

Session 14-08 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on August 21, 2014 at 5:30 pm by Chair Matt Steffy at the Cowles Council Chambers City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, BRANN, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL, ROEDL
AND COMMISSIONER LILLIBRIDGE

STUDENT REP: PEDRO OCHOA

STAFF: MIKE ILLG, RECREATION SPECIALIST
JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, DEPUTY CITY PLANNER
RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

VISITORS

A. Adele Person, Safe Routes to School

Ms. Person presented on behalf of the CrossWalk and Homer Pedestrian-Bike Alliance, an advocacy group for pedestrian-cyclist infrastructure and transportation culture change. Ms. Persons presented a complete plan to address safety for children walking or biking to school on the local roads and the need to implement more safety and awareness for the areas pedestrian and cyclists before something drastic occurs.

The following points were presented:

- Formation of a joint committee
- Funding Avenues
- Education
- Regulations
- Implementation
- Benefits

B. Carey Meyer, Public Works Director, Public Safety Building Project

Mr. Meyer was not in appearance for this meeting.

C. Gail Edgerly, Woodard Creek Coalition

Ms. Edgerly was not in attendance for the meeting. Commissioners Lowney and Archibald are members of this Coalition and provided a brief outline of the group's participants and goals in regards to Woodard Creek and synopsis of a recent meeting.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes for the regular meeting of June 19, 2014

B. Recommendation of Support for the Friends of the Homer Library Re-envisioning the Homer Public Library's western lot.

Chair Steffy and Ms. Krause explained the process and reason for implementing the Consent Agenda approach for the agenda items.

Commissioner MacCampbell mentioned the misspelling of his name in the minutes.

Chair Steffy requested a motion for adoption of the consent agenda.

LILLIBRIDGE/LOWNEY - MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Carey Meyer, Public Works Director - General Projects Update

Mr. Meyer was not in attendance at this meeting.

B. Staff Report - Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner

Ms. Engebretsen provided a summary on the items in her staff report noting the following:

- Karen Hornaday Park Improvements Invitation to Bid
- Council Actions on expending \$25,000 to clear Poopdeck Trail and Town Center; expending \$19,000 on the HERC gym to bring it up to code as required by the Fire Marshall in order to use the building; accepting a \$110,000 US Fish and Wildlife grant to complete the Beluga Slough boardwalk; and expending \$84,000 from HART funds for traffic calming and pedestrian awareness in the Old Town area of Homer.
- the donation of the Salmon and netting for Bishop's Beach was pulled from Alaskan Coastal Studies and the Artist for placement in another location of town; the donation of the loon sculpture was remanded back to the Public Arts Committee and unless they recommend Council to send it back to this commission they will have no further opportunity to comment on it as a body.
- Council will have a worksession on Monday, August 25th to discuss the Capital Improvement Plan the commissioners were encouraged to attend if they had an interest.
- The resolution identifying the town center parcel as a possible location for a community recreation center.
- Inviting visitors to speak such as HOWL and Chad from the Folk School at future meetings.

There were brief comments on the east-west transportation corridor going right through where a proposed community rec center would be on the town center parcel and funds used for traffic calming was all placed in Old Town areas and came from road money and the locations for the speed humps and flexible pedestrian delineators. The solar speed awareness signs are going to be sort of a pilot program to see if they will work. They will only be purchasing two of the solar speed signs.

B. Parks Maintenance - Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson was not in attendance.

C. Community Recreation - Mike Illg

Mr. Illg provided a verbal update on the following:

- First round of the Trails Map has been distributed and the benefits to the community
- The fall winter recreation catalog will be available next week
- On Sunday the artificial turf will be used for the first time by the community
- Due to a fire alarm re-wire the community recreation programs were unavailable for a short period but that work is now completed.

- He will be attending the conference in Fairbanks this year so he will not be at the meeting next month
- Requested volunteers for the planning committee for the 2015 Parks and Recreation Conference
- Recommended putting some information on the website regarding the Safe Routes to School and Pedestrian/Bike Safety
- Submitting a budget request for an additional half time person and would like the commissions support
- Supported the actions regarding Woodard Creek
- Repair of the flooring in the mat room

A brief discussion ensued on submitting a budget request for the Conference and the different funding sources and staff available to assist with this project, number of attendees expected, what will be offered; and submitting a recommendation in support of Mr. Ilg's staff request.

Ms. Krause recommended that this item be placed on a different agenda or to schedule a worksession for discussion of the event.

There was no further discussion.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no items scheduled for this meeting.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Karen Hornaday Park - Discussion on the Park's Entrance Road Relocation, Parking Issues, and National Parks Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

Chair Steffy inquired if there was a component of the last discussion that was requiring further discussion to engage in.

There was a brief discussion on further funding options through grants and the improvements to the access road such as ditching.

B. Safe Routes to School and Homer Safe Street Program

Ms. Engebretsen provided a summary for her information contained in the packet. She requested a motion from the commission if they supported Council applying for a grant through the Safe Routes to School program.

LOWNEY/LILLIBRIDGE - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Ms. Engebretsen then provided an outline on what the Homer Safe Streets Program which the project in Old Town is the guinea pig for the program.

Some aspects of the proposed program are:

- Intended to facilitate city and community members to form partnerships to solve local problems.
- Streamlines the city response to citizen concerns
- Opens doors to better communication and coordination of services
- Public Education
- Funding mechanism using the HART program to pay for improvements
- Technical assistance and partnerships to solve problems
- This has not been presented to Council

Questions and comments posed by the commission were:

- Issue with roads in areas such as parks and not necessarily in a community
- Users of the facility could bring that before the city
- Educating the general public on the existence of the HART program and how it works
- Research by the city on speed humps versus speed bumps
- Most cities who installed the speed humps wanted them removed
- Speed bumps are good idea in a parking lot
- May need to hire an engineer

STEFFY/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED THAT THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE IMPEMENTATION OF THE HOMER SAFE STREETS PROGRAM.

Discussion on educating and informing the public on the safety issues to be addressed implementing this program. Include the hard facts in the education, invite the newspapers to print an article also; perfect time with the roads being redone to install crosswalks too.

VOTE. YES. LILLIBRIDGE, LOWNEY, BRANN, ROEDL, MACCAMPBELL, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to Change the Designation of the Karen Hornaday Park Access Road

Chair Steffy read the title into the record.

Commissioner Archibald explained the reason he would like to submit a request to City Council to change the designation on the road leading into the park.

Discussion ensued regarding this action that it would assist in getting some changes accomplished to complete the task of safety and access road improvements. Additional discussion ensued on the details of the HART program and staff interpretation of the program however if the City Manager has suggested the commission take a different route staff will not speak against that but the HART Fund is for dedicated rights of way and that road is not a dedicated right of way. Further comments by the commission were:

- This may open funding for the existing situation.
 - If this does not work then they may be able to change the access.
 - Could not fund signs, speed bumps, not a dedicated road
- (It was noted by staff that Council chose not to find money for speed bumps, traffic calming measures, etc.)

The commission discussed further why it wasn't designated a road and how that would be completed through a plat changed.

Chair Steffy commented if the commission could ask Council to allow HART Funds to be used on that section. Does it need to be clarified further as to what section of the road? He was trying to anticipate Council's question. Commissioner Lowney stated she would prefer to change the request to include re-alignment of the road as recommended in Phase 2. Chair Steffy added that that could be the next step and this is the first step in allowing the use of HART Funds.

Further discussion on concerns expressed using Danview as access ensued.

STEFFY/LOWNEY - MOVED TO REQUEST CITY COUNCIL APPROVES THE EXPENDITURE OF HART FUNDS ON THE KAREN HORNADAY ACCESS ROAD.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. YES. LILLIBRIDGE, LOWNEY, MACCAMPBELL, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, ROEDL, STEFFY

Motion carried.

B. Budget 2015 Requests and Recommendations

Chair Steffy introduced the item and opened discussion requesting each commissioner to list their top three budget request items with amounts. Then they can prioritize them.
Chair Steffy supported Mr. Illg's request for a part time permanent staff.

