

Session 14-02 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on February 20, 2014 at 5:30 pm by Chair Matt Steffy at the Homer City Hall Upstairs Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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

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

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Steffy requested a motion to approve the agenda.

BRANN/LOWNEY - MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

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 January 16, 2014

Chair Steffy requested approval of the minutes from the January meeting.

LOWNEY.MACCAMPBELL - MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

The minutes were approved by consensus of the Commission.

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

Chair Steffy invited the audience to offer comments on items on the agenda.

There were no comments from the audience present.

#### **RECONSIDERATION**

There were no items for reconsideration.

#### **VISITORS**

There were no visitors scheduled.

#### **STAFF & COUNCIL/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ AND BOROUGH REPORTS**

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

Ms. Engebretsen provided a verbal report on the needs assessment work group and they would like to get the draft scope of work and overview before the Commission in a special meeting on March 6, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. The Commissioners were agreeable and could meet on that date.

Further discussion evolved that the March meeting may be canceled due to quorum issues but decision to cancel the regular meeting on March 20, 2014 was pulled since they may very well still obtain a quorum with a new appointment and commissioners telephonic.

B. Parks Maintenance Report - Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson was not present at the meeting. Chair Steffy inquired about the flowers that the city plants. Mr. Meyer commented that he believed it was getting underway. He elaborated the different areas that get the flowers. Mr. Meyer responded to Commissioner Brann's question regarding damage at the End of the Road Park. He elaborated on the Storm Berm landscaping that will be installed and interpretive signage and the trail. He detailed the new Overlook Area at the corner of Fishdock and Spit Roads. He noted that he is in discussion with the artist that proposed a 12 foot circle hook to see if they can talk her into doing the project. He further described the poles that will be installed with flags that were once used extensively in the past and on the poles will be the message that the flags signify. Mr. Meyer noted that the small stretch of Beluga Slough trail will have to wait for additional funding to be completed.

Mr. Meyer continued explanation on the interpretive signage using poetry and continuing that concept at Baycrest Hill Overlook and onto the Sprit Trail Project. He noted that directional signage will be included. Cruise ship passengers will be able to find their way around the harbor. He explained further that a RFP will be issued shortly. Commissioner MacCampbell inquired if there was room at the End of the Road Park to install information signs on the Kachemak Bay State Park.

The RFP will request the proposers to suggest the content.

Commissioner Archibald advocated for signage that explains what a person may be viewing.

Commissioner Lowney changed the subject to inquire about the status of the parks signage and the sign that will be at the East End Rd. She then inquired about any updates on the Pier One Campground area. Ms. Krause responded that the signage is in production and has a deadline of May 31, 2014 for installation. Mr. Meyer will contact Ms. Otteson regarding the status of the regulatory signage for Jack Gist Park at East End Road and Adams. He had no information to offer on the Pier One Campground.

Mr. Meyer commented on the future intentions of the Garden Club to improve the gardens at Baycrest this season. He also noted that artwork will be installed at Bishops Beach also.

C. Community Recreation - Mike Illg

Mr. Illg reported on the following:

- The HERC Building is in use on most every day
- Police and Fire will be using the space for training
- Popeye Wrestling has enrollment of 100 kids
- 2015 Conference Application for ARPA has been sent in and Volunteers will be needed
- Community Recreation Catalog will be in the paper
- Men's Basketball tournament is this weekend February 22, 2014
- Trails and Parks Map is almost complete, pocket size, next meeting there will be samples for each member to review and mark up. The project is well under budget too.

He inquired about land that was near Barb's Video. This was part of the Library and the city has tried selling it and would need lots of work to be usable.

D. Needs Assessment - Matt Steffy

Chair Steffy provided an update on the Parks Art Recreation and Culture Committee. Included items were the following:

- Weekly Meetings - amazing participation by all the groups. Meetings are staggered different days of the week and times were in the evenings and during the day.
- Multiple representatives from some groups that switch off attending the meetings some attend every meeting.
- Representatives from a broad base of all facets of recreation
- Constructing now what is to be included in the RFP that will be issued
- Main goals - What do people do? What will people do? What is the difference between them and how to shorten the gap? This was the simple presentation of what they want.
- They are looking at getting the RFP issued by the end of March or first of April.

- They will start at the next Council meeting to provide a brief status update to Council during the City Managers report.
- MAPP has been involved from the start. They have three people that have been rotating in on the meetings. They have provided a large book that contains a lot of information also along with how the information was gathered.

The commission expressed pleasure at the progress that the group has made in such a short time. The next meeting is tomorrow at noon in Administration. Several of the Commissioners wanted to attend the next meeting at the statement from Chair Steffy that it was open to the Public.

A brief discussion ensued that having more than 2 commissioners present would have to be noticed. The committee will be keeping the commission apprised at their progress at each of the monthly meetings plus at every council meeting.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

There were no public hearings scheduled.

### **PENDING BUSINESS**

#### **A. Karen Hornaday Park**

Chair Steffy invited Mr. Meyer to return to the table.

Mr. Meyer started off by stating that they have accomplished quite a bit of the last couple of years. The parking lot should be much easier to negotiate during break up; the ball fields have had several improvements. He then noted that the City has received the grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund which is a match of \$75,000 from LWCF and \$75,000 from the city. Most of the funding is dedicated to improvements at the campground including the site improvements for the designated camp host. This site will be highly visible to the entire park along with the campground. There is some drainage funding, trail improvements and relocating the existing shelter. Mr. Meyer then brought up relocating that shelter to the Spit which means that they would have to seek approval from the granting agency.

Chair Steffy recalled previous conversations that there may be some questions regarding the relocation process and it being able to be completed. Mr. Meyer responded that the contractor doesn't feel that it would be a problem. He further noted that the structure is massive and would fit very well out on the spit but since it is not on the agenda if the commission would like to add it to the next agenda they could bring back more information on the relocation, etc.

Commissioner Lowney advocated for putting this item on next month's agenda.

Further discussion on the relocation of this shelter to the spit and becoming a valuable asset on the spit and within the park itself ensued.

Ms. Engebretsen interrupted stating that they should first see if they can change the grant.

Commissioner Lowney wanted to discuss relocating the shelter to the campground and being able to use the grant funds to relocate the shelter from the park. Ms. Engebretsen explained that relocating this shelter within the park will probably be no problem but if they want to relocate the shelter to outside the park they may lose the funding. The grant was scored on the different things that were outlined in the request and one of them being relocating the existing shelter within the park.

Commissioner Archibald confirmed that this item will be on the March agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Meyer brought forth the idea that Phase 1 funding was used and believes that Phase 2 funding can be sought in response to Commissioner Lowney statement to address the problems with the road citing the safety liabilities to the city as a top priority.

Further discussion points that followed were:

- The CIP Phase 2 request
- How to proceed reviewing the recommendations submitted by Mr. Jack Wise
- Parking recommendations made by Mr. Wise

- conducting more meetings that are unnecessary when recommendations that were submitted are agreeable by the majority involved
- Where can we start to move the project forward?

Chair Steffy asked if this item should be on the April agenda for discussion to determine some direction and best solution.

Ms. Engebretsen asked if they would be agreeable to a worksession before the April meeting on this item.

Further comment was made on Council acting on the commission's recommendations, any changes to the approved plan for the park need to be approved by Council, not wanting to have their recommendations remanded to additional groups; the money is at least two years out.

Commissioner Lowney recommended a worksession to be scheduled.

Discussion ensued on the safety hazards relate to pedestrians and cyclists on the entrance road/road into the park. Suggestions from the commissioners were to use portable speed bumps, installing pedestrian fencing, Speed limit indicator, signage.

Ms. Krause redirected the commissioner's discussion back to determine a date for the worksession.

The commissioners agreed by consensus to have a worksession on April 3, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Meyer commented on the ability to provide a match or have some "skin in the game" on projects. The parks and rec projects are at a disadvantage because they do not have a reserve to fall back on. He went on to provide further advice on thinking in advance where the money can come from to show Council. Commissioner Lillibridge stated that if they could have the campground fees they would have a budget. These funds just go direct to the general fund. Commissioner MacCampbell stated that if we had the figures on what the Concert on the Lawn generates and what the various events that are held in the city besides the campgrounds would be beneficial to support the requests for funding.

There was further comment from Mr. Meyer on the ability to obtain funding from the State. Commissioner Lowney responded that she thinks of this as a long term project but that does not negate the fact that they must address the issues and they need to start working on this now.

Commissioner Archibald inquired about the existing Snack Shack and what will be done. A brief discussion ensued on the agreement with Little League in getting these items addressed such as the batting cage. The commission does not know how to address them. Ms. Engebretsen explained that the Commissioners should determine the top issues and bring them to the Little League. She recommended having a separate meeting to address these issues.

Further discussion was had on removing the snack shack, the batting cage and the trailer by the city since it is the city's property. Chair Steffy advocated for taking these issues to the Little League before arbitrarily taking action. Commissioner MacCampbell stated that there are other entities with a vested interest in the park especially the Little League who have invested thousands of dollars into that park. There are other user groups that should be at the table to have their input heard.

Commissioner Lowney recommended they have their meeting to determine the direction they are going with the Park and Phase 2 then they can bring the user groups in. Commissioner MacCampbell asked if one of the commissioners can meet with the Little League and talk to them about the issues. He requested advice from Ms. Krause on the legality of a commissioner meeting with Little League. Ms. Engebretsen weighed in and stated she would like to get permission from the city manager.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Land Allocation Plan Review and Recommendations for 2014**

Chair Steffy read the title into the record and requested more clarification and direction from Ms. Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen explained that the process has been changed a bit this year. She provided a brief outline on what used to be done with the Land Allocation Plan (LAP) each year. Now the commissioners are being asked to review if there is any city owned land that should be put up for lease. She asked the commissioners to focus on any land they would like to make any recommendations for leasing.

She stated that she understands that this is the first time and usually the only time that the commission gets to review all the city property and she recommended to schedule that for another meeting.

Ms. Engebretsen provided the status update on the HERC building restrictions and she said it is still at the Borough legal department regarding lifting the restrictions.

There is no update on the ownership of Mariner Park. She has not done a title search. She responded that she has recommended a second opinion on ownership of lots along Kachemak Drive but was directed to postpone further action until a later date.

The area that was previously used for Short term leases is going to have a new rest area/overlook for the new spit trail extension. It is hoped that no more sale vehicle parking is conducted in this area.

Ms. Engebretsen stated that the Land Allocation plan is amended by resolution each year but does not necessarily drive the policy of what the city will do with the property.

Commissioner Lowney commented that what frustrates her is that not only should they be looking at what could be green spaces but used for green space walking trails. Commissioner Archibald agreed that connectivity is important. Further brief discussion continued on livability and safer pedestrian ways ensued.

Ms. Engebretsen commented that there is a committee to discuss the feasibility of a large vessel haul out and repair facility on the spit but that is all she knew about it. Ms. Krause elaborated on the committee in response to the commission's questions. It was noted that Pier One was safe since it had a three year lease.

There was more discussion on the parcels in the new overlook area; the ability for outside entities can approach the city to lease a parcel. Keep existing designations on parcels.

LOWNEY/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED TO RETAIN ALL GREEN SPACE, PARKS AND/OR RECREATION DESIGNATIONS ON CITY PARCELS AND FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT ANY PARCELS THAT COME AVAILABLE FOR LEASE NEXT TO AN EXISTING PARCEL THAT IS DESIGNATED AS RECREATION, PARKS OR GREENSPACE THAT THE COMMISSION BE NOTIFIED.

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lillibridge asked how a committee can be created to determine what can be done on city land that already houses recreational activities and why this commission isn't included. Ms. Engebretsen stated that this is a conversation to have with Council. Commissioner Lillibridge stated they could use the land that will be opposite the new harbormaster office. A brief discussion on the reason why those parcels would not be advantageous to a Haul out facility ensued and that this was enterprise property which would bring in jobs and revenue to the residents of the city.

Commissioner Lowney then turned the discussion to further a walkable community that they could take a parcel in the Lillian Walli parcels to install a trail.

Commissioner Archibald also brought up the fact that there are areas that are designated campgrounds but there are no names or indication as such. Ms. Engebretsen responded that she will bring this up with Ms. Otteson and getting those campground identified.

Commissioner Lowney then brought up the new trail on the spit and the staking she then stated that she would like to see on a future agenda utilizing the two parks effectively, Coal Point Park and the Beach Park. The other idea to further discuss is Walkable Homer.

Ms. Engebretsen stated that the Planning Commission is working on that which means she is working on that and she can provide an update maybe in May. She noted that some of the issue is creating a HART project but they still have an execution problem in the city on that. Commissioner Brann asked if the Trail Plan was being used and she stated some of that is it but went on to explain a bit more and then noted that they were way off the Land Allocation Plan.

Chair Steffy reiterated the recommendation.

B. Memorandum from City Clerk re: Reducing Meetings of the Commission

Chair Steffy read the title into the record. He questioned if they had to reduce the meeting schedule or just a suggestion from Council. Ms. Krause explained that if the commission feels strongly that a reduction in meetings would prohibit the commission accomplishing the tasks set before them they can certainly make that recommendation.

Ms. Engebretsen explained that for this year since they have the needs assessment and it has been established by the City Manager that there will be a need for a few special meetings that they can recommend that the commission will make the changes to the 2015 meeting schedule this fall. Chair Steffy read the recommendations in the memo and requested comments from the commission. He believed there may be some compromise between these recommendations.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - MOVED TO RECOMMEND MEETING EVERY MONTH EXCEPT JANUARY, JUNE, JULY, AND DECEMBER.

There was a brief discussion on the following: benefits to establishing committees, putting the onus on the commission to get their work done before summer, and if there is nothing to address at the next meeting that they cancel the meeting ahead of time, the reasons why they are not allowed to create committees and why they must reduce the meetings.

ARCHIBALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ALLOW THE COMMISSION TO HOLD SPECIAL MEETINGS AS NEEDED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF COUNCIL.

Commissioner Lowney voiced concern that City Council is already perceived as not listening to the voice of the public and every step that they take to diminish their voices only adds to that perception. She noted that they already lost the ability to form and have committees she is not sure how she will vote now to reduce their abilities even more. Additional comment from staff being able to address their work requirements then also having to fulfill the thousand and one things that a committee or commission wants to have done too is some of the basis for not having committees and reducing the meetings. Commissioner Lillibridge also voiced concern on the ability to provide public input and reiterated that they are advisory to the Council and if they do reduce their meetings how can the commission advice Council in a timely manner. This effectively removes that ability and public input to council in her opinion.

VOTE. (Amendment). YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

LOWNEY/STEFFY - MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO READ MEETING EVERY MONTH WITH THE EXCEPTION OF JANUARY, JULY AND DECEMBER.

There was a brief discussion that to miss the June meeting with the Needs Assessment would not be the best thing to do this year. They can review it when the 2015 meeting schedule is being reviewed.

VOTE. (Second amendment) YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

VOTE. (Main). YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. East End Road Speed Limit near Jack Gist Park Entrance

Chair Steffy read the title into the record. He requested clarification on the desire to reduce the speed limit.

Ms. Engebretsen stated that the commission has briefly discussed this issue but have not submitted a formal request to Council to request DOT to reduce the speed limit.

MACCAMPBELL/LOWNEY - MOVED TO REDUCE THE SPEED LIMIT ON EAST END ROAD TO EAST OF ADAMS.

Ms. Engebretsen provided more information on the request to reduce the speed limit due to the increased traffic on East End Road and the dangerous conditions trying to pullout from the Horse Park with a trailer of horses and the sight distance from Adams Road makes it very difficult to see oncoming traffic. There is a slight rise in the road bed plus guard rails.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

D. Strategic Plan Review and Update

This item was postponed until the completion of the Needs Assessment in June or even January next year.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

A. Commission Annual Calendar

Chair Steffy asked if there were any comments or questions regarding the items on the calendar and explained that this calendar reflected items the commission is supposed to address in response to a question posed by Commissioner Lillibridge. Commissioner Lillibridge stated that she would like to see an event calendar especially when events are held in the city parks the commission she felt should be aware of them.

Ms. Krause stated it would be easy to provide this information.

Commissioner Lowney would like to address Park Day so they can make sure commissioners will be available. She cited the problems from last year when no one was available and it had to be canceled at the last moment. She believed May was too late to establish the date.

B. Commission Attendance Schedule at Council Meetings

Commissioner Lowney stated that she has over booked herself and will be unavailable on a Monday until June. Commissioner Archibald volunteered for the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting and Commissioner Lowney stated she will do both meetings in September.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

Mr. Roedl had no comments but did want to hand in his completed application form. He was glad to see some familiar faces here. He initially started out downstairs and he noticed they had candy on the tables.

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

No comments from Staff

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

There was no councilmember present.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Steffy wanted to say he was excited about the conference coming to Homer next year bringing a lot of vendors and visitors to town; they will keep the commission advised. He thanked Julie for keeping all the dogs on a leash as they run all over the room. He would like to pursue a high school student to fill the student position. Thanked everyone for a fantastic meeting.

**COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Archibald had nothing further to add let's wrap this meeting up.

Commissioner MacCampbell appreciated the hard efforts from staff to put the information together for them.

Commissioner Brann thanked staff for the hard work and commissioners it is going to be a good spring.

Commissioner Lowney echoed the sentiments of the other commissioners and wanted the thanked Matt and Julie for their efforts with the needs assessment.

There was a brief discussion on commissioners attending the PARC meeting tomorrow at lunch. Ms. Engebretsen stated that the commissioners could meet at a social event but since the committee was advisory to the commission and will be voting on the issue two commissioners would constitute a meeting.

Commissioner Lillibridge wanted to thank Renee and Julie; she has gotten very close with Renee who has helped her keep informed over the course of time. She also wanted to apologize for being late but she had to attend the Open House and she wants to hold meetings in the Neverland Room. The house was amazing.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m. The next **SPECIAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014 AT 5:30 P.M. A REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY MARCH 20, 2014** at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Cowles Council Chambers 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk I

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_