

Session 13-08 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on November 21, 2013 at 5:34 pm by Vice Chair Dave Brann at the Homer City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS STEFFY, LOWNEY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, AND MACCAMPBELL

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice Chair Brann requested a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD - MOVED TO AMEND TO INCLUDE KAREN HORNADAY MASTER PLAN UNDER PENDING BUSINESS ITEM A KAREN HORNADAY PARK.

There was a brief discussion to include the Master plan in the discussion since it was listed on the annual calendar.

The amended 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 September 19, 2013

Vice Chair Brann requested approval of the minutes from September 19, 2013.

STEFFY/LOWNEY - SO MOVED.

There was a brief discussion.

The minutes were approved by consensus of the Commission.

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

There were no public present at this meeting.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

VISITORS

There were no visitors scheduled for this meeting.

STAFF & COUNCIL/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ AND BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Staff Report - Julie Engebretsen, Planning Technician/GIS

Ms. Engebretsen commented that as far as she was aware the commission has spent all of its funding. The commission can elect to join the Alaska Recreation and Parks Association as long as the Council approves the budget as it is presented. This will be on the January agenda. There will be a worksession on the Needs Assessment at 4:30 p.m. which can be discussed later in the agenda. Included in the budget discussion will be the request for additional seasonal personnel for

Angie. She recently visited the Crittenden Road Improvement and it is really nice. There is now a gravel path for beach access, while steep, it is really nice.

Commissioner Archibald requested additional information on the Needs Assessment. Ms. Engebretsen state that Commissioner Steffy has more information and will be speaking to Council on Monday regarding that assessment.

Further comments will be made under the agenda item.

B. Parks Maintenance Report - Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson did not have a written report however she will be glad to answer any questions. She did note that there were campers until the last possible moment. She recommended that the Commission consider starting to work on creating a Master Plan for Jack Gist. Ms. Otteson stated that there is a need to relocate the camp fee building and her preference would be to place it at Mariner Park instead of a suggested place on the Pier One parcel.

Ms. Otteson reported that the work party on Poopdeck Trail was very successful in opening up the trail. There is still a lot of work to do and maybe in the spring they can open it up a little bit more.

Commissioner Lowney requested that this be added to the calendar so they can plan for it closer to the time. She next wanted to discuss the pile of gravel that is currently placed at Ben Walters Park. She opined that this would be perfect for the trail and if Rotary has no objection could they spread it along that trail.

Vice Chair Brann explained that Rotary did purchase this gravel and if there was another location to please check with him first. Commissioner Lowney felt that it would work for the other trail within the park and it was a good match.

Commissioner MacCampbell queried about the erosion in Mariner Park in front of the slough and if something was going to be done. Ms. Otteson commented that Public Works did address some of the issue since the erosion also totally blocked the slough making it a lake. She confirmed that there is no permanent plan to address erosion in that area.

Commissioner Archibald asked about recognition for persons in the community that plant flowers, etc.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the commission distributing personal cards thanking select person's efforts and that it could be done again. Commissioner Archibald wanted to thank Beth Cumming for all her work she has done. It was noted that the advertisement was only seen in one paper. Ms. Krause will double check that and if not set it up for printing.

Ms. Otteson confirmed that there will be restrooms open she noted that they will start with only one side of each being available and if necessary they will close both sides or only keep them open from 8:00 to 5:00 p.m. during the day.

Vice Chair stated that if there are problems they can always put a piece or letter to the editor regarding the problems.

Ms. Otteson commented that they should be completed this month but they may not be open for public use until the first of the year. She was unaware of any joyriders in the campground at Karen Hornaday before the campground closed this year. The persons camping at Mariner this year have relocated to the area near the Seafarer's Memorial.

C. Community Recreation - Mike Illg

Mr. Illg submitted a laydown regarding the number of participants for pickle ball and the other activities.

Vice Chair Brann read the information into the record.

Commissioner Lowney requested clarification on the numbers reported for the activities compared to the revenue. Commissioner Steffy pointed out that the first sheet represented only pickle ball whereas the other activities have been going on earlier.

Mr. Illg apologized for arriving late but he was busy shoveling snow and readying a room for a new activity. He briefly explained his laydown material on activities and revenues. He noted that it is not 100% accurate since it is done by the volunteers.

There are a couple of new classes starting up - Pilates and dodge ball. They are in discussions with the School regarding field usage in the summer. The new trails map is almost completed and should be to the printer in January or February. He commented that there is lots of activity going on. He responded that there have been no negative comments on the lower temperatures. He also added about not being able to do it all.

There was a brief discussion on what happened to the Boys & Girls Club. Commissioner Lowney commented on an email that is circulating through the community regarding a resolution submitted to the Borough asking for permission to be able to sell the building. She requested any updated information from staff on this resolution.

Ms. Engebretsen commented on using the Land Allocation Plan for this purpose and she will update the commission then.

Discussion ensued on the commission submitting an opinion on the HERC and if the Commission can voice to Council to allow the public a chance to weigh in on the decisions due to the fact that it is being considered for a Public Safety Building. It was pointed out that there have been many discussions on that building especially the group that is being pushed out of the building.

Ms. Engebretsen stated that there are really two issues and stressed that a Public Safety Building is really far down the road. She understands that people are seeing doors closing but explained that this has been going on for approximately three years now. The public has heard that Council cannot afford to heat the building and there are some costly fixes required for the building. She stressed the importance of the Needs Assessment.

Commissioner Lowney voiced concern with the people that will be chosen to be on the proposed steering committee. Discussion then ensued on the importance of a needs assessment.

Vice Chair Brann called for a break at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 7:07 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearings scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Karen Hornaday Park Pavilion - Status Update

1. Master Plan

Ms. Otteson reported on the status of the rock pile and it would remain until the weather warms up again. She explained the holes will be taken care soon since the ground has hardened up some.

Commissioner Archibald commented on the amount of remaining dirt work to do.

Ms. Otteson did clarify that the old shelter was going to be placed in between the other upper ballfields and that it was part of the Land and Water Conservation Grant. She was not sure about the schedule for the fire circle and benches.

Commissioner Lowney commented on the roof line of the new pavilion. She expressed concern regarding the old pavilion sitting in the overflow parking area becoming the catch-all. She wanted to make sure they move forward with the issues with Little League and cleaning up those other structures and cleaning up those spaces. Also, she would like the commission to address the MOA or MOU with Little League.

Vice Chair Brann requested that be on the January agenda. This will allow staff to contact Little League and the City Manager.

Commissioner Lowney also noted a picnic table in the t-ball field and she likes it and felt that may bring families into that area more.

Vice Chair Brann brought up the concern expressed by Ms. Lillibridge regarding the smaller size of the pavilion and that it will not be large enough to fit 8 picnic tables. Ms. Otteson stated that they can fit 4 tables comfortably but squeeze six tables. It was noted by Commissioner Lowney that the concrete corners take up a lot of space and can be used as seating.

Commissioner Archibald commented that he was disappointed and thought they could cantilever out the roof a little bit and maybe that can be done later down the road.

Commissioner Lowney noted that the second pavilion was not included in the master plan and now it is included in the LWC grant so they are stuck with it; she went on to further comment that when they are "brainstorming" they should always be allowed to refer back to the master plan. She referenced the cost of relocating the old pavilion would have changed her vote.

Vice Chair Brann requested a copy of the proposed changes by Jack Wiles be given to Commissioner MacCampbell.

It was noted by Ms. Krause that the changes were to be reviewed by the committee and they were supposed to bring their recommendations before the commission.

Commissioner Archibald admitted that the committee has not met in a while. Ms. Krause confirmed that they do have a tentative meeting date for December 5, 2013. Commissioner Archibald stated he will get an email out to the committee to review that plan and bring recommendations back for the meeting to pass on to the commission.

B. Worksession Scheduled for November 23, 2013 re: Site Visit to HERC Building

Vice Chair Brann read the meeting location from the email submitted by Mr. Illg.

C. Discussion on Worksession Site Visit to Sterling, Alaska Community Recreation Center

Vice Chair Brann read the title into the record and asked if Commissioner Steffy wanted to provide a report on their findings.