Commissioner Lowney top requests were:

1. Hiring a Hydrologist for the Woodard Creek Watershed \$20,000
2. Safe Routes to School and Trail Connectivity
3. Karen Hornaday Park Road Access

Commissioner MacCampbell top requests were:

1. Woodard Creek Trail
2. Safe Routes to School Program

He also mentioned multi-use trail funding up to \$50,000 from the DNR being available for these types of shovel ready projects.

Commissioner Archibald top requests were:

1. Sufficient funding to keep the gym operational as long as the building is standing.
2. Support for a larger Community Recreation Budget

Commissioner Brann presented his top requests:

1. Replacement Picnic Shelter & Informational Kiosk \$20,000
2. Purchase of a parcel of land off of Roger's Loop \$65,000

Commissioner Roedl did not have any requests at this time.

Commissioner Lillibridge had questions regarding the new Public Safety Building. Staff explained that this is for the 2015 Budget request to Council and some are listed in the CIP. Commissioner Lillibridge supported the HERC project, Haven House request and having a Dog Park \$10,000. She proceeded to expound on the safety and health issues in regards to having animal feces in the water supply.

Commissioner Steffy commented on his top priorities, community recreation and complimented Mr. Illg on his fortitude. He believed that from what he has heard from the majority of the commission they agreed on the support for a permanent part time staff person. Chair Steffy also agreed on the request for the hydrologist on the Woodard Creek Watershed project and that it would provide very valuable information. Chair Steffy opined that the commission should also support the Picnic Shelter and Informational Kiosk at the Pier One parcel.

Commissioner Lowney further recommended a budget request to complete the trail between West Homer Elementary and the Middle School. Chair Steffy agreed and elaborated on the components to trail connectivity and the difficulties facing the students walking to the schools.

Ms. Engebretsen summarized the projects as recommended from the commission. She confirmed that it would be good to prioritize the requests.

The commissioners discussed the status of the Needs Assessment, budget request for Community Recreation staff increase, documenting uncompensated time, statistics on the increase in services requested.

The commissioners agreed to the following in prioritized order:

1. Permanent Part Time Community Recreation Staff \$35,000
2. Woodard Creek Watershed Hydrologist \$20,000
3. Continued Funding for HERC Gym Operations

Not in Prioritized Order

4. \$20,000 for a replacement picnic shelter and kiosk at Pier 1. Grant funds may be available to leverage a portion of this, and it may cost less than \$20,000.
5. \$65,000 HART/Trails funds to purchase Roger's Loop trailhead land.
6. \$25,000 West Homer Trail Phase 2 (HART Trails), connecting West Homer Elementary and Homer Middle Schools
7. \$10,000 for outreach for a dog park and to work on dog poop issues within parks.
8. Karen Hornaday Park, and the Woodard Creek trail, continues to be an area of focus of the Commission. No direct funding requested.

Ms. Engebretsen provided a summary on the budget process.

C. Capital Improvement Plan 2015-2020 Recommendations to Council

Chair Steffy read the title into the record and requested clarification on the differences between this action and what the commission did at the June meeting.

Ms. Engebretsen provided the information regarding the new or amended projects recommended by the commission at the June meeting and explained that Council will be either agreeing with the commission and adding the project, or not including it. She further stated that the projects to submit to Council for inclusion on the Legislative Request be limited to the commission's top two projects. City Council will only be submitting 5 projects on the request. This commission has been focused on Karen Hornaday Park.

Chair Steffy recommended that they stay with the park as a top priority.

Discussion continued on the process, what projects were chosen by Council as a core service provided by the City and which projects each commissioner favored as follows:

- Mariner Park/Base of the Spit Restrooms (Commissioner Archibald)
- Karen Hornaday Park Improvements Phase 2 (Commissioner Steffy)
- Baycrest Overlook Park Improvements (Commissioner MacCampbell)
- Homer Educational Recreational Center Gym Improvements (Commissioner Lowney)
- Haven House (Commissioner Lillibridge)

Ms. Engebretsen explained the East West Transportation Corridor for the commission. There are already steps put in motion by the city to get this project completed.

Commissioner Lowney further expressed concern regarding roads going through the available and remaining green space in town that is valuable to the community and the wildlife that she believes should be preserved and opined that this commission should express a statement to that fact. Chair Steffy acknowledged her opinion but also supported responsible development of available lands.

