PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PRAC) MINUTES

January 03, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Zoom Webinar

A. CALL TO ORDER

a. Chairman Christopher Mertl called the meeting to order at 5:38pm

B. ROLL CALL

a. Board Members present: Brandie Hofmeister, Christopher Mertl, Christina Mounce, Danika Swanson, Josh Anderson, Makayla Chappell, Will Muldoon
Board Members absent: Taylor Murph
Staff present: George Schaaf, Parks and Recreation Director; Michele Elfers, Parks and Recreation Deputy Director; Eric Moots, Parks and Recreation Staff Liaison; Greg Smith, Assembly Liaison

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

a. Will Muldoon motioned to unanimously approve the agenda for the meeting. No objection was heard, so the motion passed unanimously

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. No new minutes were presented for approval

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

a. There was no public participation on non-agenda items

F. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Board & Committee Reorganization** *presented by George Schaaf*

i. Mr. Schaaf presented on the proposed ordinance of the City Assembly to reorganize and consolidate the Aquatics Board, Treadwell Arena Advisory Board, the Jensen-Olson Arboretum Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC).

Mr. Schaaf's presentation detailed the history of the establishment of boards concerning the Parks and Recreation Department. He highlighted the Aquatics Board as an example. The Aquatics Board was established as a community response to the Parks and Recreation Department's decision to close the Juneau pools in 2014 as a form of budget cuts. Following that, Mr. Schaaf explained how the ordinance would affect the PRAC.

Ms. Swanson expressed concern that the Jensen-Olsen Arboretum Advisory Board (JOAAB) would not be able to have operational decisions made if they are to be consolidated into the PRAC. Mr. Schaaf said the JOAB was not in charge of operational decisions, but the JOAAB is in charge of bigger picture decisions. Along with that, Mr. Schaaf stated that the Friends of Jensen-Olsen Arboretum, a non-profit organization, had started having overlap with many of the responsibilities that JOAAB were in charge of. Mr. Mertl stated that before the establishment of the other boards PRAC often invited members of the community who were more knowledgeable about any situation that required more informed discussion.

Ms. Hofmeister asked about the Board Reorganization ordinance's effect on the length of meetings. Mr. Mertl stated that, historically speaking, PRAC meetings were quite a bit longer. Mr. Schaaf stated that it would be up to the PRAC members to determine the length of the meetings.

Mr. Muldoon stated that PRAC needed to have more thorough staff reports present for discussion. Mr. Muldoon also believes the ordinance is overly reliant on the Parks and Recreation Staff to be

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well-intentioned, citing the original establishment of the Aquatics Board as a time when that was not the case. With that said, Mr. Muldoon expressed his support for the ordinance.

Ms. Swanson expressed concern the ordinance will be circling back to where PRAC was before the subsequent boards were established, which would inevitably lead to reestablishing the boards. Ms. Swanson questioned why the Assembly believes it will be effective this time. Mr. Mertl stated that the establishment of the other Parks and Recreation boards were a direct response to specific concerns the community had with the Parks and Recreation department. Mr. Mertl believes the current Parks and Recreation department has had many years of good direction and good community support and that now is a good time to return to what the model was originally. Mr. Anderson agreed with Mr. Mertl's assessment of how PRAC was previously operated.

Ms. Mounce stated that she would like to figure out a few operational concerns before deciding her opinion on the ordinance. She wished to know when PRAC would be meeting in person again, as well as wanting to receive the PRAC packet in further advance of the meeting so the board would have time to review it. Mr. Schaaf stated with relative certainty that with a new staff liaison in place that PRAC will be able to meet in person in the February meeting. Mr. Schaaf also states that the packets should be available more in advance and will work to make that the case.

Mr. Muldoon asked when this would go into effect and what the reapplication process would look like for the current PRAC members. Mr. Schaaf stated that the ordinance at the time has April 1st as the effective date, but was not sure if that was accurate. Mr. Smith stated that the Assembly would look into that.

Ms. Hofmeister asked what the motivation for the ordinance is and why it had any urgency. Mr. Mertl stated that an ordinance to reorganize the Parks and Recreation department boards had been under discussion for 3 or 4 years. The reason for urgency, Mr. Mertl believed, was because it was going through the City Assembly at this time. Mr. Mertl stated that if the boards were not having meetings regularly, that the boards had run their course.

Mr. Muldoon moved that the City and Borough of Juneau Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee write a letter affirming their support for the proposed board reorganization before the CBJ Assembly to CBJ Leadership. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Ms. Hofmeister moved to amend the current motion to recommend to the Assembly that subcommittees could be comprised of both members of PRAC and members of the public. Mr. Muldoon seconded this motion. The amended motion passed unanimously.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **a. Aquatics Board**
  - **i.** Mr. Muldoon reported on the Aquatics Board and their thoughts on the ordinance reorganizing the Parks and Recreation department boards.
- **b. Youth Activities Board**
  - **i.** Mr. Anderson reported on the Youth Activities Board (YAB) most recent meeting. YAB reviewed their previous year's process of scoring grants.

I. ADJOURNMENT

- **a.** Meeting adjourned at 6:50p

Respectfully submitted by Eric Moots on 1/20/23