

Session 13-07 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on September 19, 2013 at 5:34 pm by Chair Bumpo Bremicker at the Homer City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS STEFFY, LOWNEY, ARCHIBALD, BREMICKER, LILLIBRIDGE

TELEPHONIC: COMMISSIONER BRANN

STAFF: CAREY MEYER, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, PLANNING TECHINCIAN
ANGIE OTTESON, PARKS MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR
MIKE ILLG, COMMUNITY RECREATION SPECIALIST
RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Bremicker requested a motion to approve the agenda.

LILLIBRIDGE/LOWNEY - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES *(Minutes are approved during regular meetings only)*

A. Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on August 15, 2013

Chair Bremicker requested approval of the minutes from August 15, 2013.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD - SO MOVED.

There was a brief discussion.

The minutes were approved by consensus of the Commission.

Chair Bremicker welcomed the newest commissioner Matt Steffy and asked him to tell them a little bit about himself. Commissioner Steffy provided a brief biography for the commission and audience present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA *(Three minute time limit)*

Chair Bremicker invited public comments on items on the agenda and noted the three minute time limit.

Brianna Allen, city resident, member of the Old Town Artist in Resident Program, provided a brief description on her visit and commented on the Uniform Signage item under pending business. She provided a color copy of the proposed signage for Bishops Beach Park.

She requested a recommendation of support from the Commission to be forwarded to the City Manager.

Ms. Allen responded to a few questions from the commissioners and addressed concern regarding the intent to have the signage while uniquely Homer it was to be uniform.

Commissioner Lowney offered comment from the recent Public Arts Committee meeting that the proposed sign was fully supported with the added City logo placed within the design.

The commission expressed support for the new signage and thanked Ms. Allen and her group for including the project in the program.

Kathy Hill, city resident, commented on keeping the HERC building and advocated for the commission to put forth efforts to save the building and especially the gym.

There were no further comments.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

VISITORS

Homer Area Trail (HAT) - Beth Cumming and Kevin Walker spoke to the commission regarding the formation of a non-profit corporation and taking over where the Kachemak Drive Path Committee left off. He provided a brief synopsis of the progress the group has made and then expounded in detail the ownership of the land where the trail is going to be placed. HAT was requesting the continued support of the commission to work on the trail and to submit a recommendation to Council to vote down the Resolution 13-040 at the next Council meeting.

Beth Cumming provided some history on the funding and actions of council and the message that council will make if they pass the Resolution that will be before them. She explained that if Council passed the resolution they will be denying the group the support necessary to obtain funding from outside organizations.

The commissioners asked a few questions regarding the following:

- Why would the City agree to pay half of the cost of a survey if they do not own the property?
- If the proposed trail is opposed by Council right now because of cost or they oppose the project as a whole.
- If the State would allow the trail to be built with volunteer labor.

Mr. Walker responded that the State did not approve but they did not say they disapproved either. He further commented that the state favored the south side of the road for placement of any trail, citing security reasons for not wanting a trail on the north side of Kachemak Drive. He went on to say that they indicated they were willing to work with the group.

There was no further discussion. The Chair thanked the group for coming in and speaking to the commission.

ReCreate Rec - Kate Crowley - Introduced herself and provided a brief explanation of her purpose for coming before the commission. Initially the intent is to inform the commissioners the purpose of the group, members and what goals they had in mind and that they would come before the commission periodically to update them on their progress and to request support for the group. She explained that the group formed out of the need to address funding for a community recreation center.

Some items of discussion and points Ms. Crowley made were:

- There are a lot of details to forming a recreation service area
- The City would have to work with the Borough regarding a Service Area
- Additional ways to fund recreation and a parks department
- explained how a service area is delineated and that this would go before the voters in the districts that were included.
- The group would welcome any suggestions or direction from the commission
- advocate for a Parks and Recreation Board that would have power to distribute funds to groups such as one county in North Carolina has done.
- Homer has no recreational program - there is a recreational programmer and a parks maintenance person

Commissioners made the following recommendations/suggestions:

- Contacting Rachel M. Parra, Director of the North Kenai Recreational District

- Making it a cooperative effort between the City and Borough not a hostile takeover
- keeping it broad and inclusive keeps the building out of the discussion
- branding is important
- broaden the aspects to include outdoor recreational aspects too not focused solely on a community

Chair Bremicker thanked Ms. Crowley for coming to the meeting.

