



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING**



**JULY 15, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The July 15, 2021 regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Acting Chair Jon Dyson at 6:00 p.m.

A new commissioner, Brian Looney, was introduced at this meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present:

Commissioner Jon Dyson  
Commissioner Grace Johnston  
Commissioner Andrew Kastning  
Commissioner Brian Looney  
Commissioner Nora Morse  
Commissioner Alison Smith

Commissioners absent:

Commissioner Eric Milliken

A quorum was achieved with six members present.

Staff present:

Josh Durand  
Steve Rafuse  
Brad Muir  
Diana Cramer

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Johnston, the Agenda for the July 15, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was unanimously approved.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Johnston and seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Minutes of the June 10, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission were approved, with five commissioners in favor, none opposed, and Commissioner Looney abstaining.

## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

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

1. Healthy Spaces: Funding from the alcohol tax has allowed the Parks and Recreation Healthy Spaces program to address trash cleanup and illegal camp abatement throughout our public spaces – not just park properties but all public spaces. There is currently work going on in Jacobson Park, Goose Lake Park, Tikishla Park, and, again, in the Mt. View snow dump area. The crew not only works on camp abatement but also on loose trash that exists in our public spaces around town. A lot of focus has been put into mid-town, bus stops, sidewalks, bike trails, and underpasses. Peratrovich Park receives daily attention. Please report any illegal camps online at [muni.org](http://muni.org) using ANCWorks.
2. The connection of the Ship Creek Trail to the Coastal Trail as well as the Fish Creek Trail to the Coastal Trail is coming to fruition, as we received AMATS funding and passed park bonds to facilitate these projects. These will be expensive and challenging projects with multiple landowners involved, and the required permits. Work on the Ship Creek-Coastal Trail connection is about to begin.
3. Construction has been a challenge this year due to high bids received on work to be performed. In some cases the bids have been nearly double what staff expected. Nevertheless, construction is happening at Chanshtnu Muldoon Park, Frontierland Park, Tikishla Park, and in one week a trail connection at Taku Lake Park to provide ADA access to the adult fitness equipment there.
4. A grant was received from AARP to provide free lessons on how to use the adult fitness equipment at Taku Lake Park. These lessons will be available this fall and advertised on social media.

Commissioner Looney asked how the work the Healthy Spaces does is tracked. Mr. Durand responded that locations and hours worked are tracked using a GIS database. This helps ensure better coordination between the CAP team and Parks and Recreation.

Commissioner Smith asked what Parks and Recreation does about graffiti that looks like art. Mr. Durand said that yes, it's art, but it's not 1% for Art, so we try to react as quickly as possible to curb it.

## **ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION REPORT**

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director of the Anchorage Park Foundation, provided playground maps and moose loop stickers to the commissioners. She spoke about these items:

- July 27 – Youth Employment in Parks will be speaking at the Anchorage Assembly Meeting.
- July 31 – Bike Anchorage is putting on a biking event that the Park Foundation will be helping to promote.
- August 3 – there will be a ceremony to dedicate the new Indigenous Placemaking Sign and Plaza that has been installed at Westchester Lagoon. The ceremony will take begin at 4:30 p.m.
- William B. Lyons Park fundraising for the new inclusive playground continues. This playground has been designed to accommodate large numbers of children. About \$200,00 is need in order to complete the whole project.
- Two grants have been requested from the Rasmuson Foundation – one to fund the 2022 Challenge Grants and the second is for the Hilltop bike park.

## **ACTION ITEM**

### **PRC 21-13: New ASDRA Sled Dog Trail Connection in Far North Bicentennial Park**

PRC Resolution 2021-10

Presented by Brad Muir, Natural Resources Manager,  
Fran Pekar, Alaskan Sled Dog and Racing Association, and  
Shelley Rowton, Heritage Land Bank

The Alaskan Sled Dog and Racing Association (ASDRA) has proposed a new trail connection at Far North Bicentennial Park (FNBP) to connect the new ASDRA headquarters to the existing Tozier Track. The ASDRA headquarters will be located on property owned by ASDRA and the trail connection is necessary to connect the headquarters to the existing dog sled system and will provide safe circulation into and out of the facility. Part of the connector trail will use an old existing sled dog trail. The trail will be approximately 1,000 feet long and will cross the Tour of Anchorage Trail roughly 75-100 feet south of an existing sled dog trail intersection. ASDRA will building and maintain the trail. Parks and Recreation staff recommend approval of the proposed trail connection.

Fran Pekar, ASDRA, provided background on ASDRA and its activities, and, using a PowerPoint presentation, provided details of the proposed project and how the plan was

developed. Further information was provided by Jeremy Engeberg of ASDRA and Shelly Rowton of Heritage Land Bank.

### Public Appearance Requests

John McCleary expressed his concerns about the crossings on the Tour of Anchorage Trail and the conflicts he foresees happening between dog mushers, skiers and other users on the Tour trail, and made suggestions on how to design the trail to avoid conflicts.

Commissioners asked questions of the presenters and Parks and Recreation staff, and discussion ensued regarding the design of the trail, the fencing to be installed, the involvement of Heritage Land Bank, Parks and Recreation, Far North Bicentennial Park users, Nordic Ski Association, and others in developing the plan presented to the Commission, and the overall details of the plan.

Following discussion, upon motion made by Commissioner Looney and seconded by Commissioner Smith, Resolution PRC 2021-10 New ASDRA Trail Connection in Far North Bicentennial Park was approved with a vote of 5 in favor and 1 abstaining. The approved resolution is attached to these Minutes as Attachment 1.

Voting record PRC 2021-10:

Yea: Commissioners Dyson, Johnston, Looney, Morse and Smith.

Nay: none

Abstaining: Commissioner Kastning

Absent: Commissioner Milliken

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

No information items were presented.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Director Durand stated that commissioners are still needed to fill seats on this Commission. Currently two seats are vacant.

### **UPCOMING MEETING AND AGENDA ITEMS**


The next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Thursday, August 12, 2021, at Spenard Recreation Center.

Steve Rafuse reminded commissioners that a new chair and vice-chair will be elected at the August meeting.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED this 14 day of October, 2021:



Chair  
Parks & Recreation Commission



Director  
Parks & Recreation



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

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**PRC RES NO. 2021-10**

**New ASDRA Trail Connection in Far North Bicentennial 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 Alaskan Sled Dog Racing Association (ASDRA) formed in 1949 to promote and preserve the great Alaskan tradition of dog mushing in Far North Bicentennial Park and Campbell Tract; and

WHEREAS, the Alaskan Sled Dog Racing Association (ASDRA) is in negotiations with the Heritage Land Bank to exchange the Tozier Track for a property located on MLK Jr. Blvd.; and

WHEREAS, the Alaskan Sled Dog Racing Association (ASDRA) is proposing a new trail connection in Far North Bicentennial Park to support the future re-location of ASDRA headquarters; and

WHEREAS, a new trail connection is necessary to connect the new headquarters to the existing sled dog trail system and ensure safe circulation into and out of the new facility; and

WHEREAS, the new trail connection will be approximately 1,000 feet long and will cross the Tour of Anchorage Trail roughly 75-100 feet south of an existing sled dog trail intersection; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed sled dog trail connections for Far North Bicentennial Park as submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 15th day of July, 2021.

  
Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:   
Josh Durand, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska

ATTACHMENT 1

JULY 15, 2021 MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION