



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

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING**



**July 9, 2020**

**I. Call to Order**

The July 9, 2020 regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Kelly Chang at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was a virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken by Chair Kelly Chang.

Commissioners present:

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

Commissioners absent:

Commissioner Eric Milliken

A quorum was achieved with six members present.

Staff present:

Steve Rafuse  
Tom Korosei  
Brad Muir  
Michelle Fehribach  
Diana Cramer

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

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Kirkland and seconded by Commissioner Johnston, the Agenda for the July 9, 2020 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

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

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Dyson, the Minutes of the June 11, 2020 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission were unanimously approved.

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

Steve Rafuse, Park Superintendent, provided the following report:

CARES Act funding: About three million dollars has been allocated by the Assembly to be spent or at least encumbered by the end of the year. The funding will be used to hire more staff, provide grants to non-profit organizations and to hire private contractors to remove dead for the spruce bark beetle-killed trees.

Park constructions projects:

- Jewel Lake has a contractor on board and construction should begin in about 2 weeks.
- Frontierland went out to bid today so construction should begin very soon.
- Tikishla Park bid should go out in about 3 weeks.
- Chanshtnu Muldoon Park Phase 2 is moving along with all site working including lighting and parking lot upgrades to be completed by the end of this month. Volunteers are working on the community garden.
- Hamilton Park and Fairview Park now both have contractors and the construction should commence within 2 weeks.

Homeless Camps: A lot of work has been happening on the Campbell Creek and Chester Creek corridors. The Department has been following camp cleanups with the tree removal crews so that removal of the dead spruce trees can be done while there are no people in there and it is safer for the crews to work. There have been 20-25 people working on camp cleanup plus CWS workers. They will be moving on to the Mt. View area next week and then to Russian Jack. They have been taking an average of 40,000 pounds of trash to the dump every week. If anyone notices an illegal camp, please report it online at Muni.org at AncWorks.

Recreation: Fairview Recreation Center is open on a limited basis, as is Kincaid Outdoor Center and Lidia Selkregg Chalet at Russian Jack. Spenard Recreation Center is still

being used as the Emergency Services headquarters. Centennial Campground has opened. The municipal greenhouse at Russian Jack is now open to the public.

Youth Employment in Parks: The full crew started on July 6 and already working on their projects.

Commissioner Kastning asked what is done with the beetled-killed trees once they are cut down. Mr. Rafuse responded that is dependent on the location. Where possible, chipping of the trees is done on site and left there to remain part of the environment. Some locations require that the downed trees be removed and those chips can be hauled away to be used for various purposes such as ground cover chips on rights-of-way, among others.

Commissioner Smith asked for an update on the possibility of leasing Heritage Land Bank land at Pt. Woronzof as additional parking and access for the Coastal Trail. This is an item she brought up at the June meeting. Mr. Rafuse responded that will follow-up with Director Josh Durand on that item.

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

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director of Anchorage Park Foundation (APF), reported that the Youth Employment in Parks Project is in full swing, though it is only a 5-week program this year. APF continues to work on promoting the Moose Loop which was discussed in detail in previous commission meetings. It is hoped that all challenge grants will be completed this year and APF is working with grantees to determine if extensions will be needed on their grants. 2021 is the next year applications for challenge grants will be solicited.

## **VII. Action Items**

### **A. PRC 20-11: Far North Bicentennial Park Trail Connector**

PRC Resolution 2020-09

Presented by Brad Muir, Parks & Recreation Natural Resources Manager and  
Chris Beck, Alaska Trails

Alaska Trails, Singletrack Advocates and Parks and Recreation are proposing the construction of a new trail to connect the upper Hillside trail system in Far North Bicentennial Park (FNBP) with the Prospect Heights trailhead in Chugach State Park. Construction is anticipated for summer 2020. The *Far North Park Trail Improvement Plan* identified the need for this connection and specifically identifies a connection at this location. The purpose is to connect the state park trail system with the upper portions of the existing trail system in FNBP by means of a safe, well-designed, sustainable trail.

Originally two, one-way trails were envisioned. In order to accomplish having a connector built this year and using available funding, it was decided that the proposed trail will be a Class 4, two-way, multi-use, switch-backing trail about one-quarter mile long between the Prospect Heights parking lot down to the upper end of Janice's Jive and Hive trails in FNBP. The goal is to have a family friendly, safe trail that appeals to a variety of users. Singletrack Advocates will fund the project using CARES Act funding. The proposed budget is \$15,000 - \$20,000. Work will be done by Alaska Trails contractor Happy Trails beginning in late July or early August, and the trail should be ready for use in September.

The proposal is consistent with the objectives of 2011 *Far North Park Trail Improvement Plan*, and is supported by FNBP Users Groups, Singletrack Advocates, Alaska Trails, the Anchorage Park Foundation, Chugach State Park, and Hillside Community Council. Parks and Recreation staff recommends approval by the Commission.

There were no public appearances on this Action Item.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Kirkland and seconded by Commissioner Smith, PRC Resolution 2020-09 Far North Bicentennial Connector Trail was unanimously approved. A copy of the approved, signed resolution is attached to these Minutes as Attachment 1.

Voting record PRC Resolution 2020-09:

In favor: Chang, Dyson, Johnston, Kastning, Kirkland, and Smith.

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Eric Milliken

#### **B. PRC 20-12: Renewal of Permit for Telecommunications Tower in Kincaid Park**

PRC Resolution No. 2020-10

Presented by Tom Korosei, Park Planner

Mark Adams and Travis Drake, GCI

Alaska Wireless Network, a subsidiary of GCI, has requested an extension of its Revocable Use Permit to operate a telecommunications tower at Kincaid Park. The current permit expires at the end of September 2020, with the new term beginning in September 2020 and continuing until September 2021 with two, one-year options to extend. In order to facilitate wireless communications in Kincaid Park, the initial revocable use permit was granted in 2016, along with related easements for construction and operation, and allows a 3600 square foot area around the tower for a fenced-in equipment area and landscaping. The tower is located on a hill near the soccer stadium,

approximately 600 feet south of Kincaid Outdoor Center, carries antennas for multiple carriers, and is designed to simulate an evergreen tree to reduce visual impact.

Parks and Recreation feels that, although it is not aware of complaints about the tower, that reasonable efforts should be made to maintain or enhance the visual impact on the environment. Efforts may include restoring or improving tower camouflage and providing landscaping. Parks and Recreation notes the following concerns:

- Reduced effectiveness of the tower camouflage as a result of the size and number of antennas now attached to the tower and the apparent deterioration of the camouflage material itself.
- Lack of screening/enhancement landscaping around the fence as originally proposed.
- Electrical equipment outside rather than within the fenced area as originally proposed.
- Beacon on the tower whereas originally a beacon was determined not necessary.

Parks and Recreation requested that the Commission approve the revocable use permit for another year with options for two, one-year extensions in conformance with the original terms, and subject to the condition that the number or size of antennas not be increased without demonstrating adequate measures to maintain the visual character of the tower.

Commissioner Smith stated that the resolution should be revised to specifically include language outlining the stipulations agreed to in the permit and stating that the permit will be revoked for failure to comply with the terms of the permit. She felt the Commission should postpone making a decision on the resolution until August and take that extra time to prepare a revised resolution for decision at the August meeting. Commissioners Kastning and Kirkland agreed.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Kirkland, it was unanimously resolved that PRC Resolution No. 20-10 regarding the Renewal of Permit for the Telecommunications Tower in Kincaid Park should be postponed until the August 13, 2020 meeting, and the resolution should be revised to include the stipulations required in granting renewal of the permit.

Commissioner Chang, Chair, stated that she will be reaching out to Commissioners requesting input in order to prepare a revised resolution for decision at the August 13, 2020 meeting.

GCI representatives asked that they be included in that process in order to provide what information they can to facilitate the Commission process.

Steve Rafuse reminded Commissioners that they will need to be mindful of *ex parte* communications, and that all communications should be shared with Tom Korosei, Park Planner.

No public testimony was taken at this time.

#### **VIII. Information Items**

There were no information items presented.

#### **IX. Commissioner Comments**

There were no commissioner comments.

#### **X. Upcoming Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., August 13, 2020.

#### **XI. Adjournment**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Johnston, seconded by Commissioner Kastning, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair  
Parks & Recreation Commission

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director  
Parks & Recreation



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

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**PRC RES NO. 2020-09  
Far North Bicentennial Park Connector Trail**

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 Parks and Recreation Department received a proposal from Alaska Trails, in partnership with Singletrack Advocates (STA) to construct a trail connection between the upper Hillside Trail system in Far North Bicentennial Park, with the Prospect Heights trailhead and parking area in Chugach State Park; and,

WHEREAS, 2011 *Far North Bicentennial Park Trail Improvement Plan* identifies the need for better connections between Municipal managed parkland in FNBP and Chugach State Park and specifically identifies a trail connection between the Hillside Trails in FNBP and the trail system in Chugach State Park near the Prospect Heights Parking Area; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed trail will follow Class 4 trail standards and is designed to be 4-6 feet wide and will incorporate clear sightlines and passing areas; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is consistent with the goals of the *Far North Bicentennial Park Trail Improvement Plan*, and is supported by the FNBP Users Group, Singletrack Advocates, Alaska Trails, the Anchorage Park Foundation, and Chugach State Park.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks & Recreation Commission approves the proposed FNBP-Chugach State Park Connector Trail.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 9th day of July 2020.

**Kelly Chang**

Digitally signed by Kelly Chang  
Date: 2020.07.09 19:22:53  
-08'00'

Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

\* signed Steve Rafuse, Superintendent  
for Josh Durand

Josh Durand, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department

**ATTACHMENT 1 - July 9, 2020 Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting**