

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 01, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Zoom Webinar



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A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Josh Anderson, Ren Scott, Kaasáank' Andrew Williams, Danika Swanson, Emma Van Nes, Paulette Schirmer

Absent: Charles Westmoreland, Portland Sarantopoulos

Staff Present: George Schaaf, Parks & Recreation Director; Lauren Verrelli, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director; Annie Carroll, Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Mr. Anderson to approve the agenda with the addition of the Legislative Capital Priorities red folder item. *No objections were heard, and the agenda was approved.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes from September 3, 2024

Ms. Schirmer noted correction was needed to remove extraneous entry labeled "F = move" on page 5 And Mr. O'Shaughnessy noted correction is needed to the spelling of his last name on Page 3.

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

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - None

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2. October 1st Director's Report

G. NEW BUSINESS

3. JOA Painting Endowment— Presented by G. Schaaf

Mr. Schaaf explains that the Jensen-Olson Arboretum is a wonderful asset to the community and the only endowed facility that we have. Proceeds from the endowment fund and support the operation of the Arboretum In addition to general fund support from CBJ. He explains that currently a window replacement project is underway as a part of the deferred maintenance capital improvement program for the city and initially painting was to be included. Unfortunately, painting does not rise to the same level of priority as the window replacement and there was not enough money to include the painting job. Logically it makes the most sense to undertake both projects simultaneously to limit the amount of disruption on the property. He then asks the PRAC for their recommendation on whether to use endowment proceeds for this project.

Mr. Anderson asks if there are any other maintenance issues or problems at the arboretum. Mr. Schaaf answers that there was some substantial work completed at the arboretum recently in the sunroom and restroom in the managers residence. He adds that that work and this proposed job will take care of the most immediate needs of the facility, however there is interest in finishing the interior of the garage and painting the outside. Ms. Verrelli states that the residence is in the middle of the arboretum and is a

focal point so these improvements will add refinement to the property. She also confirms that she is not aware of any other big projects for the arboretum.

Ms. Van Nes asks if there is any update on the ADA accessible path planned for the facility grounds. Ms. Verrelli answers that the path has been completed and a ribbon cutting was held the previous weekend for the path which stretches from the greenhouse towards the apple tree courtyard area. Across the lawn.

MOTION by Ms. Schirmer for the PRAC to recommend that the department approve the use of the unrestricted funds from the Jensen-Olsen Arboretum Endowment Fund to repaint the residence at the arboretum. *No objections were heard, and the motion passed.*

4. RED FOLDER - Legislative Capital Priorities— Presented by G. Schaaf

Mr. Schaaf began by explaining that this is a relatively new part of the budget process, within the last 3 years. It is an effort to try to provide a unified front for the city, going to the State Legislature into the Congressional delegation to seek designated and appropriate funds rather than have every department pursue different funding opportunities for major projects. The departments are asked to propose projects, then the citizen advisory boards for the various departments are also asked to provide comment and input. He specifically mentions 3 projects on the list directly concerning Parks & Rec including the Lemon Creek multimodal path, 35 mile off Road vehicle park, and the Jackie Renninger Memorial Park renovation projects. He asks PRAC to come to a decision on their top 2 recommended projects to share with the Engineering & Public Works department by October 25.

Ms. Swanson asked if the results of the October 1 Regular Municipal Election would impact the funding of certain projects on the Legislative Capital Priorities list? Mr. Schaaf answered that it most likely would, but that that would not change their inclusion on the list.

Ms. Swanson, Mr. Kaasáank', and Ms. Schirmer all discussed the immediate need for Glacial Outburst Flood Response, Mitigation & Preparedness. Mr. O'Shaughnessy asked where the responsibility lies, and if it would be more appropriate for the PRAC to put forward endorsements for Parks & Recreation related projects. Mr. Kaasáank' also asked if it would be best to support Parks & Recreation projects and go in that direction. Mr. O'Shaughnessy says that if they are to conduct a poll, they should be free to vote for anything, but that he feels the committee's purview is for Parks and Recreation related projects and that he would very much like to see this body put forward Priorities related to the department. Ms. Schirmer noted that that was the direction the committee followed the last time they voted on the Legislative Capital Priorities list.

Mr. Anderson shares that he is going to champion the ORV, as it has been coming for a long time and he would like to continue to move it towards the goal line. He adds that the Lemon Creek project has been in the works for a long time, and he would like to stay consistent and keep these projects moving forward. Mr. O'Shaughnessy agrees with Mr. Anderson's point and says he too would like to see these projects get a little bit of help to proceed.

Ms. Van Nes states that she agrees the ORV park is important but notes that Jackie Renninger Park is in an underserved part of Juneau, and she would like to see it prioritized as well as the Lemon Creek multimodal path. She adds that the path would increase safety for those biking from downtown to the valley. Ms. Scott agrees and says that both are in underserved areas of town and that she would especially like to see forward movement on the project due to safety concerns.

Mr. Kaasáank' shares that he would like to put forward the Jackie Renninger Project and the ORV park. He says that the Lemon Creek project is of less interest to him as he sees it as more of a service to tourists who stop there to watch the eagles. He says CBJ had been very remiss in offering good solutions for entertainment to locals, especially in underserved areas. He adds that the ORV park is of interest as

he has seen locals pushed out of areas where they were previously allowed to ride off road vehicles due to tourism.

Ms. Swanson shares that she lives near the Lemon Creek Area and has never considered the path project as anything to do with tourists, and that she believes it is a safety issue for the many people walking and biking near traffic. She also mentioned that she was at Jackie Renninger 2 weeks ago cleaning up needles, so she would put that project as a top priority as well even though all three projects have such good merit. Mr. Kaasáank shares that he and his grandson also encountered needles near Floyd Dryden and that this issue is widespread so it should not which way they proceed based on that issue alone. He adds that the design of projects such as the Lemon Creek path should consider providing a place for disposal of needles.

Ms. Swanson in beginning to respond to Mr. Kaasáank notes that they have yet to be introduced and asks for his name. Mr. Kaasáank introduces himself and shares that his english name is Andrew Williams and his Tribal name, and preferred name is Kaasáank and he is an Eagle of the Kaagwaantaan clan and a child of the T'akdeintaan. He shares a bit about his family's history in Juneau, and notes that he works for the State of Alaska as a Database Specialist II, is a council member of the Juneau Tlingit Community Council, and has worked with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida for over 15 years. Ms. Swanson thanks him for the introduction and says she looks forward to meeting in person. She adds that she would like to clarify her point about needles, stating that it is not her hang up as she works with a lot of at-risk youth and knows that they often go to hang out at Jackie Renninger. She says she would like it if they had a better lit, safer place to hang out. Mr. Kaasáank says that he has the same ambitions to try and help the neighborhood, and he doesn't want to see these issues discourage people from getting involved in public sports and going to public spaces.

Ms. Schirmer brings attention to the Capital Civic Center project and asks if it is directly related to Parks & Recreation as well. Mr. Schaaf shares that Parks and Recreation is responsible for the Centennial Hall Facility and though it is managed by the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council. From an immediate operational and programming standpoint he says it would not affect Parks & Recreation because they are only involved in the basic maintenance of the building. Ms. Schirmer shares that she can get behind the Lemon Creek, and ORV Park projects. She says Lemon Creek is a high priority because it will increase safety for people who bike alongside the road.

After hearing everyone's priorities Mr. Anderson and Mr. O'Shaughnessy report that there is 4 in favor of the ORV park, 6 in favor of the Lomen Creek Multimodal Path, and 4 in favor of the Jackie Renninger Project. With that they decide to push forward the Lemon Creek Project and put the other 2 projects to vote to break the tie. Mr. O'Shaughnessy and Mr. Anderson both vote for the ORV Park and Ms. Swanson, Ms. Scott, Ms. Schirmer, Ms. Van Nes, and Mr. Kaasáank all vote in favor of the Jackie Renninger Project.

MOTION by Ms. Anderson for the PRAC to endorse the Jackie Renninger Park Project and the Lemon Creek Multimodal Path projects from the Legislative Capital Priorities list. *No objections were heard, and the motion passed.*

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

I. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Schaaf Updated the PRAC on the departments efforts to make the Marie Drake and Floyd Dryden gyms available to the public. He acknowledges that there is lots of interest in community access to the gyms, especially for pickleball. He said that the gyms which have recently been emptied have numerous maintenance needs and the department must make them clean and safe before offering them for reservations. The facilities will soon be added to CivicRec, the department's recreation management

software. He shares that they plan to use existing funding for this fiscal year to fill temporary positions to staff the facilities beginning in the new year. He adds that the community wants additional programming in these facilities. It's probably going to take an increment request to the Assembly to the department's budget to be able to really operate and manage at that level.

Ms. Swanson asked Mr. Schaaf if he could give an update on what the department is doing for pickleball. Mr. Schaaf answers that the department is still working to make improvements to the outdoor courts of the Adair Kennedy Memorial Park and issuing a small contract with a landscape design firm to solidify measurements for the courts and come up with a striping plan that will work for tennis and pickleball players at the park and can be started this next summer

Mr. Kaasáank' asked what the focus of the newly acquired facilities will be, and Mr. Schaaf answered that the community has been vocal about a desire for more indoor gym space to the point where last year, they were proposing potentially a 19-million-dollar community center to try to fill that gap. The spaces could be used for dry land programming for activities, meeting spaces, or court sports like pickleball and volleyball. Ms. Verrelli Added that having an option for private rentals at these facilities would be beneficial to the community, however she acknowledges that staffing needs must be met first.

Mr. Schaaf shares with the PRAC that several representatives from the department attended the Alaska Recreation and Park Association (ARPA) recently. He shares that he serves as the Treasurer for ARPA and that the Juneau Pools Aquatics Manager Terra Patterson was recently appointed to aboard seat. He says that the conference offers a great training opportunity for recreation professionals, and shares that for the next 2 years it will be held in Valdez. From a project updates standpoint he shares that the Adair Kennedy Memorial Park softball and baseball field has recently been updated with new artificial turf and the dugouts are currently being worked on. Additionally, Partners at The Department of Transportation have made great progress towards the bridge replacement on the Kaxdigoowu Heen Dei Trail and that it will be wrapped up this fall.

J. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Anderson shares that the youth activities board will be meeting next week, and that he looks forward to sharing an update after that.

Ms. Swanson shares that Trail Mix has completed work on the Perseverance Trail. She also adds that the Auction this year will have a true auctioneer for their dinner which will be held November 23, with tickets going on sale soon. She invites anyone interested in helping to reach out to Trail Mix to get involved.

K. NEXT MEETING DATE – November 5, 2024

L. ADJOURNMENT With no further business to discuss the committee meeting adjourned at 6:24pm

Respectfully submitted by Annie Carroll on 11/01/2024. Approved with as corrected at the 11/5/2024 PRAC meeting.