Commissioner Steffy commented that it was interesting how they got it funded and built. If it all works out it will be a wonderful example of a community working together. The center can be rented out for gatherings as large as 200-250 persons. Currently they have one volunteer staff maintenance person which is a VISTA volunteer.

It does raise a question on the model, which was an example of the extreme volunteerism of approximately 5 persons or companies. Commissioner Steffy noted that the contractor who installed the HVAC was the person who provided the tour but five years down the road and he is not available will they have someone knowledgeable.

Vice Chair Brann stated that the center is not for all things at all times such as child care or exercise equipment due to liability issues and costs. He did state that this was built for approximately \$100 per square foot. They poured the slab and then raised panels to construct the building. The volunteer contractor was able to act as general contractor for the project and even bought used ovens to save money. The city could not build something like that.

D. 2013 Park Volunteers Thank You Advertisement

Vice Chair Brann read the title into the record. He commented that it looked good, caught his attention and would really like to see something like this twice a year. He further commented that they could thank individuals if they have the names, etc. Commissioner Archibald wanted to include Beth Cummings for her efforts.

Commissioner Lowney inquired about the costs of the advertisement. She opined that a person such as Beth should be acknowledged with a card or personal thank you. She believed that there was still a need for a personal Thank you.

Vice Chair Brann requested a running account be kept in the minutes regarding persons names that they wanted to acknowledge.

Commissioner Lowney wanted to set a meeting date so they take action on it now or waiting until after the holidays. She asked to relive this issue at the January meeting.

E. Budget 2014 - Needs Assessment

Commissioner Steffy stated that he will be speaking during the Committee of the Whole to fully explain what a Needs Assessment is and does for the community. This will also qualify the dollar amount being asked for by the commission. He has recently done quite a bit of research on how different community has conducted a needs assessment. He further noted that you can expend \$5000 or \$80,000 on an assessment and it will reflect as such.

Commissioner Steffy then provided some numbers expended by other communities and what it provided. He further noted that they are on tract what the information will provide such as what the community wants and what it uses.

He further commented that with the colorful complexity of the Homer community you will need to take time to get all the right people involved in this; in Sitka they had 33 public meetings. It will be interesting is a steering committee and how to scope an RFP for this, to what extent to tie the hands or leave them open for a consulting firm. Commissioner Steffy noted that the ReCreate Rec has raised almost \$5000 to make up the difference to \$40,000. That it was a great cross section of the community who has dug into their own pockets and he believed that would make an impression on the Council.

Mr. Illg arrived at 6:28 p.m.

Commissioner Lowney added that she has been fielding comments on the price tag for the assessment. She opined that it was important they speak to the price tag as there are several that feel they could do it cheaper. Another concern of hers is MAPP has done a lot of demographic data that can be very useful especially in recreation and what this community needs and wants. She would hope that they could access what MAPP has uncovered regarding recreation. She definitely agreed that what they learned from this assessment would also feed into MAPP.

Commissioner Lowney has requested to be included in all conversations regarding Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Archibald agreed and noted that they did have a healthy budget to compile that information.

Commissioner Steffy assured the commission that the consultant hired would incorporate the data gleaned by MAPP.

Vice Chair Brann inquired if it would be possible to distribute a "Fact Sheet" or print out a point of view in the newspaper. Commissioner Steffy stated that he had thought about that. Both Ms. Engebretsen and Ms. Krause stressed the sticky-ness educating the community regarding the Needs Assessment. Ms. Krause recommended he submit in writing what he wanted to distribute or publish and then she could submit it to the City Attorney and City Manager for review and approval.

Commissioner Steffy would draw a factual document and submit for staff review.

There was a brief discussion on the format of the Council meeting for presenting the factual information and the sales pitch.

Commissioner Lowney explained what and who MAPP was and where they fit in the scheme of things. MAPP = Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships

Commissioner MacCampbell noted that the State performs a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every 7 years and that this may be beneficial for the Needs Assessment. He

knows that Homer and communities are polled regarding their outdoor communities. He was not sure when this was last completed and will look into it.

Commissioner Archibald asked if Ms. Murphy could attend a meeting to provide a status update for them. Commissioner Lowney will extend the invitation for a meeting next year to provide an overview.

