

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE **DRAFT** MINUTES

September 03, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar



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A. CALL TO ORDER

Parks & Recreation Director George Schaaf called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Josh Anderson, Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Portland Sarantopoulos, Paulette Schirmer, Ren Scott, Danika Swanson, Emma Van Nes, & Charles Westmoreland

Absent: Andrew Williams

Staff Present: George Schaaf, Parks & Recreation Director; Lauren Verrelli, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director; Michelle Hale, Assembly Liaison; Annie Carroll, Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison

C. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. September 3rd Director's Report – *Presented by G. Schaaf*

Mr. Schaaf expresses his thanks to the board and public for their understanding towards the cancelation of PRAC in August due to the glacial outburst flooding. He takes the time to recognize the Parks & Rec staff who contributed to the immediate recovery efforts after the flood. This included setting up and staffing the emergency shelter at Floyd Dryden, debris removal in effected areas, and help with the volunteer center at Melvin Park. He shared that the Parks & Rec main office will be moving to 1208 Glacier Avenue in the next three weeks, so there will be a transition period where staff will be briefly offline.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Ms. Sarantopoulos to approve the agenda. *No objections were heard, and the agenda was approved.*

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Minutes from June 4, 2024

Ms. Schirmer noted an error in the minutes and asked that the facility and parks tour date from the last meeting be corrected to July 27th as that was the date which received the most votes.

MOTION by Ms. Swanson to approve the minutes as corrected. No objections were heard, and the minutes were approved.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Public Comment

Mele Maake a valley resident, shared that she was interested in following up on the court reconfiguration and resurfacing at Adair Kennedy that was approved by the PRAC in previous months. She is in attendance to ask about these updates on behalf of the pickleball community. She says that she is concerned that there is no facility for pickleball players to reserve when its too cold to play outside. She shares that pickleball is a wonderful year-round sport and that it is beneficial to her depression. She says the sport has really grown in

popularity especially with women in the community and that she hopes they will keep this issue on their radar to think about.

Mr. Westmoreland asked if she has considered organizing individuals to rent court space at the University of Alaska Southeast gym like some other adult leagues do. Ms. Maake says that she has in the past but that the hours are very limited. She has worked with The Director of Campus Recreation David Klien and that he was very helpful, but the university students are their first priority, and the schedule is very demanding. She says that she has done her homework and looked all over Juneau for gym space, and she feels that pickleball should have the same opportunities as other sports groups in Juneau.

G. NEW BUSINESS

3. Committee Member Introductions & Appointments

Mr. Schaaf began by noting that their first order of business will be for him to serve as temporary chair to conduct the election of the chair of the committee. He further explains Robert's Rule of order and allows the PRAC members to make nominations.

Ms. Swanson Nominated Mr. O'Shaughnessy as chair sharing that he did a great job managing Trail Mix and she thinks he would be a good fit. With no other nominations or objections Mr. Schaaf asked if Mr. O'Shaughnessy accepts the position. Mr. O'Shaughnessy accepts the position of chair for the term of one year.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy opens nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Mr. Westmoreland nominates Mr. Anderson which is seconded by Ms. Schirmer. With no objections Mr. Anderson accepts the position of Vice-Chair for the term of one year.

Introductions

Ryan O'Shaughnessy shares he is a 10-year resident of Juneau. He explains that he has engaged with CBJ as the Director of Trail Mix and is excited to continue working with the team as a PRAC member, and to serve his community.

Josh Anderson shares that he has been on the PRAC for 12 years, and that he was born in Valdez and moved to Juneau in the early 80s. He is a local contractor and has been serving on the Youth Activities Board for some years as well.

Ren Scott shared that she was born and raised in Juneau Alaska. She works for the Alaska Municipal League and spent some time in the Community Development Department of CBJ. She notes that this is her first time on a city board, and she is excited to be here.

Danika Swanson shares that she is an attorney here in Juneau where she has lived since 2019. She has been on the PRAC since 2023, and shares She has enjoyed her time acting as the Trail Mix liaison.

Emma Van Nes shares that she moved to Juneau in 2017 as a JV AmeriCorps member and has lived here ever since. She has been on the PRAC for about a year and works at Southeast Alaska Independent Living in their adaptive recreation program ORCA.

Charles Westmoreland shared that he moved to Juneau from Kentucky in 2008 and started coaching youth sports through Parks & Rec in 2011, and now coaches at Thunder Mountain, and for AAU basketball.

Portland Sarantopoulos shares that she's been in Juneau for a little over 11 years, and on PARAC for a little over a year. She shares that she is currently working on campaigns for the current campaign season.

Paulette Schirmer shares that she has been on PRAC for just over a year and is an assistant professor at The University of Alaska Southeast where she teaches accounting.

Michelle Hale Shares that she serves as Deputy Mayor, and this is her first and only year as PRAC liaison as she will be going off The Assembly soon. She shared that she has enjoyed everyone's enthusiasm and interest in the subject they govern.

4. Treadwell Disc Golf Update

Mr. Schaaf introduces Matt Davidson and Shannon Crossley from the Juneau Disc Gold Association who are in attendance to provide an update on the pitch and put disc golf course at Treadwell Mine historic Park. Mr. Davidson introduces himself as the president of The Juneau Disc Golf Club which is a small non-profit whose main goal is to Educate, teach, and encourage the growth of disc golf in Juneau. He introduces Ms. Crossley as a wonderful coach and community leader in disc golf.

Mr. Davidson shares that disc gold is a very diverse and inclusive outdoor activity which is played at the 4 courses in spread across the Juneau area. Ms. Crossley shares that the club installed a temporary course at Treadwell 2 years ago with the goal to allow all ages and all physical capabilities could play on the well-maintained trail system. She shares that the course has been wildly successful with over 1,500 rounds scored, and 221 players on the app UDisc app which players worldwide use to find and experience courses. She believes many more than that have used the course without logging their game on UDisc. The club has also hosted 3 leagues in 2023 and had 41 events. She notes the course has been used by players spanning 24 states and 5 different countries demonstrating its appeal to visitors and locals alike.

Ms. Crossley shares that they are taking player input into account and improving signage with 9 generously donated signs from the Pioneers of Alaska which highlight the history of the area. She also hopes to extend the course next spring by working with Parks & Rec to design another 9 holes.

Ms. Scott asks if there was ever a set date for revisiting the approved temporary course. Ms. Crossley answered that there was not, and that the temporary nature of the course is because the baskets are not installed in the ground, but in 5-gallon buckets that can be easily removed.

Ms. Swanson recollects being trepidations about the temporary course when it was pitched to the PRAC initially but says that she is pleased by how well the course has worked with the existing trail system by allowing those walking, or biking and geocaching to enjoy the area alongside players.

Ms. Van Nes shares her experience bringing an ORCA group out to the course. She applauds its accessibility and hopes that it will be kept in mind during the 9-hole expansion planning process.

Mr. Anderson shares that he is glad to hear that the course gets kids active playing outside and competing with their peers. He notes that its good for kids to have motors in the lives, and the opportunity to compete with dirt bikes and alike locally as well.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy says that he has enjoyed learning and developing his disc gold skills playing at Aant' iyeik park and that he appreciated both Mr. Davidson and Ms. Crossley taking the time to update the PRAC on their efforts.

5. Relocation of Historic Douglas Fire Equipment to Savikko Park

Mr. Schaaf shares that the department received a request from the Douglas Advisory Board to relocate a historic fire pump that was part of the fire protection of the city of Douglas. He introduces ed Schoenfeld the chair of the Douglas Advisory Board who is in attendance to inform the PRAC about this endeavor.

