



City of Homer

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Memorandum

TO: Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Planning Technician
DATE: September 12, 2013
SUBJECT: September Staff Report

Staff activities:

- I provided the Commission's budget request to the City Manager and Finance Director. Walt said he would like to fund the P&R needs assessment if there is enough money. It is good news that this item has his attention and he will fund it if there is enough money. The commission and citizens can support this item by speaking to Council and writing letters. Squeaky wheel ...
- Thank you advertisement: staff is working on it. Should have an update at the meeting.
- Karen Hornaday Park and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant (LWCF). Katie Koester has been working diligently to complete the grant paperwork. Federal grants take a lot of time. However, hopefully we are on track for at least some construction in 2014. Attached is the project list and time schedule, although we are already behind that schedule because of federal paperwork.
- Construction on the new picnic shelter begins the week of the meeting. Placing the old picnic shelter is part of the LWCF grant, so we will not have funding to complete that project until next year. It will happen! We just have a cash flow and project timing issue for this fall.
- In August the Council had a Saturday work session on the Capital Improvement Plan, and city projects in general. (I was vocal that a P&R needs assessment is critical.) At the work session, it was clear that Council's priorities are the core services: public safety, the port, water and sewer and roads. Things like Parks and Recreation are good for quality of life and are important, but if the roads are bad it doesn't matter if the city has 6 baseball fields; the roads are still bad and we all drive them. I don't want the commission to feel like there is no money for P&R, but I'm trying to convey that the days of "oh just get a grant to pay for it..." are over. Council has had a pretty big shift in mindset. No longer does the City have a wish list of 15 projects and we hope some funding comes along. Council has become much more focused with the CIP - now there is a top 5 list, and Council is serious about accomplishing those projects. I think in order to accomplish as much as possible, P&R needs to find a way to work within this new mindset. Food for thought as we head into our fall/winter meetings.

(We could talk about a revised strategic plan at a future work session. Ideally a needs assessment will be funded, and a lot of this work will happen as part of that process.)