

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, October 13, 2009
Conference Room 224, 6PM

I. ROLL CALL –

Members Present: Jeff Wilson, Jeff Sloss, Kate Walters, Melissa Goldstein, Dixie Hood, Ray Howard, Chris Mertl, James Tipps

Members Absent: Jim King

Assembly Liaison: Randy Wanamaker (teleconference)

Staff Members: Marc Matsil, P&R Director; Helene Bennett, P&R Administrative Assistant II; Brent Fischer, P&R Facilities Maintenance Superintendent; Kevin Brady, P&R Landscape Superintendent; Kristi West, P&R Zach Gordon Youth Center Manager; Jeannie Johnson, Airport Manager; Lieutenant Ed Mercer, Juneau Police Department; Sergeant Tom Bates, Juneau Police Department

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – none

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Ray Howard motion to approve. Approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. September 1, 2009 – Kate Walters motion to approve. Approved.

V. REPORT FROM ASSEMBLY LIAISON – Municipal election certified today. New members begin today, Ruth Danner to be sworn-in on Thursday.

VI. CHAIR REPORT – defer to board comments.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT –

Information Items:

A. Airport Dike Trail re-alignment: Airport Manager Jeannie Johnson will give an update on the Dike Trail re-alignment and proposed construction schedule for the new trail alignment and parking area. The trail is among Juneau's most popular. Trail Mix and Parks & Recreation are collaborating on a trail intercept survey to determine visitation numbers. The July 2009 user numbers for the Dike Trail, for instance, varied from a low of 184 to a high of 416 daily visitations—with an average of approximately 280 daily visitations.

B. Vandalism and Graffiti at Parks facilities: Lieutenant Mercer and Sergeant Bates of the Juneau Police Department will address the recent spate of graffiti and vandalism problems at Parks & Recreation facilities over the past summer—and suggestions to reduce destruction of City facilities. Brent Fischer, our Facilities Maintenance Superintendent will provide a five-year overview of damages to Parks & Recreation facilities, and the cost to the City for their repair. These include vandalism and burning of the electrical station at Dimond Park; Cope Park, Renninger/Pipeline Skate Park, and Savikko Park graffiti; and Miller Park restroom vandalism over the past summer. Discussion will focus on preventive measures, including potential enhanced patrols by JPD.

C. Recreation Trail Grant proposals: Trail Mix and Parks & Recreation will discuss potential submissions for the Recreation Trail Grants program administered by State Parks. There is a \$50,000. funding cap per project.

D. Blackerby Ridge Access Trail: a proposal by the Juneau Alpine Working Group to construct a new 3.1 mile trail up the northwest side of Blackerby Ridge, commencing on CBJ land, through State land and ultimately ending on USFS lands at Blackerby Ridge (2,500 foot elevation). JAWG will address questions posed at the September, 2009 PRAC meeting—that includes the proposed route.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS - none