Mr. Schoenfeld shares that the historic equipment has been where it is for about 112 years and that it won't be able to stay in one piece forever in its current condition and location. He explained that they approached Parks & Rec to see if it was possible to relocate the equipment to Savikko Park once it has been cleaned up and painted for safety. The Douglas Advisory board, Douglas 4th of July Committee,

Treadwell Historical Society, Gastineau Historical Society, and CBJ Historical resources Advisory Board have all signed in support of this endeavor. What he needs is the City's commitment to helping move and support the equipment.

Mr. Westmoreland asked if it will be an issue when children start climbing on the equipment to which Mr. Schoenfeld answered that the sand blasting and painting will increase its safety, but you can't stop kids from climbing and potentially falling.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks MR. Schaaf if there is a set location to move the equipment to. Mr. Schaaf answers that it will be moved to the asphalt plaza between the Pioneer Pavilion and the softball fields once a cradle is created for it to prevent damage to the asphalt.

Mr. Westmoreland asked Mr. Schaaf if there was a cost estimate of what it will take to prepare and transport the equipment, and if there are available funds. Mr. Schaaf answers that there is no funding available to do the work, and that he hopes the community will be able to do it as a precondition of the donation. He further explains that the department can certainly dedicate staff and equipment to move it to its new home once the time comes.

Mr. Anderson adds that he has equipment that can move this, and he is happy to assist it helps f=move the project along.

MOTION by Mr. Anderson that the Department accept the donation of the "City Fire Pump" from Dale Henkins and place it in Savikko Park once it has been made safe for public display. *No objections were heard, and the motion passed unanimously.*

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

I. STAFF REPORTS

J. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Ms. Swanson shared with the PRAC that she has spoken to the Director of Trail Mix and heard that the Perseverance Bridge is now complete, and crews are wrapping up their work. The Treadwell Ditch is now completed end to end, and crews are still working on the Amalga trail, Peterson trail, and the 35 Mile ORV Park. September is service month for Trail Mix, and they will be spearheading work projects at many different trails throughout the month. She concludes by noting that the Trail Mix dinner will be coming up in November.

Mr. Anderson shared that the Youth Activities Board is working to streamline the Youth Activities Grant application and review process to help new and old applicants next year. He also shared for the record that he is very disappointed in the assembly for not reappointing Mr. Mertl for another term on the PRAC as he believes his intentions on the PRAC are good, and he has done so much to help the Juneau Park Foundation. He shares that Mr. Mertl championed that foundation, and it's a shame to lose his institutional knowledge on the PRAC. He concludes by expressing that it is hard to serve on any board in this town and not have a conflict of interest if you own a business since Juneau is small. He urges The Assembly to reconsider their decision so Mr. Mertl can keep providing service to the community which is in the best interest of the Parks. Finally, Mr. Anderson expresses his wish that PRAC could be held in person as virtual meetings are less productive and getting together in person allows you to better understand one another.

Ms. Van Nes Shares that Eaglecrest has hired a new General Manager, Director of Mountain Operations, and a Base Operations Manager all from the lower 48. They have held 4 adventure camps this summer, and the last day to buy a tier one Season pass is fast approaching.

Ms. Hale thanks the Parks & Rec department staff for their work responding to the flood. She tells Mr. Anderson that she will pass his comments on to the Assembly during their next meeting. She does not believe their decision can be recalled but promises to pass along what he has to say.

Ms. Sarantopoulos asks if there is any update on the rescheduling of the PRAC member Facility and Parks tour. Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks if a poll could be conducted to find the best date to set when they next meet. Mr. Schaaf answers that this would work for staff.

Ms. Sarantopoulos notes that she agrees with Mr. Anderon's point about virtual meetings to some extent, and that she likes to be in person as much as possible. Ms. Schirmer agrees and shares that she would be attending in person tonight if at all possible. Mr. O'Shaughnessy concludes by thanking these members of PRAC for making time to participate over Zoom.

K. NEXT MEETING DATE – October 1, 2024

L. ADJOURNMENT With no further business to discuss the committee meeting adjourned at 6:34pm.

Respectfully submitted by Annie Carroll on 9/27/2024.