Commissioner Archibald expressed an interest to attend meetings on behalf of the commission when he is able.

The commission agreed by consensus that it was okay to attend and represent the commission.

Commissioner Brann encouraged the field trip to Sterling Community Center be set up but with the caveat that whatever the date a two week period prior to the worksession/field trip must be allowed for the Clerk to advertise and notice the trip.

There were no further discussions or comments.

STAFF & COUNCIL/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ AND BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Carey Meyer - Public Works Report

Mr. Meyer provided a brief status update to the commission on the new picnic pavilion at Karen Hornaday Park. He noted that the contractor was Polar North Construction. They intend to break ground on Monday, September 23, 2013. He stated the benches and fire pit would also be constructed at the same time in response to question from Commissioner Archibald. Mr. Meyer stated that the old pavilion is currently in the parking lot and will remain there until further notice.

A brief discussion on the future use of that old pavilion ensued. It was unsure where it would be placed for repurposing at this time. The commission has time to revisit that discussion at a later meeting.

Mr. Meyer responded to questions related to drainage projects and commented on the reason for delay in addressing some of these outstanding projects was the lack of personnel.

B. Julie Engebretsen - Staff report

Ms. Engebretsen reported that the City Manager stated that the Needs Assessment is included in the stack of things he would like to fund. This does not mean it will be funded. Ms. Engebretsen recommended that one or more commissioners attend every council meeting until December and mention the desire for council to fund this request. She did have a fair amount to report on the HERC Building but will save it for later in the agenda.

Ms. Engebretsen field questions from the commission on the following:

- Clarification on what a Needs Assessment will provide.
- Amount requested in the budget to perform a Needs Assessment
- How this would be addressed with the public
- Who would determine the questions contained in the survey
- Is this survey to be city wide or area wide, there may be some questions included that address serving a broader area?
- If the budget request included funds for the campground host infrastructure
- Status of the advertisement thanking all the volunteers and groups this past year

Mr. Illg commented on the purpose of the Needs Assessment was to provide a basis and data such as financial information on funding activities, and the start of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This will also assist in applying for grants too.

Commissioner Brann noted that the city does own property outside the city limits.

Ms. Engebretsen strongly advocated that the commissioners show up and speak at the Council meetings and encourage the public who can speak in favor of performing this needs assessment.

C. Parks Maintenance Report - Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson commented that Mr. Meyer provided most of her report she did want to recommend supporting the request for support of the signage and artwork. She elaborated on the request from Brianna Allen regarding the Artwork placement and the new signage for Bishop's Beach Park. She noted that the Public Arts Committee was in the process of selecting aspects for the uniform signage and had already denoted that the larger parks such as Karen Hornaday deserved individual signage.

Ms. Otteson also reported that they have hired a company to come in and clear out the larger alders on the Poopdeck Trail. She did mention to Commissioner Archibald that instead of scheduling a Karen Hornaday Park Clean-up she would encourage a work party on the Library and Poopdeck Trail instead. Ms. Otteson further noted that the Church on the Rock has adopted this park and are planning on a cleanup party in October; so efforts would be best cleaning up the Poopdeck Trail.

Chair Bremicker provided the start and finish of the Poopdeck Trail for Commissioner Lillibridge.

There was a brief discussion on when to schedule the work party.

D. Community Recreation - Mike Illg

Mr. Illg reported on his attendance at the recent annual Alaska Recreational and Parks Association conference in Juneau. He spoke about a presentation that Commissioner Steffy and he did for the conference. Mr. Illg additionally reported that the Homer Hockey Association was awarded Outstanding Organization of the Year Award. They are one of four non-profit organizations to operate a hockey rink and the only one in Alaska. So this award is very well deserved.

Commissioner Steffy and he have put their heads together to propose Homer as the 2015 annual conference location. This will be a great opportunity and bring approximately 80-90 parks and recreation professionals to Homer. This presents a great opportunity for the city.

