

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee
November 6, 2001
Minutes
Assembly Chambers
6:00pm

I. Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 6: 01 pm.

Members Present: Alex Lukshin, Joan-Herbage O'Keefe, Ken Dean, Jeff White, Jim Scholz, Jeff Wilson, Jim King, Tom Rutlecki

Members Absent: Lynn Bartlett

Staff Present: Kim Kiefer, Brent Fischer, Donna Hatten

Assembly Liaison : Mark Wheeler

Ex-officio Present: None

II. Public Testimony on Non-Agenda Items

Tom Rutlecki formally introduced; also, Lukshin introduced Mark Wheeler as new PRAC Assembly liaison, replacing Cathy Munoz.

III. Approval of Agenda –

IV. Approval of Minutes – O'Keefe motioned to approve the August 14, 2001 minutes. No objection, motion passed.

VI. Action Items –

A. Twin Lakes – Commercial Use

Director's report: Kiefer outlined permit, explaining that this permit is within the conditions of TWG's recommendations. No public comment has been received to date. Request is for a 2 yr. cycle, looking for groups no more than 13, usually 6-7, weeknights, etc. She recommended requiring "safety zone", to make sure that no one gets hooked, and don't allow around the bike path.

Based on last year's use, Kiefer anticipates very low impact, and asked for committee's recommendations.

White: asked about the \$2.35 per person cost, how does that compare with other permit holders? Kiefer responded that it was very consistent with other users. A matrix is used, base rate plus per person cost. White asked how many customers from last year. Kiefer thought that it was less than 100.

White motioned to approve the permit. Jeff Wilson seconded, as amended to include a safety zone around fly fishing area, and to stay away from the bike path. No objection, motion passed.

B. Rotary Memorial at Riverside Park for September 11th – Brent Fischer

Brent Fischer, representing Valley Rotary Club, presented plans to install a memorial to commemorate the victims of the September 11th attacks. The design is a pentagon, with each side measuring four feet in length to represent the four airplanes lost. Two sides are missing, to represent the Twin Towers. The structure is built of concrete representing the strength of all the heroes. The flowers to be planted will represent the rebirth of patriotism. The flag represents the unity of our country. The position of the head of the pentagon will point True North to the North Star, as a symbol of the Alaskan flag and all Alaskans. Two different sites in the park are under consideration, one is near the southern park bench, and the other site is near the road, west side of lake along Riverside Drive.

Fischer explained that the flagpole is already purchased, Alaska Memorial Park has donated the plaque, but so far no donations for the concrete casting. Wayne Jensen, of Jensen, Yorba, Lott will donate the drawings, and a proposal will be done for the electrical work. He feels this is a good opportunity for Rotary to put up memorial, in joint effort with CBJ to do the groundbreaking.

Wilson asked about lighting, will there be under ground conduits, and who pays for the electric? Fischer responded that has not been identified, but Parks and Recreation would provide the maintenance. Wilson asked if the flag would be flown 24 hours a day; Fischer said yes, and that Park Maintenance would do the maintenance. Lukshin asked how easy to hook up to electrical; Fischer said that there isn't currently a junction box there, but there will be. Wilson said it would be a good idea to set lights next to walkway, better there than next to road, offer more exposure. He thinks it's a great idea. Kiefer asked Brent that if there were any other up front costs, would Rotary ask City to partner? Fischer said not necessarily, but would be nice to get city involved. He said it would be approximately \$10,000 just for lighting under the sign. Rotary likes the walkway idea, but would seek the PRAC's preference on location. People walking by would benefit. He said they'd need to find someone to do one-piece concrete casting, but the electrical would be a simple project. If they had trouble finding funds they would come back and ask. Wilson asked if this would be a spring project? Fischer replied that they could possible do the concrete cast indoors, then lift it into place. Would like to get it in as soon as possible. King asked about an estimated annual cost to CBJ. Fischer said it would basically be the electrical; Rotary would raise/lower flag. King asked about the daily maintenance; Fischer said that Park Maintenance is already there every day, emptying trash, etc. Kiefer added that this would not add an additional site to maintain, as crew is already there daily. O'Keefe said as long as the cost to the city is minimal, it's a great project and she would support it. Lukshin invited comment about the preferred location; if it was near the walkway, more people could enjoy it.