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. **Airport Dike Trail Reconstruction/Realignment Update** – Jeannie Johnson, Airport Manager; Parking lot will be the first piece to be worked on. Trail will close for four days the week of October 19th due to construction. Duck Creek will be re-routed. Safety fencing will be installed during the construction phase. In March, 2010, the new trail will be installed and a bridge constructed. Ms. Kate Walters asked how long the construction fence would be up? Airport Manager Johnson stated that the fencing would remain through the construction phase, until next year. Assembly Liaison Randy Wanamaker asked about the possibility of conducting SeaWeek events on the trail during the spring Seaweeek event. Ms. Johnson said they would work with the Seaweeek planning committee to accommodate the group. Chris Mertl asked if the signage and dog bags would be re-located on the new trail. According to Airport Manager Johnson updated signage would replace the current signs. Chair Wilson stated that trail improvements would be a great benefit to the Juneau community.
- B. **Parks Vandalism and Graffiti** – Lt. Ed Mercer and Sgt. Tom Bates, Juneau Police Department (JPD) and Facilities Maintenance Superintendent Brent Fischer; vandalism/graffiti on the rise this year. Met with City Assembly and Law Department last year to discuss a graffiti ordinance. Sgt. Bates observed that that Parks & Recreation is extremely responsive in removing graffiti immediately, and is appreciative of their responsiveness. Sgt. Bates said there was a tendency by the public to associate graffiti with gang activity, however, Juneau does not have gangs. PRAC member Dixie Hood stated she is a strong supporter of a Graffiti ordinance. She stated that while Parks & Recreation are quick/responsive in removing graffiti from their facilities, Ms. Hood stated there were downtown business owners, for instance, that have had graffiti affixed to their property for years (she cited the hand grenade stencil next to the Silverbow building as an example). Lt. Mercer stated that JPD has a process to follow and unfortunately, it delays the process of catching graffiti suspects. Director Matsil said that Parks and Facilities Maintenance crews largely respond within two hours of notification to remove graffiti. Matsil queried about video camera technology used by several municipalities as a tool to deter graffiti. Bates has researched graffiti cameras and potential grant sources to obtain more. Chair Jeff Wilson asked if graffiti is a group or individual activity and has the JPD identified individual tags? Lt. Mercer said Sgt Bates monitors the graffiti art, and has noticed that some tags are similar but cannot determine if it is an individual or group. Wilson asked what happens when the suspect is caught? Sgt. Bates: determined by prosecutor after viewing the case. PRAC member Ray Howard asked the difference between current and proposed ordinances, if cameras are placed, would it create stronger cases? Sgt. Bates stated it could and overall community help is needed to help reduce this crime. Cameras are not always guaranteed to identify a suspect as you have to factor-in lighting, clothing, etc. Mr. Mertl said, echoing Sgt. Bates, that community-watch groups working together, coupled with improved lighting could reduce vandalism. Facilities Maintenance Superintendent Brent Fischer distributed a report and bar chart delineating damage to CBJ facilities, and cost for repair over the past five years. The handout included a breakdown of graffiti, vandalism, and arson for last five fiscal years. Facilities Maintenance works closely with JPD and reports all graffiti, vandalism, and arson; Mr. Fischer stated that they file incident reports which are forwarded with photos to JPD prior to cleaning or repair. Zach Gordon Manager Kristi West stated that a community meeting was scheduled on October 21 to address skate park management options including graffiti.
- C. **Recreation Trail Grants** – George Schaaf, Trail Mix, Inc.; Mr. Schaaf was not in attendance. \$50,000 cap on Alaska DNR Recreation Trail Grants.
- D. **Blackerby Ridge Update** – Ray Howard, Juneau Alpine Working Group; Recent meeting with Director Matsil and Land Manager Heather Marlow and JAWG planning committee. Access point for the proposed multi-use trail is still an issue and the JAWG was working to create a new project plan. Mr. Wilson referenced an email from Ms. Hesse regarding the mis-naming of street name on the map.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Youth Activities Board: Jeff Sloss – none
- B. State Parks Board: Jim King – absent.
- C. Lands Committee: Jeff Wilson – not in attendance last meeting.

- D. Urban Forestry Committee: Vacant – add Chris Mertl.
- E. Dimond Park Aquatic Center Task Force: Melissa Goldstein – Therapy pool vs. Whirl pool. Parks & Recreation and the Task Force will talk to Bartlett to discuss community need of therapy pool.
- F. Jensen-Olson Arboretum Board: Ray Howard – the recent Arboretum fundraiser was a successful event.
- G. Docks & Harbors Board: Dixie Hood - none

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

- A. ORV Ordinance – Dixie Hood; Mr. Wilson asked who would enforce this ordinance, as it would be difficult to enforce.

XII. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – none

XIII. BOARD COMMENTS –

Chris Mertl: pleased to be appointed to the PRAC.

Jeff Wilson: Welcomed Mr. Mertl to the PRAC

XIV. ADJOURNMENT – 7:45pm