



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**



June 10, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The June 10, 2021 regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Kelly Chang at 6:10 p.m. The meeting was a virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams.

A new commissioner, Nora Morse, was introduced at this meeting.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

Commissioner Kelly Chang
Commissioner Jon Dyson
Commissioner Eric Milliken
Commissioner Nora Morse
Commissioner Alison Smith

Commissioners absent:

Commissioner Grace Johnston
Commissioner Andrew Kastning

A quorum was achieved with five members present.

Staff present:

Josh Durand
Steve Rafuse
Nicolette Dent
Brad Muir
Diana Cramer

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Morse, the Agenda for the June 10, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Minutes of the May 13, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission were unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Josh Durand, Director of Parks and Recreation, provided the following report:

Horticulture. The summer flower program is in full swing. Please look at the L Street flower bed and see if you can guess what this year's design is. Horticulture Supervisor Sandy Potvin has retired and Luis Lemus has been hired to fill that position.

Healthy Spaces. This new division focuses on homeless camp and loose trash cleanup. They have been working on cleanups in Mt. View, Chester Creek corridor, Tikishla, Goose Lake, and Davis Park. This will be a 7-day a week, year-round program, so you will be seeing a big difference in the results of our camp cleanup efforts.

Construction season. The upcoming construction season will be very busy. Contracts have been established and active construction is in progress. Details of the projects have been presented to the Commission at previous meetings. The Department has been seeing higher than normal bid prices which will affect cost estimates and project plans and designs.

Campbell Trail at Taku. There will be some trail renovations at Taku near the adult fitness center which may cause some detours.

APPEARANCE REQUESTS

There were no appearance requests for non-agenda items.

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director of the Anchorage Park Foundation, gave a general report on projects, Challenge Grants, volunteer events and the activities of the Foundation and its role as a non-profit partner to Parks and Recreation.

ACTION ITEMS

1. PRC 21-10 Hilltop Bike Park

PRC Resolution 2021-07

Presented by Nicolette Dent, Park Planner and
Trevor Bird, Youth Exploring Adventures

Nicolette Dent, Park Planner, provided an overview of the proposal of Youth Exploring Adventures (YEA) to construct a mountain park at the Hilltop Ski Area in Far North Bicentennial Park. She then introduced Trevor Bird of YEA who provided more detail on the project. YEA is dedicated to providing outdoor recreation opportunities for youth and adults, and under a land use agreement with the Municipality, operates a year-round recreation program. Proposed improvements include 1.8 miles of downhill bike trails built throughout the existing ski area and a pump track at the base of the slope. The park has defined areas for a variety of users – including Nordic and downhill skiers, equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers, dog mushers, and nature enthusiasts. The proposal is consistent with the 2011 Far North Bicentennial Park Trail Improvement Plan. Four trails designed for various skill levels are planned, as well as a family-friendly pump track. Parks and Recreation will continue to work with YEA throughout the design and development process to ensure impacts to natural resources are minimized and ensure safe development consistent with winter use and compatibility with other park uses. Funding for the project will come from community donations and grant applications. The project has the approval of the Far North Bicentennial Users Group and the Hillside Community Council.

Parks and Recreation recommends approval of this project as it is consistent with YEA's mission to expand recreation opportunities for you and with the community's desire for trail development at Far North Bicentennial Park.

Commissioners asked questions about (1) funding, (2) the plan keep people from creating social trails between these new trails and the Spencer Loop, (3) efforts to ensure that no invasive species are planted during revegetation, and (4) the costs of using bike park and YEA plans to make sure the recreation opportunity is available for everyone.

- (1) Funding is in place and YEA is reading to start building. YEA anticipates being able to start operating in August.
- (2) A buffer area will be created between the new trails and existing trails such as the Spencer Loop, with some fencing and signage installed.
- (3) Parks and Recreation will provide the services of a natural resource expert and landscape architect and require that only certified topsoil free of seeds and invasive plants is used in revegetation.
- (4) YEA is committed to providing low-cost recreation opportunities to the community. Some fees have to be charged because although YEA is not operating for profit, there are still maintenance and upkeep expense to be met. Plans to work with the Boys and Girls Club and Parks and Recreation recreational programmers to provide these opportunities is being discussed.