Lukshin motioned to ask for full support of project; no objection, motion passed.

VII. Information Item

- A. **Playground Presentation** - Technical difficulties required postponement of this item until the December meeting. Kiefer explained that adult sports was scheduled for that meeting as well and asked the committee's preference if

unable to fit both in. Lukshin thought that they could hear both. Kiefer said that if the agenda stayed small, both items could go on.

VIII. Committee Reports

- IX. Chair Report:** Lukshin reported that he and Jim King attended the joint state parks and local parks meeting last month. Topics at the meeting included revisions to the plan for the State Park at Eagle Beach. He said extensive expansion is planned, with construction contracts out, for completion in 2002. Plans also include a trail to be brushed out that will circle and connect the State property to the Eagle River trail; this trail will go behind the Methodist Camp. NFS is still proceeding with the planned transfer of Eagle Beach property to the State. Joe Poor, representing the Methodist Camp, presented their plans. They will be developing a camping area there, and are planning to upgrade the cabins to allow more winter activity. They are working on a children's play area. Further discussion included activities at the Gruening State Park, and included a map representing a proposed trail that would circle the park. Lukshin asked Kiefer to confirm that there is currently no camping allowed in the Methodist Camp area. Kiefer said she thought there was RV and/or tent camping, within state park boundaries.

Next joint meeting is scheduled for Monday, 11/19. Lukshin asked for a meeting with Kiefer prior to the next joint meeting. Kiefer said this had been discussed last March. Mark Wheeler, Assembly liaison, asked about discussion on the Channel Construction property. Lukshin said there had been some, but thought there was some litigation coming down. Wheeler said the Assembly had received a proposal to purchase some land, but the proposal was too big. Kiefer said Tongsgard has applied for a Conditional Use for gravel extraction on-site, and he also has asked for timber clearing permission, in the middle of the parkland. Lukshin reminded committee about possible litigation, also some mental health trust lands, so far a non-entity, for another 5-6 years. Kiefer said that during meeting last March, proposed use was discussed. Wheeler thought there was money in Congress, maybe in near future. Suggested being aggressive in working with Senator Stevens.

O'Keefe asked that the PRAC be informed when they choose a site & time.

X. Department Report

Kiefer reported that Sandy Warner called to ask about an idea to work with cruise industry to develop video to be shown on ships, for safe hiking, stay on trails, etc. People don't realize how dangerous it is to go off trails, and need to know about proper clothing, footwear. She feels this is an excellent idea, and to work with experts/agencies in community, i.e., SEADOGS that could film it locally. Maybe it could be done as a special project for a high school group. Could film it here and then run it aboard cruise ships. Would be good to also have information in kiosks, as volunteers already spend time educating visitors about safety and safe hiking. Maybe JCVB be involved, run film at their center at Centennial Hall. She said lots of ideas to come, but asked for PRAC to do letter of support.

Wilson asked if they will be asking for funding. Kiefer thought it would be a good plan to ask the cruise industry to fund. Lukshin wondered about the amount needed? Kiefer wasn't sure, but thought it needed sufficient funds to make a good product.

O'Keefe said it was a great idea, would support PRAC doing letter, conceptually, without committing funds. Agreed this is a problem and will continue to be a problem. King asked if the PRAC or department would be involved in any other way? Would the PRAC be consulted as to final form? Kiefer suggested putting that request into the support letter, but Warner's idea was to bring it before the PPC as an educational tool. The project would have to go through lots of channels before final results could be ready. Maybe for the first season flyers could be available and have videos done by the second season. King suggested it would be a good idea to have someone besides cruise industry review. Kiefer said not really looking for endorsement, but support of the idea of making trails safe for visitors. White said it was a good idea to see if industry wants video, maybe they'd only want flyers. Look into AMHS, to see if they want pamphlet or video. Also, focus should be on safety, not promotion...don't want to get into that conflict. Rutlecki said it should be made available at the airport, too. Anywhere visitors would be. Lukshin asked if the pamphlet would be first and the video second. Rutlecki said to let them decide. He asked King about trail book his wife had done, if it addressed safety. King replied that it does somewhat, but this would be different. Kiefer sees this as not a trails guide, but an overall safety guide, basic things to do/wear, if you're planning on a cruise and want to go hiking, make information available ahead of time, too. Wilson asked if Gastineau Guiding have anything written up. Kiefer said there is a tram handout about safety, similar to Mt Roberts stewards. Wilson feels that Gastineau Guiding would be a good partner, too, they have that video they show at the top, etc.

Lukshin asked O'Keefe to draft letter of support and get out to committee for comments.

Wilson motioned for full letter of support written by O'Keefe for Chair's signature; no objection, motion passed.

Kiefer updated committee on the Dimond Park Rec Center, following up COW meeting of last week. We are going forward with feasibility of moving valley library, look at number of things, including weight restrictions, height, ventilation on site, etc. She said it is a good idea to have a combined facility. Also, want to expand Rec Center to add another component. Doing mixed facilities, lots of opportunities to serve both needs, restrooms, meeting rooms, etc. with a "knockout view" from 3rd floor, if done there. COW not saying library has to be on first floor, just investigating all options. Lauren Livingston, who did feasibility study, working on this for CBJ. Other sites as outlined at the COW meeting discussed. Kiefer asked if everyone had the feasibility study for Dimond Park?

Wilson asked if this would be a shared facility with the high school, would high school have it's own library. Kiefer said they would, it will be a stand alone valley library. Wilson then asked about height restriction? Kiefer said restriction is 35 foot, but CDD said to ask for variance. Wheeler asked if the funds were set aside for Dimond, and how much. Kiefer indicated it would be an amount not to exceed \$5,000, no architectural plan, but next phase is to do actual drawings. Wheeler asked about a final product from Lauren Livingston. Kiefer anticipates it would be done by December COW meeting, with the cost estimates longer. Lukshin asked if the concept papers would be available to the PRAC before its December meeting. Kiefer will bring updates to 12/4 meeting, at least. Scholz asked if anyone else should be asked to advocate for this, or too early.

Kiefer said to look at the pros and cons, not a push either way. When it goes on the ballot, that's when the education will need to be done, making clear we're not promoting, only educating. She will let PRAC know. Scholz asked for clarification if "we" meant staff or PRAC members. Kiefer reminded members that they have to be careful, it's a fine line being an Assembly appointed committee. She said they should be encouraging people, but when the ballot timeline is established, she would talk to Law about how to go about it. On 12/4, letter can be drafted in support of the joint facility.

King asked if this can be done without losing a field. Kiefer confirmed that it has to be done that way, indicating there is a little room to work with this, there are some savings, already have bathrooms, welcome areas, elevators, parking, etc. She said there was no need to duplicate, need to make sure times used do not conflict with Rec Center.

Wilson asked if the PRAC was being asked to advocate the library or the Rec Center, as libraries don't fall under this committee. Kiefer confirmed this, but said they need to see what is come up with for recommendations, but can see it would be a great partner. She did say there is a downside, as how does phasing fit into plan, will it be a real positive, or is it just a neutral. Wilson asked about taking a vote or offering recommendation to the Assembly; Kiefer said it was a good way to go, as there are special considerations, i.e., weight of libraries compared to other types of buildings. Kiefer will provide information at the December meeting.

