



PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 7, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

PRAC Vice Chair Josh Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Josh Anderson, Danika Swanson, Emma Van Nes, Jennifer Gross, Kaasáank' Andrew Williams, Paulette Schirmer, Ren Scott, Susan Crandall

Absent: Ryan O'Shaughnessy

Staff Present: Marc Wheeler, Parks & Recreation Director, Lauren Verrelli, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director; Christine Woll, Assembly Liaison; & Annie Carroll, Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Ms. Schirmer to approve the agenda and ask for unanimous consent. *Seeing no objections, the agenda was approved.*

1. Director's Report

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Minutes from February 3, 2026

MOTION by Ms. Schirmer to approve the minutes from February 3, 2026, and ask for unanimous consent. *No objections were heard, and the minutes were approved.*

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - NONE

F. AGENDA TOPICS

3. Trail Mix 2026 Work Plan – Presented by Meghan Tabacek

Ms. Tabacek presented the organization's 2026 summer work plan, providing an overview of projects on both CBJ trails and non-CBJ trails. She noted that Trail Mix is a nonprofit dedicated to developing and maintaining the Juneau trail system. She shares that Trail Mix will operate with three crews this summer. Non-CBJ work includes Amalga Trail (Eagle Glacier Cabin), Peterson Lake Trail, Bonnie Brae Trail, & Mount Roberts Trail.

CBJ Trail Projects include the Mount Jumbo Reroute: 750 feet of new tread from Paris Creek to the Treadwell Ditch, installation of a 25-foot bridge, and grade and drainage improvements. Completion is targeted for August 2026.

35-Mile Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Park: Primary focus will be route finding, flagging, logging, and logistics coordination with the Juneau Off-Road Association (JORA) and city-contracted crews. JORA contributed approximately 800 volunteer hours last year, and the goal is to approach near-completion of the beginner route. A tentative target of opening some routes by 2028 was noted.

Amalga Meadows Cabin Construction: Trail Mix will construct a second cabin in the Amalga Meadows using a city workforce development grant and Proposition 2 funds. The cabin will be built with local contractor Lone Wolf Customs, and lumber barged from Icy Straits Lumber. Construction is expected to begin late June or early July, with a completion target of the end of September 2026, so the cabin could be available for reservations in early October.

Cabin Access Trail: Approximately 0.15 miles of trail was completed; almost a quarter mile remains. Ten weeks of crew work is planned, & completion is timed to coincide with cabin construction.

Fish Creek Trail: Five weeks of work continuing tread improvements, turnpike construction filled with gravel, and creek-edge stabilization. Work is permitted through ADF&G, and gravel extraction from the creek is timed to avoid salmon impacts. A bridge replacement on the upper trail is planned if the bridge can be ordered in time.

Annual Trail Brushing: A crew of five will brush and perform minor tread maintenance on 60 or more CBJ trails and beach access points, typically running July 1 through August 15.

Damage Report Response Team: Trail coordinators respond to public damage reports submitted via the Trail Mix website throughout the year, addressing fallen trees and other hazards and coordinating with land managers on larger issues.

Youth Employment and Parks (YEP) Program: An 8-week collaborative season with the City, SAIL, and the Zach Gordon Youth Center. YEP crew projects include:

Eagle Valley Center and SAIL Ropes Course, Montana Creek Trail, Lena Point Trail, Beach Access Points, and Horse Tram Trail

Trail Stewards Volunteer Program: Priority trails include Mount Jumbo Reroute, Black Bear Trail, Under Thunder Bike Trails, Schweitzer Creek Loop, Christopher Trail, Fish Creek, Auk Lake, Beach Access Points, and Tee Harbor

Ms. Tabacek noted that work is underway with Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Verrelli restarting the Juneau Trail Plan process. The last adopted Juneau Trail Plan dates to 1993. Summer 2026 will be used for scoping and agency coordination, with the full planning process running from November 2026 through November 2028. The process will include community focus groups, user group input, community-wide surveys, and feasibility studies. Ms. Tabacek cited Sitka Trail Works' 2023 trail plan as a model. A completed plan will strengthen grant competitiveness for major construction projects.

Ms. Van Nes asked about crew size and composition, and Ms. Tabacek confirmed Trail Mix will have approximately 20 staff total in the summer, with about 13 of the 16 crew members being local residents or college students returning to Juneau.

Ms. Gross asked about the Dupont Bridge. Ms. Tabacek shared that Trail Mix was awarded a \$20,000

grant from the Juneau Community Foundation today to begin permitting and planning. She is working with DOT on permits and noted that while DOT is not expected to fund construction, the goal is to complete permitting this season and potentially begin preparation or install the new bridge next season, depending on grant funding.

Mr. Anderson asked how local businesses or individuals could donate to Trail Mix. Ms. Tabacek confirmed all donations are tax-deductible, and that a corporate sponsorship program is available with promotional perks, and that individuals can donate at trailmixinc.org.

Ms. Swanson asked about the DuPont Trail itself, not just the bridge. Ms. Tabacek explained that Trail Mix holds an active Forest Service agreement covering DuPont and related glacier and cabin trails, but that trail work has largely stalled because moving equipment across the current bridge is not feasible. Repairing the bridge is the key to unlocking continued trail work. The Forest Service's recreation planner has also been engaged and supportive of the bridge project.

G. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Wheeler provided updates on department projects. He noted that work at Marine Park is now visibly underway after delays due to snow. Engineering Department support has been limited as staff are heavily consumed by outburst flood planning.

Mr. Wheeler noted that the Assembly is continuing its budget deliberations, with members asked to identify \$2 million in potential reductions. Compiled proposals will be discussed beginning April 22. A budget retreat is scheduled for Saturday, April 11. Parks & Recreation and the libraries have been subject to significant questions from the Assembly in this process.

Mr. Wheeler previewed items expected at future meetings, including a Jackie Renninger Park design update at 35% completion, a presentation from Docks and Harbors on plans for Elizabeth Peratrovich Plaza, a discussion with DNR about potential trail management transfers (CBJ receiving Mount Juneau Trail and Granite Basin Trail; DNR taking over Camping Cove Access Trail), and naming the new Amalga Meadows cabin being built by Trail Mix.

Mr. Wheeler acknowledged Trail Mix's strong value to the City but noted that Proposition 2 bond funds, which have supported much of the trail work, are winding down. CBJ funding for Trail Mix is expected to decrease in future years without a new funding source.

Mr. Wheeler reminded the committee that the annual PRAC report is due. He indicated that Mr. O'Shaughnessy is aware of this obligation. He also noted that several committee members have terms expiring April 30 and encouraged those interested in continuing to submit reappointment applications through the Clerk's Office, and may continue serving past April 30 while paperwork is processed.

Mr. Wheeler invited reactions from the four committee members who attended the recent behind-the-scenes tour of the Diamond Park Aquatic Center (DPAC). Ms. Van Nes noted that far more goes into operating a pool than she had previously appreciated and thanked staff for the informative tour. Mr. Anderson asked about the status of the air handling unit at DPAC. Mr. Wheeler confirmed it is a high priority. The unit is approximately 17–18 years old and approaching the end of its expected 20-year lifespan. It was also noted to have been spec'd with inappropriate materials, causing corrosion. Replacement is estimated at approximately \$4 million and would require removing a large section of the wall for installation. Due to current budget constraints, a bond measure is being considered for 2027 at

the earliest. Mr. Anderson asked whether the unit could be placed on the roof; Mr. Wheeler noted he would raise that with the facilities team.

Ms. Schirmer asked whether a flyer was available about the contagious disease affecting mountain goats on the Juneau Ridge and Sheep Creek Ridge. Mr. Wheeler confirmed that signs have been posted at Flume Trail, Perseverance Trail, Mount Roberts Trail, Sheep Creek, and West Peak Trail and offered to provide a PDF. He noted that the disease is expected to be a long-term issue, as spores remain viable for up to 12 years. People and dogs can be infected through contact with affected goats, with no cure available. In humans, it presents similarly to a recurring blister condition. Goats cannot be inoculated. The recommendation is to keep dogs on leash and avoid contact with goats or carcasses. Committee members were encouraged to help spread the word. The decision was made to use education and signage rather than trail closures, given the likely long duration of the issue and low compliance with closures generally.

H. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Ms. Schirmer provided a report from the Lands, Housing, and Economic Development Committee. Topics discussed at two recent meetings included the affordable housing budget; limiting the number of short-term rentals held by a single individual in the downtown area to prevent large-scale acquisition by outside entities; a land trade between the state and CBJ for a tower & access under a bridge; and a peer-to-peer vehicle-sharing tax proposal to ensure they are subject to the same local taxes as traditional car rentals.

Mr. Anderson reported on the Youth Activities Board (YAB). The grant review and scoring process is complete. On April 14, all applicants will meet at Juneau-Douglas High School to review scores and allocations. The total grant pool is approximately \$356,000, distributed across sports, academic, and arts categories. No report was available from the 1% for Arts Committee.

Ms. Woll provided a report on the Assembly's budget work. She noted that in December, the Assembly directed the City Manager to develop a budget addressing \$10–12 million in revenue loss from the recently passed ballot propositions. The Manager's proposed budget, including Parks & Recreation, has been submitted and includes significant departmental tightening, and increased user fees. The Assembly is now working to identify additional service level reductions. A two-year approach is being taken due to uncertainty about the actual impact of the sales tax exemptions. A budget retreat is scheduled for Saturday, and community input opportunities continue, including a public listening session the following Wednesday, where the Manager will present the budget at a high level, and the Assembly will receive public comment. Ms. Woll thanked community members who participated in surveys and workshops.

Kaasáank' shared the Tlingit word of the day: *Ash Kudat'ájaa*, meaning "Swimming/Playing in the water". Literally, slapping one's palms on the surface of the water. He noted that he and his grandson created an [animation showing the Lingít Language Pronunciation](#), posted on YouTube.

I. NEXT MEETING DATE - MAY 5, 2026

J. ADJOURNMENT With no further business to discuss, the committee adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Annie Carroll on 05/01/2026. Approved at the 5/5/2026 PRAC meeting