He has no update on the Trails Map. He is planning on getting back to that this fall and would like to include Ms. Engebretsen at the next meeting.

He reported on the possibility of using the HERC building at cold status until it is demolished. He has been meeting with a group of people to begin Dodge Ball program.

Commissioner Steffy responded to the question on cost and specifics on joining the association. He noted the different levels and also recommended that the city should join as an agency member which costs \$150 per year. He commented on the award that Homer has been given and the strong possibility of hosting the conference it would be very beneficial to be a member.

Commissioner Brann asked for this item to be on the next meeting agenda and that the commission vote on becoming members.

Chair Bremicker thanked Commissioner Steffy and complimented him on his knowledge.

Commissioner Lowney encouraged Mr. Illg to get the Trails map done since the commission has designated funds for this new map.

Mr. Illg provided more details on his presentation at the conference at the request of Commissioner Steffy. His presentation was on professional certifications in Parks and Recreation. There are numerous certifications that are becoming the expected qualifications. He is also working with the Board creating scholarships or funding for parks and recreational professionals to take the certification tests since they are very expensive. He looks forward to the next discussion.

Commissioner Steffy stated that there are currently on three certified professionals in the state and Mr. Illg is one of them.

Chair Bremicker called for a recess at 7:02 pm. He called the meeting back to order at 7:08 pm.

- E. Karen Hornaday Park Committee - Robert Archibald
1. Synopsis of the September 5, 2013 regular meeting

Commissioner Archibald provided a report on recent meeting with Carey Meyer, Public Works Director, in attendance the committee received clarification on exact location of the new pavilion. The old pavilion was removed to the parking lot.

Commissioner Lowney noted that a motion was made to remove it from the park because the funding was not available for \$20,000 concrete pad. She noted that it was not included in the master plan. Commissioner Archibald commented that more conversation will be had on this issue.

Commissioner Archibald reported on the hydro-seeding and drainage and the suggested revisions to the Master Plan by Jack Wiles; they also hit Mr. Meyer pretty hard with questions regarding Woodard Creek. Mr. Meyer responded that if a volunteer group would walk the proposed route and flag it that maybe additional work could be completed on upgrading.

Commissioner Lowney brought up the proposed trail in the LWC grant which is not in the master plan. She questions bring in additional work when it was not included in the master plan and Woodard Creek was included in the plan. When the commission gave approval they were not aware of the cost. She would like these issues to come before the commission for discussion.

Commissioner Archibald addressed the cost of the pavilion is high using grant monies from the State due to the requirement of following wage standards.

Chair Bremicker would like to see the proposed revisions suggested by Jack Wiles plan before the commission. He also noted the comments tonight on more personnel needed. He advocated for stressing the addition of personnel to council. Chair Bremicker then suggested moving the Pavilion to the spit - Coal Point might be a good spot to consider.

The commissioners entertained further discussion and comments on placement of the old pavilion.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearings scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Discussion on Usage of the Remaining Commission Funds for Uniform Signage

Ms. Krause provided a brief synopsis of the purpose this item was on the agenda.

The commissioners entertained a discussion on the uniform signage for the parks and the parks that were prioritized for signage starting with parks that had no signage. Commissioner Lowney advocated for designating the commission funds for uniform signage.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD- MOVED TO USE REMAINING COMMISSION FUNDS FOR UNIFORM SIGNAGE UNDER THE PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE.

Commissioner Brann would approve with the caveat that the parks without signage get signage first. Staff reminded the commissioners that funds for the advertisement has not been expended and that amount would be approximately \$450-500.00. It was noted that the funds would be used for Uniform Signage under the direction of the Public Arts Committee.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion on Resolution 13-040, Directing City Administration to Terminate All Survey, Design, and Cost Estimating Work on the Kachemak Drive Pathway

Chair Bremicker read the title into the record. Chair Bremicker commented that the committee was disbanded. The outside group was formed. The trail has not been removed from multiple plans. The City Manager has noted the safety aspects in a memo to the Airport Manager regarding removal of trees hampering sight lines for the runway approach. Chair Bremicker believes that to have the City cut it off was the wrong direction. He stated it was one of the main reasons he joined this commission. Further he believes that there are funds for trails that could be used. Chair Bremicker believed that with the city's backing and the use of volunteer efforts this trail could be done. He cited as an example the ski trails.

