



MEETING MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, April 5, 2022 – 5:30 PM
Zoom Webinar

I. Call to Order at 5:34 p.m. – C. Mertl, Chair

Present: Josh Anderson, Makayla Chappell, Emily Haynes, Chris Mertl, Will Muldoon, Danika Swanson

Absent: Taylor Murph

Staff Present: George Schaaf, Director; Michele Elfers, Deputy Director; Lauren Verrelli, Recreation & Public Services Manager

II. Agenda Changes – None

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – None

IV. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items – None

V. New Business

A. Urban & Community Forestry Program

Elizabeth Graham, acting Urban and Community Forestry Program Manager for Alaska – Liz has been acting Manager for the past several months. She sees funding opportunities on the horizon and wants to help CBJ to maximize those opportunities. She said she would like to see Juneau reinstate their Tree City USA accreditation.

W. Muldoon – How close are we to being certified with Tree City USA?

C. Mertl – We are pretty close. The challenge is there is not a landscape ordinance in place. If we get the certification, it will open doors to getting the top tier of funding.

G. Schaaf – During extreme weather events we are seeing a lot of tree issues. Our urban/forest interface involves trees falling on things rather than catching on fire. That has come to the attention of the CBJ Risk office and we do have a number of tree related policies.

Elizabeth Graham – In most communities, the emphasis is on planting but in Juneau, the focus is on management by removal.

E. Haynes – What are the deadlines for becoming a Tree City USA and for securing funding?

Elizabeth Graham – I can let you know when those dates come up.

B. Kaxdigoowu Trail Rehabilitation

Peter Jackson, ADOTPF Project Manager and Christina Mounce, ADOTPF Environmental Impact Analyst: Peter and Christina briefly described current condition of the trail and the proposed construction and improvements project. The project includes improvements to the bridge, streambanks, trail pavement and culverts. The project is expected to be completed in several phases over 3-4 months and require temporary trail closures during construction.

E. Haynes – Disclosed that she works for DOT. It was decided that this does not create a conflict for this meeting.

C. Auke Lake Temporary Closure

George Schaaf, CBJ P&R Director: George explained the lake will need to be closed during the

Ironman Alaska triathlon (August 6-7, 2022). CBJ P&R is working closely with the state and with CBJ departments and they are looking for a recommendation from the PRAC to the Assembly. Ordinance 2022-23 authorizing the closure is before the assembly.

C. Mertl – Are you giving yourself enough time with just one day?

George Schaaf – The organizers want to keep the closure as short as possible in order to limit the inconvenience to the public.

Tracy Gilmore (9343 River Court Way): How will this work with people swimming prior to the competition? There may be conflict with user groups.

George Schaaf – I agree and we are expecting an increase in people swimming in the pools as well as the lake. We also expect to see more runners and bicyclists on the roads. Ironman has a plan to inform and educate the public on the expected impacts.

*J. Anderson moves that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly adopt the ordinance temporarily closing Auke Lake during the IRONMAN Alaska triathlon. **Adopted.***

D. 35 Mile ORV Riding Park

Michelle Elfers, CBJ P&R Deputy Director, and Darrin Crapo, Juneau Off Road Association President: Michelle presented the status of the proposed 35 Mile ORV Riding Park. The proposed park is comprised of approximately 530 acres near Bridget Cove. Darrin presented the conceptual site plan including the entry area, parking area, and courses. The park will be open during the summer, will have an onsite caretaker, and will feature a variety of obstacles and topographies. (Mud bog, loop trails, cross-country riding areas). They are asking for PRAC approval and recommendation to the assembly.

J. Anderson – Of the \$250,000 in CIP funding, how much has been spent?

Michelle Elfers – None of the CIP funds have been spent so far. Money spent in 2013 to pay for a consultant came from other funds. The \$250,000 is still available.

J. Anderson – How much of the CIP funding will be spent on the 35-mile site and how much will be left for future ORV groups?

Michelle Elfers – My thought is that money should be used to leverage grant funding. If this site is developed successfully and managed well, it may become a model for obtaining more funding in the future.

J. Anderson – Will the park be insured with private insurance or under the umbrella of CBJ insurance?

Michelle Elfers – JORA would be responsible for providing the insurance. It would not be under CBJ insurance.

J. Anderson – Would there be overnight camping at the site?

Darrin Crapo – Overnight camping is not currently in the plans. It may be allowed in the future.

D. Swanson – How far will the sound carry? Will hikers in Bridget Point hear the noise from the ORV Park?

Darrin Crapo – We are going to see how far the sound carries by putting people on the highway, on a trail and out on a boat and will measure the volumes there.

Michelle Elfers – This is something we will be studying. The Planning Commission will focus on noise when considering the permit.