Dimond Park: Field 4 – Wilson updated group on field 4, said the light base was poured, and supposed to install early January, with testing mid January. Field 4 getting sub base, weather not good, mushy...ball pins being built, the backstop is up, and fencing is going up, so things are making progress.

Savikko Park: Kiefer updated committee about bleachers lost at Savikko Park two weeks ago due to heavy winds. Two sets of bleachers lost. Just ordered new sets, new guidelines require kick boards. 5row bleachers were picked up and put on top of fencing. Talking with insurance company, probably will be \$25,000-30,000 to replace, backstop alone is \$15,000, other fencing work will be needed. May salvage enough from the bleachers to make one bleacher, but don't know. Lukshin asked if it was required to put kick board in. Kiefer replied that this is in the code. She further stated some trees were lost in the Treadwell area, also lost a tree at Savikko. No reports on Kax or Outer Point trails.

Ice Rink: Kiefer informed committee that the refrigeration bid was out, due end of November. Full construction package out late December; still on line to open it in September, 2002. She also provided update on ice rink grant status - the LWCF grant: amount could change, pending Sitka's proposal. Could potentially could get more, but reminded committee that the Federal Government is looking for money everywhere right now. Lukshin asked if committee be asked to review final construction plans? Kiefer said probably no PRAC review again. Jensen, Yorba, Lott doing design work.

XI. Ex-Officio Reports

XII. Correspondence

Board comments –

Scholz: SLOC work – congratulated Kiefer and SLOC Committee for good work. Scholz: good use of your time, even if you're not doing officially. She explained that she was doing it officially, as part of committee. She also explained how torch arrives, in lantern on plane, then get passed through; committee is seeking nine "support" runners, age 12-18 to go along w/runners, as "cheerleaders", have to run between 1-2 miles, not super runners, but good all around athletes.

King: asked about the two new ballfields, out the road. What do we call them? Should be thinking about names. He sees the practicality of keeping the larger, gated field closed at night. But he felt since it has more parking outside the gate, people could park below and walk up if they chose. Highways often looking for drop sites for material, possible use. Kiefer said the lower park is called Lena Park, which is confusing as you have Lena Park, Pt. Lena Park, and Lena Cove. King asked about changing the name/ballpark? It doesn't relate to Lena Cove like the others do. Kiefer replied that Lena Park is already officially named, accepted by the Assembly in the Comprehensive Plan. She will put on December agenda to name the bigger park.

Wilson asked if an indoor gun range was being built and if it would be passed to the city for maintaining. Kiefer said that Fish & Game was building it, and hopefully would not pass it down to the city, as it's being built next to the gun club. She said the city has been out of the picture for some time. Wilson asked it was funded. Kiefer confirmed that it had been, at \$1.5 m, but doesn't include everything they wanted it to include.

Rutekci said he'd been contacted by John Ingalls, regarding North Twin Lakes water level. Kiefer explained the situation with the culvert with the slide gate near Vanderbilt Hill, said that water reached a certain level and then goes over top so lake doesn't get too high. Water kept going over, after fixing, in the meantime, sealing work needing to be done on Egan side of slide gate. Arete Construction is trying to get repairs done, with the city waiting to fix rebuilt, as we don't want to drain lakes again. She indicated that department hoped to have water lever up by end of October, but didn't happen.

Lukshin asked status of playground equipment, how much was changed, and what happened to the old stuff. Kiefer responded that since the old equipment was taken out as a safety issue, it would not be passed on to be used by any one else. Lukshin said there was a big sale in the PRAC magazine, for possible equipment replacements at Savikko playground. Kiefer said department wants to complete Adair-Kennedy playground, then the Mendenhaven Park playground equipment. Also, city considering putting fencing at Mendenhaven Park, to delineate property lines. This would have to be bid out.

Wilson said he took a tour of the new climbing wall at the Rock Dump; wall is supposed to open this month, and will be the largest climbing wall in Alaska.

XII. Adjournment. 7:23pm.

Motion to adjourn, unanimous consent.