

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 3, 2013
CBJ Room 224, 6 p.m.

I. Call to Order: Chair Jeff Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
Present: Mr. Wilson, Ms. Walters, Mr. Mertl, Ms. Gilmour, Mr. Morrison, Ms. Hood, Mr. Brudie, Mr. Landry.
Absent: Mr. Rutecki and Mr. Nankervis

A quorum was present

Staff Present: Brent Fischer, Director Parks and Recreation, Fran Compton, Secretary; Myiia Wahto, Recreation Superintendent; George Schaaf, Parks and Landscape Superintendent

II. Agenda Changes: Mr. Mertl requested to strike Agenda New Business item B; topic will be presented at next PRAC Meeting.

III. Public Participation of Non-Agenda Items - none

Mr. Wilson: PRAC members will get updated P&R Comprehensive Plan. Please use your red pen or highlighter to add or make deletions and do some fine tuning. It will be reviewed at a later PRAC meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Mertl to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2013, meeting. Hearing no objection, the minutes of the July 2, 2013, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee were approved by unanimous consent.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Park update – Mr. George Schaaf:
Handout to members posted on website. He received this report two weeks ago and did some updating: The proposed site is at a “35-mile” city owned parcel. Parks and Recreation hired a consulting firm to map and pulled information from various entities. NOHVCC staff came to Juneau at Parks and Recreation’s invitation and held 2 public comment meetings, and met with stakeholders, Mayor Sanford, and conducted a workshop to explain their philosophy. They present a vision statement, which is contained in this report. Their statement is one site cannot meet all views or needs. They looked at several places around Juneau that could include as many uses as possible. The park we approve and construct will serve as a model for southeast Alaska, with a significant investment of time and resources. P&R staff is evaluating their findings with CBJ Engineering, and working on what the priorities are. Should we pursue alternative sites? This report is one piece of larger puzzle and P&R staff working with stake holders and others will determine what needs to be done to meet user needs.

Mr. Mertl: what are the priorities – the alternatives are 1 site to 4 and which site is P&R’s greatest desire? Mr. Schaaf: it depends; Goldbelt quarry is

lowest investment cost but P&R staff has not talked to Goldbelt, and it is actively being used. For play areas, learning areas, proximity to camping and beach areas, it is an easy answer. "35 mile" CBJ area has some places that cannot be developed, and a park to meet all needs will take a lot of time to plan and develop.

Ms. Gilmour: Are there options to having a number of areas? Mr. Schaaf: this is not the city or staff report, this is the consultants' report.

Ms. Gilmour: What about insurance, rentals, specific users groups, charge, time of operation? Are these questions for later? Mr. Schaaf: there was a lot of input, with buy-in for caretaker, and a day use area only, with other general comments.

Ms. Hood: You made a reference to "not overnight" did you mean no caretaker? Mr. Schaaf: no that means usage. Ms. Hood: It is her belief that a caretaker who lives on scene is helpful.

Ms. Walters: Is 1% set aside just for 35 mile? Mr. Schaaf: not a designated place, just "OHV park" and not tied to one parcel.

Mr. Wilson: PRAC investigated Fish Creek quarry and the public came up against it, and considered the rock quarry at Home Depot, but that is valuable land and CBJ needs to keep as industrial; considered Gold Belt land and there was tax consequence and they said no thanks. CBJ and PRAC have spent a lot of time finding this area [35-mile].

Mr. James Tipps: If they (the park land holders) charged us (the users) there would be tax (by CBJ on that fee).

Mr. Schaaf: Fish Creek quarry, one thing identified was the trail system proposed came close to people's property line – the new proposal will have the trail inside the parcel. All the sound should be contained.

Mr. Mertl: Have you talked with Goldbelt? Mr. Schaaf: no. Mr. Wilson: we are waiting for direction; for P&R staff to meet with CBJ Engineering staff and get direction. Is there a Wetlands delineation? Mr. Schaaf: no, not until we know where the trails will go.

Mr. Mertl: What's the general consensus of getting a facility ASAP? We have money coming in two years. What is our best vehicle to get this going? Mr. Schaaf: For the designated funding P&R will get a design and some limited construction. Users have a lot of donations and enthusiasm. The out the road construction companies could help. For consultants and engineering - \$100K will barely get the plans; there is not enough money to put something on the ground.

Mr. Landry: Is there any way to make Echo Cove area work? Mr. Schaaf: CBJ has parking lot and boat ramp there is no other land.

B. Auke Lake update – Mr. Schaaf: With a beautiful summer, the reports from Auke Lake area residents are: fairly quiet summer. We will have data later this fall of onsite surveys and daily counts. P&R is using cameras to document and will compile information and users. P&R purchased 25 regulatory no-wake buoys which came in last week. They won't be put in this late in the season. P&R installed new boat launch signs, which included length of boats statement. There was some public confusion over rinse/flush because of the boat size limitation. There was tremendous support from AK

Fish and Wildlife troopers doing safety checks, having a visible presence on the Lake and talking to visitors. They cannot enforce city ordinance, but did talk to users about equipment, and made sure vessels were registered. Staff finalized a brochure to distribute next summer with Auke Lake map and general boating safety. P&R staff are keeping a log of activity. P&R recently added a second park ranger to staff: Jordan Sawyer, with Dale Gosnell and Mr. Schaaf make appearances at the lake often. Mr. Schaaf and Ranger Gosnell spent contact time in June and first half of July issuing two written warnings for violating boat rules, 6 verbal warnings. There were several warnings issued by state troopers and 17 parking warnings on the highway. DOT added two "no parking" signs. Overall users were appreciative and most understood the rules and were compliant, but some were hostile.

Mr. Mertl: whatever happened to PRAC's recommendation to the Assembly?

Mr. Fischer: The letter was presented and reviewed. The assembly told P&R to take no action, enforce the regulations, and provide better usage information at the end of summer. Mr. Wilson: So P&R was able to put in buoys, update signage, provide user education, and hire a ranger. Mr. Mertl: where did the funding come from for the Ranger? Mr. Schaaf: P&R took existing salary funding for landscape person. For vehicles and uniforms, P&R received funding for the start up at Thane Campground.

Mr. Brudie: Has any of the Auke Lake property owners been deputized or provide interactivity with users. Mr. Schaaf: no, this has to be authorized by city manager. He gets phone calls from owners and encourages them to call JPD. JPD is taking reports seriously, and they make a note and try to get someone to respond.

Ms. Hood: When she was making inquiries she was told the troopers couldn't help and she wants to know what happened. Mr. Schaaf: the troopers have presence not enforcement.

Mr. Wilson: Parking situation – DOT had SAGA clearing bushes, are we going to do a by-pass trail, do we have funding to do that? Mr. Schaaf: yes, there are a lot of projects coming from DOT and it sounds like it will be done by this time next year. Mr. Wilson: Is there a Plan for PRAC to see that? Mr. Schaaf: DOT has a new project manager and Brotherhood Bridge replacement with parking lot is priority, once done they will review other plans. As he receives information he will bring them to PRAC.

C. Empty Chair project update requesting PRAC action. Mr. Fischer: Requesting PRAC recommendation to CBJ Assembly to allow the processing of grant funding from National Park Service for this project and recommend the project to proceed. In the PRAC August meeting he announced an \$80,000 grant from National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. The Empty Chair program received an official letter with notice of award. The grant agreement paperwork is being processed and Mr. Fischer is working with their committee. He is requesting PRAC support to approach the Assembly with this grant news. Project Plans propose the completion by June of next year. Mr. Wilson: This is at Capital school playground - can you give us an update? Mr. Fischer: The site presented to the PRAC in the corner is the current site (after the committee was

considering a change), on the existing path, bottom of the knoll, south east corner of the park near the community gardens, 5th and Main St. side.

Discussion: Mr. Landry: how much staff time will be required to fulfill the grant? Mr. Fischer, it is my time, a few hours.

MOTION by Ms. Hood that PRAC urges the Assembly to allow appropriation of the \$80K grant for the proposed Empty Chair project. Discussion: Mr.

Fischer: \$50K has been raised by the committee; the National Park's grant is a matching grant of \$80. Mr. Mertl: will there be a design update? Mr.

Fischer: construction designs possibly, but Mr. Mertl's submission will be used. I can give you an update if there are any changes and bring to the PRAC with an update.

Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Fischer will present to Assembly in late Sept.

D. Retreat schedule – discussion. Date set as Nov 5, 2013, 6 p.m. at the Dimond Pool Conference Room. Mr. Wilson: Will P&R send an email of staff comments for meeting? He requests PRAC members submit their suggestions to him. Mr. Fischer: Has charged staff to come up with strategic Plan for 1-5-10 years; request PRAC to review our plan to pick your top goals. What has to happen is the public review and comment for this Plan. Once we have topics we will request direction from the public. Ms. Hood: In the past she has asked people to come, is there any reason this meeting cannot have advanced publicity and a specific place on the agenda? Mr. Fischer: This is much more involved process than just the public comment period – want to have in-depth public research. Mr. Landry: The Comprehensive Plan is available on-line at P&R website. Will the strategic Plan be available on the website? Mr. Fischer: Strategic is the P&R staff strategy for facilities, and programs, our 1-2-5-10 year's Plans being put together over the next several weeks. Discussion of Mr. Fischer's vision to align PRAC wants with P&R needs and how to get public input.

E. P&R Comprehensive Plan is scheduled (in October) as the main agenda item. Discussion. Mr. Fischer: P&R will make the Plans available to PRAC and requests PRAC members to review the Plan and input at each PRAC meeting, as time goes by with a goal of completion in 2014. This will require a lot of work.

VI. New Business

A. Augustus Brown Pool Climbing Wall: Ms. Wahto: This information has been presented to the PRAC previously. Juneau Community Funds has received \$20,000 to purchase an aquatic climbing wall, 2 panels wide and 4 panels high, rising from the water on the side of the pool next to the high diving board. JCF is ready to buy the product and we request your action to recommend this project for the Assembly to appropriate. Maintenance staff has been consulted. It needs minimal upkeep, is a great feature addition and easy for staff to maintain. This request is being presented at the Sept 9, 2013 Assembly meeting, and voted on Sept 23. Requesting your approval and recommendation. Mr. Brudie: moveable? Ms. Wahto: Can be removed but not portable. Discussion. MOTION by

Mr. Mertl to recommend the CBJ Assembly appropriate the funds from the JCF for the Augustus Brown climbing wall. Ms. Walters: the Aquatic Board supports this project. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

~~B. Invasive Plant Species in Parks: INFORMATION. John Hudson, USF&WS presentation (postponed to October meeting)~~

C. Liaison Docks & Harbors Board change: Mr. Fischer: – received an email from C. Uchytel that D&H will not have any liaisons. Everyone appreciates the support from Ms. Hood. Mr. Wilson: wants to talk through the liaison position at the retreat and will ask for PRAC input about these.

VII. Public Comment - none

VIII. Liaison and Staff Reports

- Chair's Report: Jeff Wilson – Marine Park, The Dock project coming to bid – on hold waiting for Merchant's Wharf. The Bridge Park is moving ahead, applying for permits, have had some 'geotech' for the sculpture, that project will probably go out to bid next September. The Whale may be in town next summer – and the "park" may open in 2015. PRAC needs to start moving this forward, part of the retreat discussion. Asked Staff to come and speak about Auke Bay green space and shelter with D&H exchange, at the next meeting. Mr. Mertl permit requirement took green space out – the waterside projects were removed. Master Plan has been updated with a hybrid and has to be permit reviewed. Walk, green space, pavilion near the boat launch. Design team being asked for schedule – and nothing will move until Nov.
- P&R Director's Report: Brent Fischer – Mr. Brna resigned and we are looking for a new Ice Rink manager. We are in the process of hiring. Will update the PRAC next month. Alaska Recreation & Parks Association Conference is being hosted by P&R in Juneau – Ms. Wahto is the principal for this event, Sept. 11-13. The 3rd Annual Day of Play is Saturday Sept 14th with P&R facilities and programs opened up to public. Information is posted on our website.
- Liaison to the Assembly Report: Jerry Nankervis absent
- Lands Committee: Jeff Wilson – Petersen Hill zone change (Auke Lake and Mendenhall River) for high density neighborhood; Eaglecrest cell phone operations; Right of way purchased; catalog shoots in the area; Looking at affordable house locations.
- Youth Activity Board: Tom Rutecki absent
- Aquatic Facilities Advisory Board: Kate Walters – held a special meeting for elections. Discussion about Capital Transit.
- State Parks Board/Trail Mix: Gerry Landry – nothing unusual. Oliver Inlet trails; Territorial Sportsmen wants more cabins and will work legislature for funding; House of Wickersham landscaping; Gruening Historic Site being worked on. In Montana Creek near McGinnis discovered an almost completed squatter's cabin. Work on Tram area;

Peterson Lake trail has come to a standstill because machinery broke;
Discussion of Under Thunder Trail.

- Juneau Urban Forestry Partnership: Chris Mertl – nothing to report
- Jensen-Olson Arboretum Board: Kate Walters - meeting tomorrow.
- Eaglecrest Board/Nordic Ski Club: Odin Brudie - Eaglecrest will meet this month.
- Juneau Sports Association: Tracie Gilmour – 60 teams; elections last week; tournament use of Melvin Park – question regarding Savikko Park? Requested when blocks of field time are not used that they are given up for others to use asap.

IX. Other Business –

Mr. Landry: use of resources at SAGA and the Eagle Valley Center, would like to discuss that at the Retreat. Discussion – education center and other ideas being discussed.

Mr. Morrison: would like a future discussion regarding use Downtown park: pocket park – taken over and unsafe and cannot be used by general public -- something needs to be done. Discussion.

Ms. Hood: appreciation for PRAC members going to meetings and sharing during meeting time. Thank Jeff for his outside interests and bringing the information to the PRAC.

Mr. Brudie: has questions on Marine Park on status and plans for the outdoor performance space. Discussion of future funding and goals.

Mr. Mertl: big projects coming, what are P&R's maintenance obligations and is funding available? What about items that have been sidelined but still need addressing? We might be better served by not missing meeting dates.

Ms. Walters: has enjoyed the park at the top of the garage.

X. Adjournment – There being no further business, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted September 13, 2013,
Fran Compton, P&R Administrative Assistant II

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, October 1, 2013