Ms. Krause noted that this discussion is out of order and should be addressed on another agenda.

Commissioner Brann pointed out the mission of the commission towards preservation of the existing green space and notification of the opportunity to gain green/recreational space.

Commissioner Lowney next added comments and concern regarding the concession stand verbiage in the Jack Gist Park Improvements Project on page and would like it removed citing all the problems with the concession stand at Karen Hornaday Park. Commissioner Lowney then stated that on page 92 she thought it mentioned a bridge over Woodard Creek and expressed concern regarding the projected costs for the projects were incorrect. She expressed concern that it would visibly put off selection of the project.

Staff explained that incorrect project costs did not affect the project being selected and that many costs were not updated on a yearly basis.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Commission Annual Calendar

Chair Steffy noted that they can discuss scheduling a fall park walk through at the next meeting.

B. Commissioner Attendance Schedule at Council Meeting

Chair Steffy will attend the Council meeting on August 25th and September 8th. He requested the remaining commissioners to review their schedules for attendance at these meetings and this could be updated at the next meeting.

C. Application to RTCA by Woodard Creek Coalition

Chair Steffy noted the information in the packet

D. Events Scheduled for the Kenai Peninsula for September/October

E. Park Day 2014 Photos

There were brief comments on the attendance and success of the event. Commissioner Brann requested permission to donate the remaining whistles to the Pratt Museum to hand out to children who visit the museum.

The commission agreed by consensus that would be agreeable.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

None.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Ms. Illg challenged the commissioners to participate in a community recreation activity and suggested that the commission have a recreation walk through instead of a park walk through since they are Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Engebretsen thanked Mr. Illg for a great suggestion. She noted it was a great meeting and reminded the commissioners that they spoke previously about not having an October meeting but with a full commission it was unlikely that they would not have a quorum but to please review their individual schedules so it could be determined at the September meeting to hold the October meeting.

Ms. Krause commented that it was a great meeting; she apologized if her manner was a bit direct but wanted to keep the commission on task. Ms. Krause offered her assistance to Mr. Illg and Chair Steffy in planning the Parks & Recreation Conference for 2015. She apologized to Commissioner MacCampbell for the incorrect name listing.

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

There were no council members present.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Lowney had no comments, but continued by acknowledging the efforts of staff to keep the commission on task and did not think they would get through the agenda in such a short time tonight. Ms. Lowney is excited to see if the RTCA application comes through and working with that group through the Coalition on that project.

Commissioner MacCampbell requested Mr. Illg to contact him regarding the Conference and he will put on his other hat. He also advised Mike to get some rest.

Commissioner Archibald commented that Mike still had his hair! He appreciated Renee and Julie's hard work and everything they do for them.

Commissioner Brann thanked staff as usual for their hard work; he was glad to see Pedro at this meeting and appreciated his suggestion regarding seniors assisting the younger students; and finally he will be out of state from September 15th to October 15th 2014.

Commissioner Roedl agreed it was a great meeting and he will be out of state for the entire month of September. He inquired on how to attend telephonically. Chair Steffy responded to see Renee.

Commissioner Lillibridge apologized for her tardiness as she was working. She has been out of the loop but feels pretty caught up now; agreed it was a great meeting that they covered so much tonight. She has asked for the next two months off for those meeting dates so hopefully they will have a meeting.

Commissioner Ochoa commented that he should be able to attend meetings now that he is through with working and he will be attending college locally in town so he will be able to offer more input on matters before the commission.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Commissioner Steffy commented on the lengthy agenda and how efficient and productive meeting; shows a lot of consensus on the direction on where this commission's priorities are and very successful communication. He thanked staff for the background materials and directions and they do need to get more focused on the conference. He has no plans to be in the mountains so will be able to meet to work on that. He will not be attending the conference in Fairbanks this year.

Chair Steffy recognized the volunteer efforts and work by Commissioners Brann and Archibald in the Demonstration Forest recently. He has pictures that he can use for instructional purposes in the future. He commented on the use of weedeater in trees.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m. The next **REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2014** at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Cowles Council Chambers 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk I

Approved: _____