Ms. Engebretsen stated that Soldotna has a \$70,000 plan which a portion of it is the needs assessment. It is available on the Soldotna city website. She commented that they may not need a fancy flashy plan and have something much simpler.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD - MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ALLOW MR. ILLG TO PROVIDE HIS REPORT AT THIS TIME.

There was no discussion.

The motion to suspend the rules was approved by consensus of the commission.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Welcome New Commissioner!

The commissioners welcomed Commissioner Roger MacCampbell. Commissioner MacCampbell relayed his interest in parks and trails and looked forward to being on the commission.

B. Establishing the 2014 Meeting Schedule

1. Resolution 13-0XX

Vice Chair Brann review the dates for the commission listed in the memorandum from the City Clerk.

Ms. Krause explained that the commissioners can take the opportunity to review their personal schedules and compare to the proposed meeting schedule for 2014. She noted that if there was a conflict with the commissioners they could change dates now or if the proposed schedule was good she would like a motion to approve it as presented.

Vice Chair Brann requested a motion to approve the meeting schedule for 2014.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Elections - Chair and Vice Chair

Vice Chair Brann read the memorandum into the record. Prior to opening the floor for nominations of Chair he declined any motions to making him chair. He stated he did not mind being Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Brann opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Commissioner Lowney nominated Commissioner Steffy. Commissioner MacCampbell seconded the motion.

Commissioner Steffy accepted with the caveat of assistance from the staff.

Vice Chair Brann closed the floor for nominations.

The motion was unanimous for Commissioner Matt Steffy to fill the post for Chair.

Commissioner Brann turned the meeting over to Chair Steffy.

Chair Steffy opened the floor for nominations of Vice Chair.

Commissioner Archibald nominated Commissioner Brann for Vice Chair. Commissioner Lowney seconded the motion and requested a call for the vote.

Chair Steffy inquired if Mr. Brann accepted the nomination for Vice Chair. Mr. Brann consented.

Chair Steffy requested those in favor of Mr. Brann retaining his seat as Vice Chair say aye.

VOTE. YES. ARCHIBALD, LOWNEY, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL.

Motion carried.

D. New Memorandum of Agreement - Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

Chair Steffy read the title into the record. He asked if Commissioner Brann had any comment on the agreement due to his involvement with the Ski Club.

Commissioner Brann provided a brief history and status on the agreement. He further noted that while he was away the City Manager had emailed him regarding extending the term of the agreement to five years but since he did not respond the current agreement before them represents the two year term.

Since there were no further comments or discussion from the commissioners they were good to go on the agreement.

E. Adopt a Park

Chair Steffy read the title into the record.

Commissioner Lowney stated that she requested this item on the agenda but wanted to discuss how to promote this program. She went on to explain her concerns and different groups that could be approached and asked for suggestions on how they can promote this program.

Commissioner Lowney relayed the greatest need presented by Angie Otteson.

Commissioner Brann stated how he approached this item with the Rotary. He then recommended that a list be created showing what parks have been adopted and what parks are still waiting to be adopted.

Mr. Illg suggested getting some buy-in from the Chamber of Commerce but also utilizing large events to promote the Adopt a Park Program such as the Telluride Film Festival, etc.

Chair Steffy inquired what parks were adopted and what hasn't been that could be reviewed. Further discussion on what could be done to promote the program ensued. It was noted that any changes to the form would have to be approved by Council. Staff recommended creating a one page cover summary in response to the concern expressed regarding the commitment.

It was noted that persons or groups could iron out the details with Ms. Otteson.

It was noted that there was signage available to show who adopted the park.

The commission also discussed what more could they do for persons or businesses that adopt a park such as a link to their website on the City's website; having it noted on the Chambers website if that business is a member of the Chamber; inclusion in print materials distributed by the City regarding the parks and trails; Letter to the Editor or small press release when a person or group adopts a park, performs a clean-up, etc.; Issuing a Certificate of Appreciate to the Organization or Business to display if they so choose.

Commissioner Lowney would like to consider promoting the program at the next park Day event.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Commissioner Attendance at Council Meeting Schedule

Chair Steffy noted that the Council meeting of the 18th was moved to the 25th. He will also be at the December 9th council meeting. Ms. Krause asked if she could get a volunteer for the January Council meetings since there is no meeting in December of the commission.

Commissioner Brann volunteered.

Chair Steffy asked what the process was regarding the informational materials. Ms. Krause explained the process. Chair Steffy next inquired if there were any questions or comments regarding the informational materials B through K.

Commissioner Brann commented on the informative value of the informational materials contained in each packet.

B. 2013 Strategic Plan

C. Commission Annual Calendar

D. 2013 Council Budget Development Schedule

E. Memorandum 13-139 Appointment and Reappointment

F. Resolution 13-092, Amending the Meeting Length

G. Resolution 13-095, Authorizing to Keep the HERC Building Gym Open

H. Memorandum dated September 20, 2013 to Mayor and Council re: Resolution 13-040

I. Memorandum dated September 20, 2013 to Mayor and Council re: HERC Site

J. Certificate for Bumpo Bremicker Retirement

Chair Steffy thanked Bumpo Bremicker for his years of service and wishing the best to him on behalf of the commission to his next adventures.

K. Ordinance 13-39, Appropriated a Land and Water Conservation Grant for Karen Hornaday Park Improvements

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

There was no audience present.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Ms. Engebretsen reminded the commission that the last meeting of Council will be the most interesting even though the Budget process is conducted over a three month period it always seems that a lot is done at the last meeting; she congratulated the Chair and Vice Chair and welcomed Commissioner MacCampbell.

Mr. Illg commented that mid-January will be the deadline for the next Activity guide if there is any information that they would like to include please let him know. He invited the commissioners to stop on by and see what they were up to at community recreation. He then congratulated the Chair and Vice Chair.

Ms. Krause thanked the commissioners. Ms. Krause offered advised on a perceived versus an actual financial conflict and recommend caution.

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

There was no councilmember present.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Steffy thanked Robert for his compliments. He also commented that he has always loved Commissioner MacCampbell's park and trails as he grew up across the Bay and it has always been his most favorite park. He then noted that a recent online survey by Christine Beal who was a trails ranger in Cordova, Denali and Montana. He did note that are considering approaching her for the ARPA conference in 2015. He commented that for the last two months he has been focusing on the Needs Assessment and he felt that it was encouraging and inspiring to see how many respondents that are coming forward from the community. He encouraged getting the word out regarding attending the Council meeting and while it is the City that will be conducting the assessment it will provide beneficial results for all kinds of groups within the community. He also said if they can attend to email the City Clerk or drop it off at the office. He enjoys working with the commission.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Lowney commented on the group Recreate Rec and performing the due diligence the on why we need to do the needs assessment. She then commented on the economic impact recreation has to the area and community. She wanted to put a shout out to Mike on the recreation program and the new programs. She also wanted to update the commission on her work with the Arts Committee on uniform signage. She said it is really cool and the group fed off of the sign that Old Town commissioned for Bishops Beach. She said that they will see a new sign at Bayview Park, Louie's Lagoon, Jeffrey Park and Jack Gist Park. The End of the Road Park will get a new sign through the improvement project. She also extended Kudos to Sitka for being a Walkable Town and would like to encourage Homer to work toward that effort.

Commissioner Archibald welcomed Roger and complimented Chair Steffy on running a great ship. This will be a fun group to work with.

Commissioner MacCampbell asked for a recommendation on a request for support for the Kachemak Drive Path member due to his position now as a commissioner and through his employment. He further expressed his pleasure being on the commission.

Commissioner Brann congratulated Chair Steffy; he always appreciates the staff and all the support they provide; he next commented on the Trails Rondy in Anchorage and that this event is put on every other year and there are great presentations and activities. He did not have the actual dates but it usually towards the end of April. He also supported and encouraged getting the Alaska Trails membership which offers reciprocal membership. He further noted that June 6-8 is Annual Trails Day/Weekend and they will be having the ribbon cutting on June 6th for the Water Trail.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The next **WORKSESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY AT NOON ON NOVEMBER 23, 2013 AT THE HERC BUILDING; THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 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: _____