



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING**



**June 11, 2020**

**I. Call to Order**

The June 11, 2020 regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Kelly Chang at 6:02 p.m. The meeting was a virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken by Josh Durand, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Commissioners present:

Commissioner Kelly Chang  
Commissioner Jon Dyson  
Commissioner Andrew Kastning  
Commissioner Grace Johnston  
Commissioner Alison Smith

Commissioners absent:

Commissioner Erin Kirkland  
Commissioner Eric Milliken

A quorum was achieved with five members present.

Staff present:

Josh Durand  
Steve Rafuse  
Taylor Keegan  
Brad Muir  
Annie DuBois  
Diana Cramer

### **III. Approval of Agenda**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Johnston, the Agenda for the June 11, 2020 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Minutes of the May 14, 2020 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission were unanimously approved.

### **V. Director's Comments**

Josh Durand, Director of Parks and Recreation, provided a brief overview of Parks and Recreation activities. Horticulture has been busy planting flowers and placing the hanging baskets around town. The golf course at Russian Jack has re-opened and parks, trails and public green spaces are seeing a lot of activity. New LED lighting is being installed in the greenhouses. The spruce bark beetle infestation continues to be a big problem. One grant has been received that will be used to expand our present tree crew to 10 to remove trees affected by the spruce bark beetle and additional funding is being sought for in order to increase staffing and rent needed equipment.

Steve Rafuse, Park Superintendent, gave an update on the construction projects for this summer. Jewel Lake and Frontierland construction should begin in the next few weeks. Elderberry Park and William B. Lyons Park both have been approved by the Urban Design Commission and staff is getting those projects ready to go out to bid. Some of the bigger projects, like Elderberry and Tikishla, may not be completed this summer and if they are not they will be finished next spring. Park Maintenance and Horticulture have been very busy and very responsive to park issues and concerns.

Commissioner Smith asked about the status of the bird cherry tree invasive species removal program. Mr. Rafuse responded that this program is still active. Parks and Recreation is working with Tim Stollard, the Anchorage Park Foundation, the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, and others to move this program forward and coordinate the program with other projects such as streambank restoration and spruce bark beetle tree removal.

Commissioner Smith also asked about the possibility of leasing Heritage Land bank land at Pt. Woronzof to be used as a parking area for access to the Coastal Trail. Mr. Durand responded that will discuss the idea with Heritage Land Bank and get back to the group on that topic.

Commissioner Chang asked if the Department had seen changes or increases in use of recreation facilities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr. Durand responded that there are counters in place on the trails and he believes there was a 30% increase in trail use in May. Otherwise, just going around to all the parks things seem to be bustling.

## **VI. Anchorage Park Foundation Report**

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director of Anchorage Park Foundation, stated that there has been significant progress made on the Moose Loop program that was presented to the Commission in May, they have done a lot of social media work, and are ready to get rolling with it.

## **VII. Public Appearance Requests**

There were no appearance requests for non-agenda items.

## **VIII. Action Items**

### **A. PRC 20-09: Indigenous Placenames Project – Chanshtnu Muldoon Park**

PRC Resolution 2020-07

Presented by Steve Rafuse, Park Superintendent;

And Project Team Members Bri Keifer (Huddle), Aaron Leggett, and Melissa Shaginoff

Led by the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Native Heritage Center, several organizations in Anchorage have collaborated to bring awareness to Dena'ina history and place names in the Anchorage area. This has resulted in the naming of the Dena'ina Center in Downtown Anchorage and the new Chanshtnu Muldoon Park. The current effort intends to install place name signs in Anchorage parks, trails and public spaces. To date, twenty-six locations have been identified for placement of signs. An Advisory Committee was formed with leaders from Native corporations, the Municipality of Anchorage, the Anchorage Assembly, and local non-profits and artists. The Committee developed six factors to guide the design of the place name signs and artists then used that information to create a design concept that also incorporated Parks and Recreation Wayfinding Guidelines. The Indigenous Placemaking Movement Booklet, provided to Commissioners, provides the conceptual designs and guidelines for the signs. Also included in the booklet were a list of place names where the signage could be placed in future. Funding was received from National Endowment for the Arts grant through the Alaska Native Heritage Center, and a Rasmuson Foundation grant through the Anchorage Park Foundation.

The first project proposed is the installation of a “Chanshtnu” place name sign at Chanshtnu Muldoon Park. “Chanshtnu” means grass creek in Dena’ina. The sign will be placed off the paved trail opposite a turf area on a site that offers views of the creek and surrounding area. Details of the sign features described include cedar posts with the name on the front, interpretive and wayfinding information panels, and a metal plate with project phrases topped with the project symbols – a fire bag and dentalium bead patterns. Project organizers worked closely with Parks and Recreation. Significant public process has occurred which included presentations to the Northeast Community Council. Parks and Recreation staff recommends approval of the resolution supporting placement of the sign at Chanshtnu Muldoon Park.

There were no public appearance requests for this Action Item.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Dyson and seconded by Commissioner Smith, PRC Resolution No. 2020-07 Indigenous Place Names Project – Chanshtnu Muldoon Park was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved resolution is attached as Attachment 1 to these Minutes.

Voting record for PRC Resolution No. 2020-07:

In favor – Commissioners Chang, Dyson, Johnston, Kastning and Smith

Opposed – none

Abstained – none

Absent – Commissioners Kirkland and Milliken

#### **B. PRC 20-10: Youth Employment in Parks 2020 Projects**

PRC Resolution No. 2020-08

Presented by Brad Muir, Natural Resources Manager and

Annie DuBois, Youth Employment in Parks Program Manager

Youth Employment in Parks (“YEP”), a joint program of Parks and Recreation and Anchorage Park Foundation, is beginning its 14<sup>th</sup> summer. YEP has hired over 350 youth and completed over 102 projects during that time. YEP provides meaningful employment, job training, and education to its youth. This year projects include Campbell Park tree planting; Ruth Arcand Park neighborhood connector trail construction; Government Hill Bluff Trail maintenance and improvements; Far North Bicentennial Park Tour of Anchorage Trail bridges, boardwalks and trail construction and improvements; Rabbit Creek Park trail construction; and trail construction at the new BLM Campbell Tract entrance on 68<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Funding is in place for the projects. Parks and Recreation worked closely with government agencies and non-profit partners to identify appropriate projects and recommends approval of a resolution supporting the YEP 2020 projects.

There were no public appearance requests for this Action Item.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Johnston, PRC Resolution No. 2020-08 Youth Employment in Parks 2020 Projects was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved resolution is attached to these Minutes as Attachment 2.

Voting record for PRC Resolution No. 2020-08:

In favor – Commissioners Chang, Dyson, Johnston, Kastning and Smith

Opposed – none

Abstained – none

Absent – Commissioners Kirkland and Milliken

#### **IX. Information Items**

There were no information items presented.

#### **X. Commissioner Comments**

There were no commissioner comments.

#### **XI. Upcoming Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., on July 9, 2020.

#### **XII. Adjournment**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Dyson, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this 9 day of July, 2020:

**Kelly  
Chang**

Chair  
Parks & Recreation Commission

Digitally signed by  
Kelly Chang  
Date: 2020.07.09  
19:22:21 -08'00'



Director                      Steve Rafuse, Superintendent  
Parks & Recreation on behalf of Josh Durand





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

632 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 630  
P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519



**PRC RES NO. 2020-07  
Indigenous Place Names Project – Chanshtnu Muldoon 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 Indigenous Place Names project (IPN) is a collaboration with several organizations to bring awareness to Anchorage's Dena'ina history and place names; and

WHEREAS, funding from the Alaska Native Heritage Center with a National Endowment for the Arts grant and funding through the Anchorage Park Foundation with a Rasmuson grant, implementation will begin with the installation of a 'Chanshtnu' place name sign. 'Chanshtnu', meaning Grass Creek is the Dena'ina place name for Chester Creek; and

WHEREAS, the project uses materials that are consistent with current wayfinding standards and will feature the place name on the front of the post, interpretive and wayfinding information on panels on the back and sides, with a metal plate featuring two project phrases and topped with a weathering steel sculptural piece inspired by the dentalium bead pattern and firebag which represents the living off of the land; and

WHEREAS, Project organizers have worked closely with the Parks and Recreation Department through this process to respect past park planning efforts and the desires of area residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed Indigenous Place Names Project for Chanshtnu Muldoon Park as proposed and presented.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 11th day of June, 2020.

**Kelly Chang** Digitally signed by Kelly Chang  
Date: 2020.06.12 09:48:03  
+08'00'

Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

  
Josh Durand, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department



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

632 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 630  
P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519



**PRC RES NO. 2020-08  
Youth Employment In Parks - 2020 Projects**

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 Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation Department and is focused on providing Anchorage teens with meaningful job experience, outdoor education and environmental stewardship skill in Anchorage Parks and Trails; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation, and various project partners has dedicated or achieved \$181,500 in funding to support the 2020 Youth Employment in Parks projects; and

WHEREAS the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is in its 14<sup>th</sup> year of operation with a planned scope of work that includes trail work, tree planting, landscaping and vegetation rehabilitation, and park beautification projects to be completed during the 2020 YEP program season; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the scope of work submitted by the Department for the 2020 Youth Employment in Parks Projects.


PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 11th day of June, 2020.

**Kelly Chang**

Digitally signed by Kelly  
Chang  
Date: 2020.06.12  
09:48:55 -08'00'

Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST.

  
Josh Durand, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department