



## PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 5, 2025, at 5:30 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar

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<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/94184441385> Or 1-669-444-9171 | Webinar ID: 941 8444 1385

### A. CALL TO ORDER

PRAC Chair Ryan O'Shaughnessy called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

### B. ROLL CALL

**Present:** Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Josh Anderson, Danika Swanson, Emma Van Nes, Paulette Schirmer, & Susan Crandall

**Absent:** Ren Scott, Jennifer Gross, & Kaasáank' Andrew Williams

**Staff Present:** Lauren Verrelli, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director; Ginger Hudson, Jensen-Olsen Arboretum Manager; Dan Bleidorn, CBJ Lands and Resources Manager; John King, Deputy Land Manager; & Annie Carroll, Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison

### C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION** by Mr. Anderson to approve the agenda. *No objections were heard, and the agenda was approved.*

#### 1. August 5 Agenda Overview

### D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### 2. Minutes from June 3, 2025

**MOTION** by Ms. Schirmer to approve the minutes. *No objections were heard, and the Minutes were approved.*

### E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

**Linne Clarke**, a valley resident, recounted that at the March 2024 PRAC meeting, Mr. Anderson put forth a motion to recommend that the Parks and Recreation Department reconfigure the courts at Adair Kennedy Memorial Park to provide 4 to 6 pickleball courts, one tennis court, & basketball court. Director George Schaaf indicated that this project would take place during the summer of 2024. He said that the project would include paving and fencing, and it would likely take a few weeks to complete. Mr. Schaaf said that the contracts would be issued in April of 2024 and that work would take place in May and June of 2024, which has not yet happened. In May 2025, she began corresponding with Colby Shibler, Parks and Landscape Supervisor, about the status of the proposed courts. Her last email from Mr. Shibler was dated June 23 and shared that the quote the department received for the court paint was \$20,000, and they would need to work with CBJ Engineering to move forward with the purchasing rules that are in place. She says that

there has been no progress in the last two pickleball seasons, so she has attended this meeting to advocate for the completion of these courts and more transparency on the project timeline.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks Ms. Verrelli if the department can provide an update on this project at the September meeting. Ms. Verrelli responded that she can and acknowledges there have been delays in the project. Part of the delay was due to edits that needed to be made to the plans to correct the size of the courts. She also notes that the \$20,000 quote exceeds their \$5,000 purchasing limit, and she will check with staff to receive updates on progress since that quote was received. She mentions that the department will be offering drop-in Pickleball at Floyd Dryden Gym starting September 3

Ms. Clarke follows up by asking if there is a project manager or timeline that can be shared with the public. To this, Ms. Verrelli responds that the plans were taken back to the design stage after it was realized that the dimensions were inadequate. Progress slowed as there was a lot of transition among leadership in the spring, with Director Schaaf leaving his position, and her being on maternity leave. She shares that Mr. Shibler can be their point of contact, or they can reach out to her for updates moving forward.

Mr. Anderson asks Ms. Verrelli if the cost of painting the courts was \$20,000, to which she replied that it is only the material cost of the paint, and they intend to hire a contractor to do the work.

**Grace Hamar**, a downtown resident, began by asking if the courts at Cope Park were resurfaced by CBJ staff, and if the cost of doing this work has risen exponentially in comparison to what it will cost to do the courts at Adair Kennedy. She continues stating that if you compare playing at Cope Park to Floyd Dryden, Cope is much more pleasant to play on, and it's far safer. They have a large group of folks that come and play ages anywhere from 5 to 80, making it a very inclusive sport, and good exercise, though she notes the concrete surface isn't forgiving. She shares that the companionship, company, and whole social-emotional element of the sport is good for you. She invites folks to come out and join them for a lot of laughter and fun.

Ms. Verrelli shares that they were resurfaced around 2018 and that park staff have maintained them since that work was done, and they plan to do the same for Adair Kennedy. She says that they were surprised by the high paint cost, but notes that it is a unique product, unlike average paint.