Public Appearance requests: Fred Valdez, a YEA board member, spoke about how much Hilltop gives to our community. As an example, Hilltop does not charge Special Olympics to rent and use its ski facilities and provides a place for those athlete to learn, practice and compete. He supports and recommends approval this project.

Resolution: Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Milliken and seconded by Commissioner Dyson, PRC Resolution 2021-07 Hilltop Mountain Bike Park was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved resolution is attached as Attachment 1 to these Minutes.

Voting record for PRS Resolution 2021-07

In favor: Commissioners Chang, Dyson, Morse, Milliken and Smith

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioners Johnston and Kastning

2. PRC 21-11 Pickleball at the Chester Creek Sports Complex

PRC Resolution 2021-08

Presented by Nicolette Dent, Park Planner and
Robin Walthor, Anchorage Pickleball Club

Nicolette Dent, Park Planner, described the proposal of the Anchorage Pickleball Club to create 12 pickleball courts to be painted within the Bonnie Cusack Memorial outdoor rinks at Chester Creek Sports Complex. There are currently limited options to play pickleball in Anchorage and players experience long wait times. This proposal will provide for year-round use of the ice skating rinks and provide more playing opportunities. The Pickleball Club will paint and maintain the courts.

Robin Walthor, President of the Anchorage Pickleball Club, discussed the Club's formation, activities, and the sport of pickleball, which she stated is the fastest growing sport in the world. Players of any age can participate. The club will maintain all the courts and provide the paint, labor, and maintenance to keep the site updated and clean. The club has also volunteered to do projects elsewhere on the site. The project was submitted to the Fairview Community Council and no objections were heard.

Parks and Recreation approval of the proposed improvements.

A question was asked about access to the site. Ms. Dent responded that the site will be gated and locked, with the Club having keys so they can access the site during their open play times.

Appearance Requests: John McCleary had two questions: He asked if the general public will be allowed to play during the open play times. Ms. Walthor responded that initially, for security and safety reasons, at this time someone will have to let people in and out. It

is hoped they will be able to improve that situation. Mr. McCleary also asked if information about hours of operation will be posted on signs at the facility and on the Parks and Recreation website. Ms. Walthour responded that signs will be posted and hours are posted on their website. Ms. Dent responded that a link to the Pickleball Club's website can be put on the Parks and Recreation webpage.

Resolution: Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Smith, PRC Resolution No. 2021-08 Pickleball at the Chester Creek Sports Complex was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved resolution is attached as Attachment 2 to these Minutes.

Voting record for PRC Resolution 2021-08

In favor: Commissioners Chang, Dyson, Morse, Milliken and Smith

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioners Johnston and Kastning

3. PRC 21-12 Earthquake Park Trail Improvement

PRC Resolution 2021-09

Presented by Brad Muir, Natural Resource Manager and Paxson Woelber

Brad Muir, Natural Resource Manager, stated that last fall Paxson Woelber reached out to Parks and Recreation with his idea to use treated lumber from his home improvement project to improve an existing social trail at Earthquake Park by building some boardwalks and bridges on the trail. The trail goes from the Coastal Trail along the shore of Cook Inlet and back to the Coastal Trail.

Paxson Woelber intends to provide all materials and labor to build the boardwalks and bridges over wet areas along this trail and use gravel to create entry/exit ramps on each end of the boardwalk or bridge. The fixtures will be no more than 8 inches high. It will make the trail more usable for hikers and bikers.

Turnagain Community Council supports this project.

Beth Nordlund of Anchorage Park Foundation states APF supports the project and offered to assist Mr. Woelber with funding.

Parks and Recreation recommends approval of this trail improvement project.

Appearance requests: There were no public appearance requests for this action item.

Resolution: Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Milliken and seconded by Commissioner Smith, PRC Resolution No. 09 Earthquake Park Trail Improvement was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved resolution is attached as Attachment 3 to these Minutes.

