

Session 14-05 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on April 17, 2014 at 5:30 pm by Chair Matt Steffy at the Homer City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS STEFFY, LOWNEY, BRANN, MACCAMPBELL

TELEPHONIC: COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS ROEDL AND LILLIBRIDGE (EXCUSED)

STAFF: RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Steffy requested a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/BRANN - SO MOVED.

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 March 20, 2014

Chair Steffy requested approval of the minutes from the March 20th meeting.

LOWNEY/BRANN - SO MOVED.

The minutes were approved by consensus of the Commission.

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

Kevin Walker, resident of Kachemak City and a member of HAT commented on Earth Day and wanted to volunteer his information regarding the Kachemak Drive Trail. He offered some additional information on flagging the proposed trail options. He commented on the bicycles cutting in switchbacks on the Reber Trail and was willing to help out with any information that the commission would need.

There was a brief discussion on someone from the Commission attending the Earth Day event as several would be in attendance in the role of their jobs or other interests. The event is April 26, 2014.

Chair Steffy asked if Ms. Krause to send an email out to the missing commissioners.

VISITORS

Beth Cumming, member of Homer Area Trails provided a presentation regarding easements and undeveloped right of ways and one section line in relation to public access to the beaches and new trails. Ms. Cumming pointed out the following locations:

- Tom Shelford Street between Kharacters Bar and Sunny Service - proceeds uphill and ends in a large storage area that also has an illegal fence crossing the right of way. This right away goes through to Lee Street, approximately 150 feet east of Main Street.
- Off of Hohe between Bartlett and Main Street and runs parallel then Danview and Cityview have right of ways that would connect HoHe Street to Bartlett Street and also continues to Woodard Creek.
- on Kachemak Drive towards East End Road there is a 60 foot dedicated Beach Access near the eastern edge of the large hotel that was recently completed. She used to be able to walk down there but it would need more rocks there to aid traversing down to the beach.
- a little know Beach Access is located west of Ren Tolmans Boat House. She believes that it should be noted as a Public Beach access that is staked out with logs, gravel and signage.

- In the Ocean Drive Loop neighborhood there are several places that afford Public Access to the Beach or Slough. Ms. Cumming pointed out a section line easement or right of way which is between Wimmerstedt's (sp) and Dr. Bell's property. It is the far west of the horseshoe. Ms. Cumming stated that a pedestrian path could be created and while the access is on seemingly private property it is a public access. A rope handrail could be installed to aid in ascent and descent to the beach.
- The next location is Parson Lane there is a right of way with an approximate 30 foot drop from street level to the beach. The seawall runs along the bluff. This is located between Lot 37 and Lot 38. It is steep but there is ways to install trails along steep areas.
- Victoria Place, located between Lot 8 7 Lot 11, is another right of way that would provide public access to Beluga Slough.
- there is another right of way quite wide, and steep located at the end of what would be lake Street. This would end at the seawall but folks have talked about having a trail along the top of seawall.

She just wanted to advise the commission that there are many areas around Homer that would offer connections to established trail and access to the beaches. She also noted that the group, Friends of Woodard Creek, raised funds for putting in a trail. They also wanted to do something about the fill that was placed in the park.

The commissioners inquired about connection to any trails regarding the right away she mentions between Sunny's and Kharacters. Further comments regarding making Homer more walkable and safe routes to school utilizing the right of ways. The Non-Motorized Trails Plan did address some of these items. Commissioner MacCampbell commented that section lines do not necessarily mean there is an easement and several have been vacated. He recommended contacting DNR and having them review those possibilities.

Commissioner Brann asked Ms. Krause to have Ms. Engebretsen see if a map has been created and shows the right of ways and possible easements. Commissioner Lowney stated that she believed Julie was already working on information for the May meeting on Safe Routes to school so she could be asked to include the information.

Commissioner Archibald stated it would be nice to see the right of way between the auto service and that section line to see if it is still there.

Ms. Cumming provided some historical discussion she had with the property owner regarding the fence that was installed across the right of way.

Further comment from Commissioner Brann on some work he had done with his classes that he may still have the research. Commissioner Lowney agreed that the commission should take on the Public Access to the beaches making them more appealing to the public for use because most are not welcoming.

There was a brief discussion on the Bishops Beach access and Crittenden beach access.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Staff Report - Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner

Chair Steffy reviewed the staff report and asked if there was any question.

Commissioner Lowney requested for the next agenda the possibility and feasibility of relocating the entrance to the park to Danview and using HART Funds. Ms. Engebretsen had previously informed the commission that the park road was not a designated road so HART funds could not be used for improvements or relocation however Danview is. There is funding available.

Commissioner MacCampbell noted that this idea has been floating around for a while and is not a new concept. Commissioner Brann agreed and has even reviewed access to the campground from Mullikin which would alleviate the traffic up the park road.

Commissioner Lowney stated that since Danview is a road it could address the problem in the long term and using the HART fund would accomplish that part.

Chair Steffy responding to what it would take to complete Danview would be simple as putting in a couple of culverts and completing the road.

There was a brief discussion on the concrete footers for the speed bumps, installation of earth stairs to the ballfields and earthen bleachers on the hillside for Little League Ballfield 2. He will present that idea to staff to get Public Works input on the idea. There was concern expressed regarding the inherent dangers with pedestrian traffic coming out into traffic when cars park along the park entrance road. As long as people park along the road they will have a problem. Commissioner MacCampbell stated that installation of a pullout with a temporary time limit of 10 minutes for loading and unloading, signage and enforcement they will have a problem.

Commissioner MacCampbell commented that they should have addressed speed dips or tables as alternatives but they do have to be engineered. Chair Steffy will have staff talk with Public Works regarding the possibility.

Chair Steffy requested clarification on the projects the commission would like to do that Saturday separate from the Church and other volunteers will be doing May 3, 2014.

B. Parks Maintenance - Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson was not in attendance. Ms. Krause reported that she spoke with Ms. Otteson earlier and there is not much change Ms. Otteson is preparing for the season. Commissioner Brann reported on the success of the worksession conducted on the Poopdeck Trail. He believed that this represented the kind of project that can provide a big difference.

C. Community Recreation - Mike Illg

Mr. Illg was not in attendance. Chair Steffy wished him luck competing in the Boston Marathon.

D. PARC Status Update Report - Matt Steffy

Chair Steffy reported that the RFP is advertised and will close on May 8, 2014 and there was nothing further to report. There were currently no companies on the Plan Holders List.

Commissioner MacCampbell requested this on the May agenda and a brief discussion ensued on how and when the review will be conducted. The committee members will be reviewing the proposals and it will then along with their recommendation be presented to the commission then on to Council for award.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Amending the Commission Bylaws to Amend the Meeting Schedule, Establishing Committees and Holding Special Meetings.

Chair Steffy noted that the proposed amendments are as follows:

To Reduce Commission Annual Meetings to Nine - Currently the commission does not meet in December and the months of January and July would be additional months that the commission does not meet.

To Amend the Ability of Committees to Be Formed without the Approval of City Council - Currently the commission has the ability to form committees to address issues or special projects as determined by the Commission. Due to problems with established short term committees established to address specific issues or projects going beyond their purview it has been decided that City Council must approve any requests for formation of a committee.

Commissioner Brann commented that all they needed was to make the motion. Ms. Krause confirmed that was the action required.

BRANN/LOWNEY - MOVED TO AMEND THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION BYLAWS TO AMEND THE MEETING SCHEDULE AND ESTABLISHING COMMITTEES AS OUTLINED IN THE DOCUMENTS.

There was a brief discussion.

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

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Ordinance to Request Funding for Karen Hornaday Park Improvements: Traffic Calming and Safety Measures for the Park Road.

Chair Steffy read the title into the record. There was discussion on the cost and different methods to install removable speed bumps. The commission expressed reluctance at expending the remaining funds on speed bumps.

The commissioners requested staff to invite Dan Nelsen to attend the May or June meeting to discuss the speed bumps along with additional recommendations he may have on reducing the speed of traffic into the park. The issue at hand is more important than just installation of speed bumps, there is the liability to the city to consider when looking at all forms of traffic calming.

LOWNEY/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SIGNAGE, DEPLOYING THE SPEED TRAILER AND POSTING A SPEED LIMIT.

There was discussion on installation of signage, pedestrians and safety.

MACCAMPPELL/STEFFY - MOVED TO AMEND THE RECOMMENDATION TO EXPEND FUNDS TO CREATE CROSSWALKS BY INSTALLATION OF SIGNAGE INDICATING CROSSWALK LOCATIONS.

There was a brief discussion on the proposed amendment.

VOTE. (Amendment). YES. MACCAMPBELL, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, STEFFY, LOWNEY

Motion carried.

VOTE. (Main) YES. LOWNEY, MACCAMPBELL, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, AND STEFFY

Motion carried.

B. Karen Hornaday Park Summer Work Schedule

Chair Steffy stated that at the worksession the group talked about visiting the trail along Woodard Creek. Chair Steffy would like to postpone action on this item. Commissioner Lowney was not agreeable since there were several people who were very familiar with this project. She wanted something to get going on this one and Fairview. Chair Steffy was not sure that they were prepared to create a work schedule at this time. Commissioner Lowney stated that Mr. Meyer gave the group permission at a worksession during the site selection of the new pavilion up at the park on a Friday. She did not recall the date.

Discussion continued on conducting a site visit to flag a proposed trail during the May 3, 2014 Clean-up day. They can announce it and anyone can show up. Ms. Otteson will already be at the park. It was noted that if they can come to a major consensus where they would like to see the trail.

Commissioner Lowney inquired if a time was needed. It was agreed that if they could meet up at 9:00 a.m. or throughout the day as their schedules allowed. Chair Steffy asked if the commission wanted to discuss Mullikin Street Trail. Commissioner Lowney explained the needs for the crossing into the park. Discussion ensued on additional trail from Wright Street.

C. Woodard Creek Trail and Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan

Chair Steffy stated that this is removing the bridge aspect from the plan or having a preamble to the bridge. He would prefer another commissioner with more experience than himself to volunteer to draft the paragraph.

Commissioner Lowney offered to draft a paragraph and bring it back at the May meeting. She will word the paragraph so that it could always be included back into the project if the funding and desire

indicated such after comment on getting more input from the public on the bridge concept from Commissioner Archibald.

D. Plan and Select a Date for the Spring Park Walk Through

Commissioner Brann recommended Coal Point Park and then passed some pictures around that he took regarding the condition of signage and also location of the new spit trail. He proceeded to explain he contacted Carey Meyer regarding the content of the signage should reflect the Railroad History of the Spit instead of the usual interpretive signage. Next he brought a safety hazard to the new trail going past some blue storage containers.

Commissioner Lowney recommended extending the walk along the trail so that they could make themselves aware of all the changes and improvements being made through End of the Road park.

Chair Steffy agreed and Commissioner Brann went on to explain that there is a bench in the park and it's rotting and unsafe.

Further discussion on installation of plaques acknowledging the history of the Coal Point Park and also the status of a plaque recognizing the donation of the land for Karen Hornaday Park.

There was a discussion of performing a Spring Walk thru during the week after work in the evening. Final decision was made for May 8, 2014, Thursday 4-8 p.m. Meeting at the base of the harbor corner of Freightdock Road/Spit Road otherwise known as the Buy/Sell Lot.

E. Establish a date for the Commission Park Day Event

Commissioner Brann proposed the new Spit Trail and End of the Road Park to highlight all the new improvements out there. Commissioner MacCampbell preferred later in the summer, Commissioner Lowney has low energy on this event since they have not had good response in the past and she is not thrilled about spending money on food. Chair Steffy suggested getting the businesses involved along the Boardwalk, getting someone involved from the museum to recite the historical aspect so it is something of a cultural destination event. Commissioner Archibald liked the idea of getting the businesses involved.

- Suggestions included starting the event at Coal Point and working our way along the boardwalk towards town
- Commissioner Brann will contact the businesses along the boardwalk to get interest in participation.
- Contacting the museum for a representing
- August 9, 2014
- Invite Council and Mayor
- Start at 2:00 p.m.
- Celebrate Our New Boardwalk and Learn Spit History Along the Way

F. Discussion on the Expansion of the Spit Trail from Coal Point Along Entrance of Harbor to Gear Storage Area.

Commissioner Brann wanted to bring this issue to the commission's attention and provided photos of the area of safety concern regarding a blue colored container and conditions at Coal Point Park. It was noted that he had concern regarding the existing conditions. He suggested that he could visit the Harbormaster and show him the pictures and express the concern for the safety concern. The commission expressed hesitation on speaking with the harbormaster master due to response received from staff on Commissioner MacCampbell offering to speak to Little League. Commissioner Brann suggested a twist on the interpretive signage by highlighting the railroad history to include pictures. Commissioner Lowney would also like to see protected signs such as a roof over the signs.

Commissioner Brann stated when he spoke with Carey Meyer he did put a bug in his ear that if they have any funding from the interpretive signage project remaining. Further discussion on the feasibility of refurbishing the existing signs, speaking with public works to see if they have the funding and discussing what possibilities are out there. Commissioner Brann also noted that this is one part of Homer's history that is not spoken about much.

Commissioner MacCampbell asked if this was not something that could be funded with the \$16,000 that remained in the reserve fund.

Additional discussion on the status of the small informal committee that was working on the interpretive signage and when they would be meeting again and if this would be replacing the other interpretive signage on the Spit Trail; that it would make sense to partner with this committee and at the minimum get on the next agenda. There was a preference to invite the group to the next Parks and Recreation meeting. Commissioner Lowney offered to speak to the group also on behalf of this project if they are unable to attend the meeting of the commission. The commission requested Ms. Krause to contact the group to see if they would be able to attend the meeting.

Further comment was made on the city owning the property and that the safety concerns should be covered under the lease requirements.

G. Discussion on Applying to National park Service for Rivers, Trails and Conservative Assistance

Chair Steffy was not sure about this item and inquired if there was a specific project that was considered for application.

Commissioner Brann explained his reasons for requesting this item to be placed on the agenda. He praised the efforts and assistance that this group provides. He believes that this would be a good activity regarding Karen Hornaday Park Phase II plan and how they could get all their ideas together and where to start. He recited his own experience with the planning of the Water Trail.

Commissioner Lowney inquired what his recommendation would be regarding this item. Commissioner Brann felt that they could invite them to an informal discussion regarding the services and applying.

LOWNEY/BRANN - MOVED TO PUT THIS ON THE JUNE MEETING AGENDA AND THE COMMISSIONERS TO REVIEW THE PAPERWORK AND DETERMINE WHAT THEY WANT TO ASK FOR ASSISTANCE WITH DURING THAT MEETING.

The commission discussed speaking with Julie Engebretsen and/or Katie Koester on the City of Homer viewpoint, postponing this until June will allow some time to consider the application and exactly what the commission will ask for assistance and guidance on. They would be able to get a good handle on funding available.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

H. Proposal presented by William Marley - New Park/recreational Venue for the Community

- a. 31 acres between West Hill Road and Soundview on the Southern Side of the Sterling Highway

Chair Steffy stated this was requested to be on the agenda to get some historical background on the project and Ms. Krause has provided the background. Commissioner MacCampbell noted that he did approach him a couple of years ago and this makes it \$120,000 per acre.

A brief discussion on Dr. Marley's previous attempts to interest the city in purchasing the property. All the groups were very supportive however stated that the city did not have the funding and would probably not have funding for this project in the near future. It would be a great statement to represent Homer and make the area into a park and recreational center but that would be up to the taxpaying residents.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Commission Annual Calendar

B. Commissioner Attendance Schedule at Council Meetings

There was a brief discussion on trading attendance on the April 28, 2014 Council meeting as Chair Steffy was going to a conference and would not be able to attend. Commissioner Brann can do the first

meeting in May. Commissioner Archibald can attend the first meeting in June. Commissioner MacCampbell can attend the second meeting in June. Chair Steffy stated that Commissioner Roedl can be assigned the one meeting in July.

C. Kenai Peninsula Events Calendar for May 2014

Ms. Krause added that the Ninilchik Farmer's Market will start May 24, 2014 at 10 am to ?

Commissioner Brann reminded Ms. Krause for the June calendar to add the Kachemak Water Trail Grand Opening ribbon cutting ceremony on June 6th at 5:00 p.m.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Kevin Walker commented on sidewalks and connections to schools, he offered to assist with the beach access stuff especially those on the east end of town where he lives, he advised that someone should speak with a realtor to get a more realistic price on the 31 acres but then he is probably preaching to the choir on that issue.

Beth Cumming commented on the exhibit by Janet Kline which is on display at Land's End in the east wing. She thought she was remaining at the meeting to speak about Friends of Woodard Creek had raised funds through fundraisers and Kachemak Bay Conservation Society has been holding the funds that was to be spend on Woodard Creek and they did not want to put those funds in a mud puddle. The group decided those funds would be used for a trail. She was amazed that this group after a couple hours decided that on May 3rd they were going to build a trail along with cleans up. She was astounded. Ms. Cumming then mentioned when they were considering the trail that the west bank of Woodard Creek is quite steep and would allow a very narrow trail and you would have to cross the creek several times. She was walking Woodard Creek one time and was severely chastised because there are areas that are privately owned. It is hard for her to imagine that they are going to mark out a trail in one day. They have all this money sitting in a bank that is committed to Karen Hornaday Park and specifically for a trail.

Chair Steffy stated the intent is to flag a possible trail. He then commented on the process to flag the trail at West Homer Elementary and they provided different groups with different colored tags and then reviewed where the tapes overlapped and this was the process they used to design the trail.

Commissioner Lowney wanted to heighten the commission to do something with this trail and Woodard Creek keeps getting pushed to the side and never gets addressed.

Commissioner Lowney stated that her laughter was out of total respect for how much time Ms. Cumming has put into Woodard Creek and the research on that area and time spent hiking the creek; it is also out of a sense of frustration because what she wants to see done in Karen Hornaday park is to see the right thing done about Wood Creek. She does not believes that May 3rd is the day to go build that trail and or mark it but she does believe it is the day to get people up there and familiar with the project because they do have a lot of new commissioners. She believes it is incredibly important that they get up there and they do start to walk it and envision what can be done. Any feedback input from the Friends of Woodard Creek would be very critical. Let's make something happen to do the right thing for the entrance to the campground and Woodard Creek.

Commissioner MacCampbell stated that he will not support unsustainable trails. It costs too much to maintain these trails what with manpower and the materials involved. He is interested in doing it right the first time. He also requested large topo and aerial maps of the area for review on that clean-up day. Ms. Krause will try to locate those maps and have them available for the commissioners.

Ms. Cumming stated that the group is waiting for Robert to return and get retired.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Ms. Krause commented that it was a good meeting and the commission covered a lot of stuff.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Archibald commented on the dedication of many people and the hours they spent fundraising to take care of the Woodard Creek area. The amount raised was \$10,000 and approximately \$9,000 is being held in an account by the Conservation Society. It would be a good thing to get people up there to walk the area which has been walked several times for several years by the group and city personnel. The fill came from the hospital project but if you review the area there is a trail but the dirt is there too. It was a good meeting and he appreciates the folks listening to everything.

Commissioner Brann also stated good meeting and then offered further historical information and pictures on the railroad that ran coal to the end of the spit from Bidarka Creek and everyone is welcome to borrow it as long as he gets it back.

Commissioner MacCampbell stated that he attended his first Council meeting and the room was standing room only with all the Hockey Players and there was cake which he was unable to get to but it was a good meeting especially on all the trail stuff.

Commissioner Lowney thanked Beth Cumming and Kevin Walker for making their presentation and their dedication involving trails and the connectivity in Homer. She appreciates the information that was provided tonight. She is concerned that staff may not be at the next meeting and there are a lot of new items on the May agenda and it would be nice to have staff available to provide the answers and information that the commission will need to work through those items regarding connectivity and the trails especially. It makes it hard to complete tasks without staff present.

Ms. Krause asked if staff was not going to be in attendance then did the commissioners want to postpone those items.

There was a brief discussion on maintaining all items on the agenda and if Ms. Engebretsen will not be at the meeting then possibility the commissioners could submit their questions prior to meeting for her to answer however it was noted that questions do come up during their discussions and it is always nice to have the answers at that time. It was agreed to keep the agenda as discussed. If staff is not available at the meeting then they will deal with the issue then.

Commissioner Lowney requested feedback, information and criteria on safe routes to school, what has been done and what is in the plan to do. Such as the issue brought up by Mr. Walker regarding Paul Banks.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Steffy provided some information on the planning for the safe route to West Homer. He thanked Ms. Cumming and Mr. Walker for coming in and giving up their time. The commission values their input. He thanked everyone for all the effort on the Poopdeck Trail and thanked Commissioner Brann for picking up the Council meeting on the 28th. Good job everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m. The next **REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY MAY 15, 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: _____