**Melehoko Pauu Ma'ake**, a valley resident, shares that she was excited at the March 2024 meeting when they heard that the resurfacing would be done, and that listening to the meeting tonight makes her feel like the project will be moving forward. She emphasizes the value of pickleball to the community as a sport that brings families together. She asks that they offer as many hours as possible to support the active community. She concludes by sharing that pickleball is one of the fastest-growing games in the country, and she looks forward to working together to see this project through.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks Ms. Verrelli how long the courts will be unusable during the resurfacing, to which she answers that it will likely be around a month.

Mr. Anderson asks if there are any temporary solutions that can be made quickly, easily, and cheaply to improve the conditions at the court, and how involved the work will be. Ms. Verrelli answers that she will check in with Mr. Shabler to see about options, but her understanding is that the surface work will be done on top of the current concrete slab.

Ms. Swanson shares that in the last few years, the PRAC has seen how much Pickleball matters to the community, and they have supported solutions with shared courts and indoor programs because they know the community wants to increase their opportunities to play. She acknowledges that there have been snags along the way, but reassures everyone that they hear the message loud and clear and understand they are invested in seeing that this project progresses.

Ms. Schirmer asks if the online court reservation have begun, to which Ms. Verrelli answers that they are waiting until the project is complete with signage and photos so that the reservations are accurate and clear.

**Kueni Maake**, a valley resident, expresses that the community will support this endeavor however they can, and she hopes the financial complications don't prevent the city from seeing it through. She shares that the free outdoor space is valuable to the community as the price of drop-in programs and space at the Alaska Club adds up for active players.

Ms. Verrelli thanks her for her offer of support and reaffirms that the funding for the project is not in jeopardy; they simply must work according to the City's purchasing policy, which has delayed things.

## **F. AGENDA TOPICS**

### **3. Committee Member Introductions**

Mr. O'Shaughnessy introduces himself as the PRAC chair to Susan Crandall, the newest member of the committee.

Mr. Anderson follows suit, sharing that he has been on the PRAC since 2010 or 2012 and joined because he was passionate about getting a motocross park in town. He says that he has been in the same place as the pickleball players attending tonight and expresses his appreciation to them for their effort and persistence in rattling the cage and getting things done. He acknowledges the hurdles Parks & Rec staff must go through to get things done following procedure, so he thanks them for being respectful and patient.

Ms. Swanson welcomes Ms. Crandall and shares that she moved to Juneau around 2020 and joined PRAC because of her love for parks and trails.

Ms. Van Nes introduces herself and shares that she moved to Juneau in 2017 and works with the ORCA program. She joined the PRAC to keep accessibility in mind in the parks.

Ms. Schirmer shares that she is a professor of accounting at UAS and is one of the newer members of PRAC, who joined when the advisory boards were consolidated into this committee, and she wanted to remain involved.

Ms. Crandall introduces herself, sharing that she lives in the valley and attended a meeting with the CBJ clerks for those interested in joining the assembly. After attending, she decided to pursue a different position and applied for the vacant PRAC seat, and is glad to have been accepted, and excited to hear from the enthusiastic members of the community.

#### **4. Juneau Disc Golf Treadwell extension**

Ms. Verrelli introduced Shannon Crossley of the Juneau Disc Golf Club and shared that last month they gave her a tour highlighting their plans for expansion of the Treadwell disc golf course. She believes the course has been a great success in the 3 years since its establishment, and she shares that Ms. Crossley will be presenting more about their plans.

Ms. Crossley introduces herself as a resident of St. Ann's in Douglas near the course that she is presenting. She begins by sharing the remarkable amount of activity that has been recorded on the disc golf app UDisc at the Treadwell course, which exemplifies the project's success. She presents their draft map for the expansion and explains that the course won't be extended but rather filled in to make room for 9 more holes. This plan has benefits such as encouraging players to park nearer to Savikko Park to lower congestion in the St. Ann's parking area, and encouraging more engagement with the historic artifacts along the trail. She concludes by asking for the PRAC's support of this plan, and emphasizes that there is no financial commitment needed, as they have plans to install the baskets themselves and have donations supporting the installation of signage for the course.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy shares his thanks for her work on this and expresses that, in his opinion, this has been one of the most successful and relatively easily implemented projects he has seen in the community. He notes that the Disc Golf Club has been extremely helpful in maintaining the trails and equipment this course uses, and he extends his thanks to them for the value this has brought to the community.

Ms. Shirmer asks if this plan would lead people to park closer to the Treadwell arena, to which Ms. Crossley answers yes; this will mark the beginning of the course starting near the Savikko shelters.

Mr. Anderson shares his support of this plan and thanks Ms. Crossley for her presentation. He recalls trying to get a motocross park near Aant'iyek Park but being trumped by disc golfers, which he says was more popular than kids with dirt bikes.

Ms. Van Nes shares that she appreciates how accessible Disc Golf is and recalls bringing a few groups to play at the Treadwell course. She asks what accessibility will look like with the new additions. Ms. Crossley answers that it will remain mostly the same but that 14 and 15 are on a bit of a hill, which could be more challenging for those with mobility aides or strollers.

**MOTION** by Mr. Anderson for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to recommend that the Department support the Juneau Disc Golf Club’s proposal to install 9 additional holes at the Treadwell Mine Historic Park disc golf course. *No objections were heard, and the motion passed.*

**5. Request to Purchase City Property on Meander Way**

Ms. Verrelli introduces Dan Bleidorn, CBJ Lands and Resources Manager who presents the purchase request CBJ received for a parcel of parkland (LAKEWOOD 3, Public River Access) along the Mendenhall River on Meander Way. He begins by introducing Deputy Land Manager John King to the committee and shares that they will be returning more frequently to present topics to the PRAC in the coming months. He continues by presenting a memo that outlines the status of the plot, which has Hesco barriers and an engineering and public works easement through it for storm drainage that runs underneath the property. He shares that the 2016 Land Management Plan designates this property is to be retained for public access to the Mendenhall River. The owner of the property at 3503 Meander Way has submitted this application to try to acquire property adjacent to their lot because of concerns about the public trespassing onto their property to view the river. The department recommends that the application be denied, but that signage be established in the area, which says that access is temporarily closed to address the nearby homeowner’s concern.

Mr. Anderson shares that he was involved in 2016 when they identified the park properties' potential for sale and retention. He shared that a big part of that is that we have a lack of park space, and so holding on to it as much as possible was in their mission as a part of the comprehensive plan. He also acknowledges underground utilities that are present in this case, and proposes that they retain this property, and he is ready to make a motion if there's no further discussion.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy notes that typically undeveloped parkland is open to the public, and he asks Ms. Verrelli if there is any reason the department may struggle closing this area. She answers that they can support the signage strategy presented by Mr. Bleidorn.

**MOTION** by Mr. Anderson for The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to recommend retaining “LAKEWOOD 3, Public River Access” in the Juneau Parks & Open Space System with the addition of appropriate signage to assist neighboring property owners. *No objections were heard, and the motion passed.*

**6. Youth Activities Board (YAB) Representative Appointment**

Mr. O'Shaughnessy introduces the topic, sharing that Mr. Anderson has held this position in the PRAC for several years. Mr. Anderson gives a brief overview of the responsibilities of the YAB representative and a timeline of the yearly work they do to support youth programs in Juneau.

Ms. Swanson asks if Mr. Anderson is interested in retaining his position as YAB representative, to which he responds that he is happy to continue if people support him doing so. With no other members of PRAC presenting interest in stepping into the role, Danika shares her support of Josh.

**NOMINATION** by Ms. Swanson for Mr. Anderson to serve as YAB Representative continuing his work and support for Juneau youth. *No objections were heard, and the nomination carries.*

## **G. STAFF REPORTS**

### **7. Jensen-Olson Arboretum (JOA) Update – Presented by Ginger Hudson**

Ms. Hudson begins by introducing herself as the Manager of the JOA and shares that she has been in the position for 5 years, where she acts as the director, horticultural manager, and on-site resident manager. She introduces the arboretum with a brief history of the endowment and management practices in place. One of the more recent changes to this management approach has been to introduce a commercial use program in accordance with the property’s administrative agreement to help grow and support the endowment fund with the goal that it will increase and eventually become the sole source of funding for the arboretum.

Ms. Hudson shares that on their modest budget, their staff are able to steward and grow the grounds while contributing to the community with outreach programs, educational horticulture, and historical promotions and partnerships. She acknowledges the invaluable support of the Friends of Jensen-Olson Arboretum nonprofit, which runs independently to support their garden collection and endeavors to engage the community in the garden. Ms. Hudson asks the PRAC to carry forward the message to the City Manager’s Office that the people of Juneau, and its many visitors, cherish the arboretum. She encourages the members of the PRAC to visit the grounds and come for a tour so she can share all that goes into managing and fostering the facility in the amazing condition that it is in.

Ms. Swanson asks for an update on the research into primrose hybrids that are better suited to Juneau’s climate, as she shared with the PRAC during her last visit. Ms. Hudson shares that locals were able to share seeds from primroses that have been growing in the area for a long time. She notes that the concern isn’t how wet it is here but actually the lack of snow cover insulation in the winter, and that they are still waiting to see how these seeds will fare.

Ms. Schirmer and Mr. O’Shaughnessy both share thanks to Ms. Hudson for her hard work with the department, maintaining the arboretum and helping it grow into a community space.

Ms. Crandall asks how to approach the Mayor with Ms. Hudson’s request for support, to which Mr. O’Shaughnessy answers that she can reach out to the assembly as an individual, or the PRAC as a body, can continue to support JPA initiatives, and recommend a full budget for the facility in years to come. Mr. O’Shaughnessy suggests they all carry Ms. Hudson’s message forward to the rest of the community to inform the voting public of the value JOA brings to Juneau.

## **H. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

**Ms. Schirmer** shared that the Lands Housing and Economic Development Committee discussed the extension of the Seawalk and had conversations on affordable housing and title nineteen building regulations, and finally, they voted to renew the Goldbelt Tram’s 35-year lease.

**Mr. Anderson** shared that he has nothing to report for the Youth Actives Board as they have completed their work, but that they will be scheduling their first Fall meeting coming up in a week or so. Mr. Anderson also makes a comment on how he would like to see more funding allocated towards kids and programs at the Jensen-Olson Arboretum. He shares his support for Acting Director Verrelli. Mr. O’Shaughnessy supports his sentiment and notes that an overview of the budgeting process and how the PRAC can be impactful to the programs that they’re passionate about, and that they hear from the community, would be really helpful, especially for some of the newer members of the body. Mr. Anderson reiterates that the Community in Juneau is eager to support projects that matter to them, and he would like to see the City explore more avenues to take advantage of the power and resources volunteer groups can bring, with consideration of liabilities and policy. He states the community is very resourceful and could do a lot of good for facilities like the arboretum or the courts at Adair Kennedy Park.

Ms. Swanson asks if staff can provide an updated breakdown of pickleball resources, facilities, and projects for the September PRAC meeting so the committee can keep itself and the public informed about current offerings. Ms. Verrelli agrees and shares that she will come to PRAC in September with an update on current pickleball projects.

**I. NEXT MEETING DATE** - September 2, 2025

**J. ADJOURNMENT** With no further business to discuss, the committee adjourned at 6:58 pm

*Respectfully submitted by Annie Carroll on 8/22/2025. Approved as amended at the 9/2/25 Meeting.*