C. Mertl – Thinks this is great and would like to see camping allowed in the future.

Chair Mertl left the meeting at 6:59 p.m. leaving J. Anderson as acting chair.

E. Haynes – The financing seems low. Do you have any concerns with how the project is going insofar as securing permitting, etc.?

Darrin Crapo – We have spent a lot of time working with people to address concerns. We are keeping communication open so we can know what people are concerned about. We want this to be a win for the

community. Regarding expenses, we are excited about the state program that allows a portion of gas taxes for off road vehicles.

E. Haynes – The next step is to secure a conditional use permit. What are the steps following that?

Michelle Elfers – When we go to the planning commission for the permit, we would include a draft MOA in the packet. The planning commission may amend the MOA with conditions. We will then go back to the assembly for a resolution. Once that is finalized, the MOA would be signed but could be amended or adjusted over time. It will be a ‘living document’

Dave Hanna (Back Loop Road) – Is excited to see this moving forward. While this won’t satisfy everybody’s needs, it is a great first step. Considering costs, suggested watching the funds and utilizing volunteers when possible.

Chris Zimmer (Cohen Drive) – Thanked Darrin for offering this as an alternative to the problem of illegal riding. Would like to see more in the form of enforcement in the Echo Cove area.

J. Anderson – Part of getting the ORV park to work will include education and good signage.

Michelle Elfers – Goldbelt has been involved in several of the meetings and they are supportive of the ORV park as a possible solution to the illegal riding on their lands.

*E. Haynes moves that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly support the manager to negotiate an agreement with JORA to permit, design, construct, operate and maintain an off-road vehicle riding park at 35 mile. **Adopted.***

VI. Unfinished Business –

A. Disposal of Park Land (Parcel NO. 4B2801020070)

Dan Bleidorn, CBJ Lands Manager – Presented the request to purchase the property and explained it is being retained by the CBJ for waterfront access. The applicant wants to purchase the parcel to develop parking and access to their residence. The Lands department concluded if the CBJ disposes the land, staff recommend platting a public access and utility easement from Glacier Highway to the shoreline in order to retain public access.

E. Haynes: I have concerns that this is disposing of park property. The limitations on the private property were existing when the parcel was purchased. What level of analysis has been done to evaluate alternatives to avoid using parks property?

Dan Bleidorn: Deferred to the applicant

C. Mertl: Once again we are disposing of park lands. There needs to be a strategy to find alternatives to protect public access to park lands.

J. Anderson: Agreed with Emily and Chris that we should avoid disposing of park land and added that when park land is sold, the parks department loses current and future value of that land and the lands department (not the parks department) gets the money from the sale.

Jim Parise, applicant: Mr. Parise explained the garage currently in place is dangerous because the retaining wall blocks view of oncoming street traffic. Obtaining the parcel would help solve the problem.

Dave Hanna (Back Loop Road): This is an instance where disposing of the land makes sense. Keep in mind that this will add to the tax rolls and will be money coming back to the CBJ.

E. Haynes moves that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee does not recommend that the Assembly dispose of the Beach Access parcel adjacent to 12005 Glacier Hwy.

C. Mertl: Objected to say they need to set up with the City Manager a mechanism that will track land that is sold so the funds can be earmarked for the department.

Dan Bleidorn: Explained that the Lands department is responsible for all CBJ lands and proceeds from all disposals are recorded to the Lands fund. All sales and purchases are tracked and the Lands department can use those funds to acquire parcels to be used by the Parks department.

Raised Hand Vote:

Y: Emily, Josh, Makayla

N: Chris, Danika

The motion passes 3 yea 2 nay.

VII. Staff Reports – None

VIII. Committee, Liaison, and Board Member Reports

A. Chair Report— Welcome to the new PRAC members. There remain 2 vacant seats to be filled. Asked George for update on the retreat. George reported the retreat will be held April 16 at the Mendenhall Valley Library.

B. Liaison to the Assembly Report— None

C. Liaison Reports—

Aquatics – None

YAB – J. Anderson: The board is busy reviewing grant applications. Grants will be awarded soon.

Eaglecrest – None

Jensen-Olson Arboretum— None

Lands, Economic Developing, Housing – C. Mertl: Met and discussed the purchase of Family Practice by Bartlett and the MOU for the up to \$10M CLIAA for support for the JACC/Centennial Hall improvements.

Park Foundation— None

Treadwell Arena Board – None

Trail Mix— E. Haynes: None

1% for Art— J. Anderson: None

D. Other Member Business – None

Adjournment – 8:00 p.m. *Having no other business before the board.*

Respectfully submitted by *Kathleen Jorgensen Business Assists (907)723-6134* 🍷

Unanimously approved on 03/07/2023