann also suggested addressing the chain link fencing along the back of the park.

B. Staff Report – Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner

Vice Chair Brann would like an update in the purchase of the Roger Loop property. He then brought up the issue of the steel caps that were removed from the harbor and dumped in the additional parking area at Karen Hornaday Park. He has addressed the issue with Public Works and the Harbormaster and neither want the steel caps, he believes they could sell them and use those funds for improvements at the parks. Formal acknowledgement should be received from the Harbormaster and Public Works Director.

LOWNEY/ROEDL - MOVED TO REQUEST FROM PORT AND HARBOR AND PUBLIC WORKS THAT THE CAPS BE GIVEN TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION TO RAISE FUNDS

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lowney commented on the issues at Bishops Beach and reported that Chief Robl has agreed to send an officer out to the area as soon as possible to take action. She emphasized that people call and report offenders. She commented on the doggie bags and getting these ordered before the end of the year. Then spoke about the trash cans and mentioned some programs regarding trash cans that are needed especially on the spit trail and in town. She advocated the benefits and service to the community.

Vice Chair Brann opined that they would probably get more buy in if the trash cans were smaller instead of those large barrels. Businesses did not want to take on the responsibility of emptying those barrels, they can get pretty heavy.

Commissioner Lowney commented on the Foraker article in the packet and that being a good idea.

C. Community Recreation Report – Mike Illg

Recreation Specialist Illg provided materials from the previous meeting on activities as a laydown. He was not in attendance at the meeting.

D. Parks Report – Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson was not in attendance and did not provide a written report.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Purchase of Doggie Bag Dispensers

Vice Chair Brann requested a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Lowney also noted that a logo could be imprinted and Ms. Engebretsen had requested suggestions.

LOWNEY/ASHMUN - MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF 4 LARGE DISPENSERS AND 250 INDIVIDUAL DISPENSERS.

Discussion on having a catch phrase imprinted on the dispensers was entertained by the commission. There were no suggestions or ideas forthcoming from the commission.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Vice Chair Brann requested volunteers to brainstorm locations to distribute the small dispensers.

Commissioners Lowney and Ashmun volunteered to pick locations. It was noted that replacement baggies should be considered. It was questioned whether the dispensers were refillable. It was noted that the Commissioners could distribute or educate dog owners and pass out the dispensers.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2016 Regular Meeting Schedule

The commissioners discussed the current issues facing the city presently and acknowledged that there were some important issues that may affect the commission and should be addressed sooner rather than later regarding budgetary matters. It is with this consideration that the Commission made the following amendment to the regular meeting schedule:

LOWNEY/ROEDL – MOVED TO ADD THE THIRD THURSDAY IN JANUARY TO THE 2016 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE.

There was a brief discussion on the value of having this meeting rather than waiting until February since the commission does not meet in December. It was noted that the commission could cancel the February meeting or another meeting later in the year if they find it is unnecessary in order to keep to the budget constraints.

VOTE. YES. BRANN, LOWNEY, ROEDL, HART, ASHMUN

Motion carried.

B. How can the HERC be Sustainable

Commissioner Lowney commented on the idea of making the HERC Sustainable. She would like to follow staff recommendation and have a citizen group organize a committee that includes citizens, commissioners, and Mike Illg to create a proposal that makes the HERC sustainable using past proposals as starting point. It was noted that Council would have to approve a committee so this was to be totally outside of city involvement. Commissioners could attend but no more than three could be involved. It was highly recommended to have this a citizen committee.

The Commission requested the following information:

- Specific reasons for limiting the occupancy of the building.
- Why were the activities limited to Community Recreation?

It was recommended that the citizen group work on a proposal to be submitted to the Commission at the January 21st meeting. Commissioner Hart, Lowney and Roedl volunteered to contact specific community residents to be involved. The group can submit a proposal on what as a community that they can do to maximize the use of the building, proposing to council on increasing the revenues that can make the program sustainable and using the building to pay for itself.

Question was raised regarding the vote on Dec 1st and if they should do it if it fails. It was noted that they could address that question later as no one had any ideas at this time since the HERC would be shuttered.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Commission Annual Calendar 2016
- B. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings 2016

Commissioner Brann volunteered for February & April
Commissioner Ashmun volunteered for March
Commissioner Lowney volunteered for May

The Commissioner put Chair Steffy in for the January meetings since he was not in attendance at this time but would be reappointed next week.

C. Bishops Beach and Parking on the Berm

Vice Chair Brann commented and thanked Nina Faust for the pictures and felt it was a great example of participation from outside this commission.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Robert Archibald commented on putting the Police Department phone number in their cell phones, and that was a good idea regarding the HERC building.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Krause commented that it was a good meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER *(If one is present)*

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Lowney stated it was a good meeting, commented on the struggle through the budget this year being exceptionally difficult.

Commissioner Ashmun spoke on the berm issue and people driving on that berm. She felt that the old policy is good enough and she expressed her frustration on the lack of enforcement and going more aggressively in signage such as at Mariner. She expressed that the signage was passive. On the positive side the police did go down there and speak to the people on the berm. Great meeting.

Commissioner Roedl commented on looking forward to see the HERC proposal goes forward and that they are here to advocate for parks and recreation and the rest of the problems that the city has are not their problems and they represent what the city resident wants regarding parks and rec.

Commissioner Hart commented on the signage at Bishops Beach and the lack thereof, but maybe barriers to prevent the cars from driving in those areas should be placed. She has lived where barriers were used and felt that the logs that were in the area should be moved to prevent vehicle traffic. She believed that barriers work and every law they implement will cause someone to break them.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Commissioner Brann enjoyed the radio show regarding the budget on KBBI and almost called in and then requested the Clerk to distribute the strategic plan to the new commissioners so they be familiar with the document for the meeting in February. He mentioned the idea presented by Mr. Illg that Community Recreation used to be a number 1 or 2 priority with the commission and wondered why it still was not on the list. He apologized again for his tardiness and looked forward to having Robert on this side of the table again.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The next **REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2016** at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Cowles Council Chambers 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk

Approved: _____