



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**



**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING**

April 11, 2024

The April 11, 2024 meeting was held in person at Spenard Community Recreation Center.

CALL TO ORDER

The April 11, 2024, regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Brian Looney at **6:03 p.m.**

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

- Commissioner Edwin Blair
- Commissioner Bruce Graham
- Commissioner Brian Looney
- Commissioner Andrew Kastning
- Commissioner Scott Wamsganz

A quorum was achieved with **five** members present.

Staff present:

- Taylor Keegan
- Mike Braniff
- Tanya Hickok
- Nicolette Dent
- Melanie Hess
- Ellen Devine

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion duly made by **Commissioner Graham** and seconded by **Commissioner Kastning**, the Agenda for the April 11, 2024, meeting was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by **Commissioner Wamsganz** and seconded by **Commissioner Graham**, the Minutes of the March 14, 2024, meeting was unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mike Braniff, Parks and Recreation Director

1. **Horticulture:** New supervisor of horticulture, Annie Dubois, who has been with us for 8 years in the YEP program and has recently moved into a new role. We are still about 6 weeks away from plants getting out into the field.
2. **Healthy Spaces:** First abatement is coming up at Davis Park, and soon the Archive Site next to Cuddy Park will be abated and cleaned.
3. **Hiring:** So far, our hiring numbers are a little bit better for our maintenance crews and horticulture team. With that said, our recreation staff is currently understaffed and that results in not being able to open facilities as much. The same issue is present with our aquatics team needing lifeguards.
4. **Greenhouse Tour:** Let's consider having our May meeting at the greenhouse to get a look at all our plants in bloom.

Taylor Keegan, Parks Superintendent

1. **Planning:** We have a new Landscape Architect joining our team, Melanie Hess, came to us from Intrinsic Designs and went to school for Landscape Architecture and Environmental Science. She is excited to be joining this team.
2. **Forestry Grants/Challenge Grants:** Eagle River and Anchorage Parks and Recreation are currently reviewing grants with Anchorage Park Foundation. The grantees will be announced on May 17 at Cuddy Park.
3. **Upcoming PRC meeting:** Next meeting will include YEP project as well as Town Square Park Lighting project.
4. **Recreation Updates:**
 - a. The Anchorage Bike Rodeo is happening on May 11 at Chanshtnu Park. It is a bike safety event that includes partners from APD, AFD, AHD, and more.
 - b. This is the 50th anniversary of the Mayor's Marathon.
 - c. In terms of regular programming, we have roleplaying game night happening weekly at the Lidia Selkregg Chalet and Bunker Biking Buddies at the Kincaid Wax Bunker

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

Beth Nordland, Anchorage Park Foundation Executive Director

1. **Park Bonds:** Anchorage passed the park bonds! \$4.3M was passed and is the 13th park bond in a row that has passed. It is obvious that we love and care about our parks and green spaces.
2. **State Capital Budget:** There are several parks and trails projects that are in the State Capital Budget. It is in the Senate Finance Capital Budget now, but we are hopeful that the park and trail projects move forward.
3. **Challenge Grants and Neighborhood Forest Grants:** Look forward to the announcement of the grantees in May.

NON-AGENDA APPEARANCE REQUESTS

There were no non-agenda appearance requests.

ACTION ITEM

PRC 24-02: PRC 24-02: Jodhpur Park Bank Stabilization Project
PRC Resolution 2024-02
Presented by Tanya Hickok

Tanya Hickok, Anchorage Parks and Recreation Park Planner, presented a project that has been in the works for a long time now. After the November earthquake in 2018, there were 500 ft of cracking in the Jodhpur Bluff, so we started researching opportunities for bank stabilization processes. In 2022, a large erosion event happened, in relation to the crack that occurred in 2018. This created a bank erosion failure, and we have been tracking the water levels in the Jodhpur Pond since then. The pond eventually started encroaching on the cliffside, getting two feet from the edge of the cliff, and this impacted the bluff destabilization. In total, about 13,000 cubic feet were displaced.

This pond is currently used by the motocross user group to wet the motocross track to reduce dust for events. The reason we are proposing this plan is because the water needs to be collected at the lowest point and we do not want it to flow directly and unchecked down this cliffside and cause additional erosion.

In addition, after the 1964 earthquake, the community used cars to restabilize this area and then buried them. As these cars become uncovered due to erosion, we are responsible for the cars, and we do not want cars or contaminated soil to fall into the Coastal Wildlife Refuge.

The proposed plan is to regrade the bluff as well as the pond to make the pond deeper with a better slope and use the removed materials and mixing with granular material to give additional strength. The plan is to then put in geogrid to add additional strength. It will then be stabilized with a topsoil that is inert and doesn't have invasive plants. The plan is to also use a liner that will help prevent erosion.

The total cost of this project has changed over time because of additional erosion and is currently projected at \$1.5M in FEMA dollars. These dollars cannot be allocated to other projects. This has been brought to the Sand Lake Community Council. The proposed construction period would be about 60 days and would work relatively well with the motocross racing season.

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Blair**, seconded by **Commissioner Kastning** and unanimously approved, the resolution was postponed for reevaluation in the May PRC meeting after doing a site visit to Jodhpur Bluff.

**PRC 24-03: PRC 24-03 Indigenous Place Name Project
PRC Resolution 2024-03**

Presented by Nicolette Dent, Beth Nordland, Bri Keifer

Nicolette Dent, Anchorage Parks and Recreation Park Planner, introduced the Indigenous Place Name Project which brings Dena'ina place names to the forefront of our parks and trails. The project was then presented by Beth Nordland and a representative from Huddle. The project was spear-headed by Aarron Legget and is now bringing additional names to our parks and trails. The Dena'ina place names will not replace current names but will instead highlight the names used by the original peoples of this area.

So far, four place name signs have been installed. The Anchorage Parks Foundation has applied and been awarded \$1.7M to start installing 32 signs recognizing these place names. This summer we are looking at installing four in parkland, one at earthquake park, one at Spenard Beach Park, and two in Kincaid Park.

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Graham**, seconded by **Commissioner Wamsganz** and unanimously approved, the resolution was passed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

There were no information items.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- **Commissioner Wamsganz:** As a note, I will be travelling in the upcoming months and likely won't be attending another meeting until late summer.

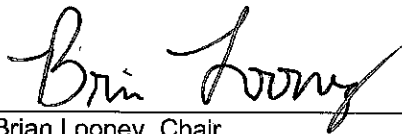
UPCOMING MEETING

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at the Mann Leiser Memorial Greenhouse.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion made by **Commissioner Looney** seconded by **Commissioner Wamsganz** and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at **7:42 p.m.**

MINUTES APPROVED this 9 day of May, 2024:



Brian Looney, Chair
Parks & Recreation Commission



Mike Braniff, Director
Parks & Recreation