Chair Bremicker stated that Council should get behind this and it should be made a priority. He wanted City Council to say "yes, it's a good idea what do we need to do to get this done what can we do to help." He is not sure where the antagonism has come from. He stated that the people of Homer want this trail.

Commissioner Brann agreed with the key points of the trail being in the plans; but by Council stating that the commission cannot talk about the trail is negating those approved plans; he is not asking them to fund it, but to allow the commission to speak with and a work with the non-profit group on the trail. He believes that volunteers can do what the city won't.

Commissioner Lillibridge commented on removing or recommending amending the last two whereas's to state they will not fund it at this time.

Mr. Illg stated that this is both symbolic and would set precedent and passing this Resolution would stonewall additional future efforts for parks and recreation.

Ms. Engebretsen stated the commission can make a recommendation that City Council fail this resolution.

Further discussion on what direction the commission would like to have Council take for Resolution 13-040 was held with points made on safety concerns, hampering funding options, postponement, the resolution containing non-specific other issues; non-support from the City.

Chair Bremicker stated that this resolution does not have the majority support of Council. It is supported by the mayor but she doesn't vote. They are not asking for funds right now. They don't need this to cut off future help from the city.

Chair Bremicker requested a motion. He opined strongly that the motion should be voted down.

Additional comments on commenting on the Resolution during the Council meeting.

BREMICKER/BRANN - MOVED TO REQUEST CITY COUNCIL DO NOT PASS RESOLUTION 13-040.

Commissioner Archibald asked to amend the motion to include the wording "or postpone". The commissioners then entertained discussion on the motion.

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

Motion carried

Mr. Illg requested Chair Bremicker suspend the rules to address Item D under New Business.

Commissioner Steffy suggested a motion to extend the meeting time past 8:00 p.m. to address the remaining agenda items since they seemed pretty important.

Chair Bremicker called for a motion to extend the meeting time.

LOWNEY/BRANN - MOVED TO EXTEND THE MEETING TIME PAST 8:00 P.M. TO ADDRESS THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS.

No discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Bremicker requested a motion to suspend the rules to address Item D before Item B & C.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Scheduling the Fall Park Walk Through

Chair Bremicker read the title into the record.

Commissioner Lillibridge suggested a walk through on the HERC site. She stated that she would like to see what they as a commission are fighting for since she has not visited the building.

Commissioner Lowney recommended walk through on KHP reviewing proposed revisions recommended by Jack Wise to the Master Plan.

LOWNEY/LILLIBRIDGE - MOVED TO SCHEDULE A FALL WALK THROUGH ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD AT NOON.

There was a brief discussion regarding access and Mr. Illg stated he would get the key and provide a tour through the building. The commissioners asked about the other building and staff responded that would be up to the maintenance staff permission.

VOTE. YES. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Scheduling the Fall Karen Hornaday Park Clean up

Chair Bremicker read the title into the record and inquired what the commissioners would like to do.

Discussion ensued regarding the request from Ms. Otteson on cleaning up Poopdeck Trail. Discussion included the commissioner's availability to participate.

Chair Bremicker requested a motion to schedule the autumn cleanup at Poopdeck Trail.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - MOVED TO SCHEDULE FALL CLEAN-UP FOR POOPDECK TRAIL ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013 AT NOON.

There was a brief discussion on showing up earlier for those commissioners who are early birds.

VOTE. YES. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

D. Discussion on City Council Decision to Use the HERC Site as the New Public Safety Complex Site

Chair Bremicker read the title into the record.

Mr. Illg brought to floor the information of a new resolution to keeping the Gym in Cold Status.

Discussion developed on the Council changing the procedures for the CIP, dropping a bomb on the commission and having a public hearing by the commission or council.