Voting record for PRS Resolution 2021-08

In favor: Commissioners Chang, Dyson, Morse, Milliken and Smith

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioners Johnston and Kastning

INFORMATION ITEMS

There were no information items presented.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Chang announced that this was her last meeting and Jon Dyson will take over as Chair at the July meeting. Mr. Dyson, joined by the rest of the commissioners and Parks and Recreation staff, acknowledged her hard work and dedication and thanked Kelly for her service to the community.

Commissioner Milliken asked how the positions of chair and vice-chair of the Commission will be handled. Mr. Rafuse said the plan is to have nomination and election of chair and vice-chair on the July agenda.

UPCOMING MEETING

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission will be held at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, July 8, 2021, at Spenard Recreation Center. The meeting will not be a virtual meeting but rather will be held in its traditional location in the multipurpose room at Spenard Recreation Center.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Dyson, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this 15 day of July, 2021:



Chair
Parks & Recreation Commission



Director
Parks & Recreation



**Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Commission**

632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
P.O. Box 196660
Anchorage, AK 99519
Tel 907-343-4355
URL www.muni.org/departments/parks



**PRC RES NO. 2021-07
HILLTOP MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the nonprofit corporation Youth Exploring Adventures, Inc. (YEA) seeks to develop the Hilltop Mountain Bike Park to increase activity, revenue and recreation opportunities during the summer season; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Hilltop Mountain Bike Park is to create a safe area for youth and adults to gain outdoor recreational life experiences and to create a community asset that allows opportunity for clinics, camps and skills progression; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Hilltop Mountain Bike Park would include 1.8 miles of various levels of downhill biking trails, a pumptrack and a jump line in the existing developed portion of the Hilltop Ski Area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project and improvements are consistent with the public's desire for expanded recreation opportunities and investment in Far North Bicentennial Park; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project and improvements are supported by the Hillside Community Council; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed project and improvements for Hilltop Mountain Bike Park in Far North Bicentennial Park as submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of June, 2021.

Kelly Chang Digitally signed by Kelly Chang
Date: 2021.06.11 09:33:04 -0800
Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST: 
Josh Durand, Director
Parks & Recreation Department

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska

**EXHIBIT 1
PRC MINUTES 6/10/21**



**Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Commission**

632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
P.O. Box 196650
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**PRC RES NO. 2021-08
PICKLEBALL AT THE CHESTER CREEK SPORTS COMPLEX**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, pickleball is a growing sport across the U.S. and in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Pickleball Club formed in summer 2020 with a goal of promoting and developing pickleball throughout the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements meet an established community demand for outdoor pickleball courts that do not compete with other user groups; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements are supported by Alaska Ice Rink, Inc. who manages the space under a Cooperative Use Agreement with the Parks and Recreation Department; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed improvements for the Bonnie Cusack Memorial Outdoor Rinks as submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of June, 2021.

Kelly Chang
Digitally signed by Kelly Chang
Date: 2021.06.11 09:16:04
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Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:


Josh Durand, Director
Parks & Recreation Department

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska

**EXHIBIT 2
PRC MINUTES 6/10/21**



**Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Commission**

632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
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**PRC RES NO. 2021-09
EARTHQUAKE PARK TRAIL IMPROVEMENT**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, community member Paxson Woelber would like donate materials, construct trail structures and improve a social trail in Earthquake Park; and

WHEREAS, the improvements would be made by constructing small wooden bridges and boardwalks over wet portions of an existing social trail to create a more sustainable trail and access in Earthquake Park; and

WHEREAS, the improvement implementation will focus on addressing public safety concerns, trail improvement and sustainability, as well as the community's desire for investment at Earthquake Park; and

WHEREAS, the proposed trail improvements are supported by the Turnagain Community Council; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed trail improvements for Earthquake Park as submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of June, 2021.

Kelly Chang Digitally signed by Kelly Chang
Date: 2021.06.11 09:15:41 -0800

Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST: 
Josh Durand, Director
Parks & Recreation Department

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska

**EXHIBIT 3
PRC MINUTES 6/10/21**