Points made were as follows:

- Boys and Girls Club left quietly no one knows why
- More efforts have been made to use that building for Community recreation
- Keep what we have
- Spoke about the tour given by the City Manager and many groups were ready to rent space that were non-profits and recreationally based.
- This has been a conversation for the last two years or more
- It cannot really cost \$10 million to mitigate the asbestos and renovate the building to address the safety and code requirements.
- Deal with the Borough on the land
- Propose another location where the RV dump is that would address the Chief's concern about being further distanced from the Spit
- What happens to the Skateboard Park?

During the CC worksession there were four sites considered - Julie participated in that site visits

- Town Center
- Main Street
- HERC Site

BREMICKER/BRANN - MOVED THAT PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE USE OF THE HERC SITE FOR RECREATION AND EDUCATION.

Discussion ensued.

LILLIBRIDGE/- MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO FOCUS ON KEEPING THE GYM

LOWNEY/STEFFY - MOVED TO AMEND HERC BUILDING TO HERC SITE

Pointed out that there were many comments and council said thank you and continued discussion.

VOTE. (Amendment) YES. LOWNEY, STEFFY, LILLIBRIDGE, BREMICKER, BRANN

VOTE. NO. ARCHIBALD.

Further discussion on it being too weak a statement. The commission has done their work and it is now up to the public to voice their point of view. The commission has already expressed their opinion on the HERC building. Further discussion on the popularity, previous attendance and programs ensued. Chair Bremicker called for the vote.

VOTE. YES. NONOBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Commissioner Attendance at Council Meetings 2013

B. Strategic Plan 2013

C. Commission Annual Calendar

D.

There was no discussion on the informational materials.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Brianna Allen, good job on such as meaty meeting, Old Town AIR would like the expressed support of the omission for installation and maintenance of a new work of art that will be placed in Bishops Beach Park. The amount will be \$15,000.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - MOVED TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE OLD TOWN ARTIST IN RESIDENT PROGRAM REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL.

There was a brief discussion on the content or idea, installation costs, and maintenance concerns regarding added work for city personnel and the Old Town group adopting the park and maintain it. The selection committee would be able to address those concerns also.

Commissioner Lowney volunteered for the selection committee. Chair Bremicker appointed her to that committee.

VOTE. YES. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Ms. Engebretsen and Ms. Krause had no comments.

Mr. Illg commented that he will be running the 2014 Boston Marathon on behalf of a local young man for the Children's Tumor Foundation and he will be raising money. If you would like more information please contact him.

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

There was no councilmember present.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Bremicker stated he was going to make October his last meeting he believed that tonight was his last meeting. He doesn't remember how many years he has served. He was not sure when the terms ended and was hoping to vote for the next chair and vice chair. He has another book to write and he needs to focus. So putting in his plug he is having a book signing at AJ's on Sunday and hopes to see everyone there between 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. He thought it was really great having Matt on board. This is great commission and he knows that things will keep progressing. He will visit periodically. He seconded Dave's opinion on great staff.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Lowney commented good meeting she thanked Brianna for sticking around for so long, thanked Dave for calling in and being on the phone for the long haul.

Commissioner Steffy stated he will be taking over as the section chair for the Recreation and Parks Association Citizens and Board Committee which encompass all the parks and recreation committees and boards statewide. He would like to get this commission working with other communities that have dealt with similar issues so we don't reinvent the wheel.

Commissioner Lillibridge agreed it was a very good meeting, glad to see the energy back from the summer, welcomed Matt on board. Thanked Dave for calling in; it is really dynamic to hear the new voices.

Commissioner Archibald commented that he would like to attend the ReCreate Rec meetings on behalf of the commission and will report back on actions.

Chair Bremicker appointed him to that committee.

Commissioner Brann thanked everyone and all the staff for their hard work, time and expertise and making this all work. He did read her note about the economics of finances. He did have some financial information from the National Economic Recreational Study that she could probably Google. He said if Matt needs a volunteer he recommended the commissioners go along they could a lot about recreation. It was a good meeting, Thanks.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Bremicker adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m. The next **WORKSESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY AT NOON ON OCTOBER 5, 2013 AT POOPDECK TRAIL; THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2013** 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: _____