



**TO:** Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** George Schaaf, Parks & Recreation Director  
**DATE:** February 28, 2024  
**RE:** March 5, 2024 Meeting

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### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Please find enclosed the information supporting your agenda topics for this meeting. The meeting is anticipated to last 60 minutes and will take place in person at City Hall and virtually via **Zoom Webinar**. To join the Zoom Webinar, go to <https://juneau.zoom.us/j/94184441385> or call 1-253-205-0468. **Webinar ID:** 87003674124.

#### **G. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **1. Court Reconfiguration at Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park**

Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park currently has two tennis courts and two basketball courts. The surfaces of both courts need to be refurbished and the fence around the existing tennis courts must be replaced. With the explosion in popularity of pickleball in Juneau, there is tremendous demand for dedicated pickleball courts in the community. The Department currently provides one court at Cope Park that is striped for both tennis and pickleball, which is in near constant use during the summer. Similarly, the tennis courts at Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park are primarily used by groups of pickleball players. To better accommodate growing demand for pickleball, staff propose reconfiguring the existing courts to provide 4-6 pickleball courts, one basketball court, and one tennis court.

While this will result in the loss of one basketball court, there are three covered basketball courts located nearby at Kaxdigoowu Héen Elementary School, Glacier Valley Elementary School, and Mendenhall River School. Given current levels of use and the proximity of indoor tennis courts at The Alaska Club nearby, staff believe that one tennis court at this location is adequate to meet existing demand.

*Recommended Motion:*

I move that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee recommend that the Department reconfigure courts at Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park to provide 4-6 pickleball courts, one tennis court, and one basketball court.

**I. STAFF REPORTS**

**1. Christopher Trail Reroute Project Update**

At its February 5, 2024 meeting, the PRAC requested an update regarding the Christopher Trail Reroute project.

This project was previously discussed in detail by the PRAC at its regular meeting on September 6, 2022. Deputy Director Michele Elfers and Trail Mix Executive Director Ryan O'Shaughnessy presented information regarding the project's goals and a map showing the proposed route. This information is included again in the packet for tonight's meeting, as well as the minutes of the September 6, 2022 meeting.

No members of the public provided comments on the project at that meeting. Following a discussion of the project by Committee members, the PRAC unanimously recommended that the Parks & Recreation Department proceed with the project and pursue any required leases with AEL&P, AJT, and the Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources. The project was subsequently reviewed by the PRAC as part of the Department's Capital Improvement Plan on November 1, 2022 and December 6, 2022. The Assembly Public Works & Facilities Committee received information on the project during a presentation by staff on December 19, 2022. The project was included in the Department's FY23 Capital Improvement Plan and approved by the Assembly during the FY23 budget process.

As was presented to the PRAC in 2022, the purpose of this project is to reduce conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians on the Flume, which is owned by AEL&P. A 1989 agreement between AEL&P and CBJ limits access to foot traffic only because the structure is too narrow for two-way traffic that includes bicycles or other wheeled transportation. The Christopher Trail Reroute provides bicyclists with an alternative to the Flume, where they are not allowed. The project includes improving an abandoned roadbed above the Flume and constructing a new trail to a future bridge across Gold Creek in Cope Park. While these improvements are accessible by pedestrians, they are designed primarily for use by bicycles. An existing social trail leading to the Flume from the old water main east of Cope Park remains available.

## 2. Division Updates

### *Aquatics*

The ribbon cutting for Augustus Brown Pool was held on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, with limited hours available the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>. A grand reopening will take place on March 9<sup>th</sup>, including a free community swim. Thanks to the efforts of staff from Parks & Recreation, Engineering & Public Works, and general contractor Dawson Construction, we accomplished more work than originally planned while also keeping the project under budget. In addition to replacing nearly all of the building's mechanical systems, significant renovations and improvements were made to the locker rooms and lobby areas. A former staff office has also been converted to a small event room that will be available for birthday parties and other rentals. Other improvements include LED lighting inside the natatorium, resurfacing of the leisure pool, new signage, a refurbished sauna, and security cameras.

Our Facilities Maintenance Division is working to replace a main pump at the Dimond Park Aquatic Center. Unfortunately, the new pump arrived in Juneau with significant issues, resulting in a two-day closure of the leisure pool. The leisure pool will be closed again briefly in coming weeks to complete the final repairs.

The Aquatics Division hosted a job expo at Augustus Brown in mid-February to recruit lifeguards and other staff to operate the downtown pool once the renovation is complete. Seven new lifeguards recently completed their training, and we received another 10 applications for Aquatic Attendants.



Our latest Dive-in Movie was a hit! Over 100 people enjoyed **Jaws** thanks to our sponsor, Allen Marine Tours. For our next movie, we're taking the big screen to Treadwell Arena!



### *Treadwell Arena*

Our Facilities Maintenance Division installed new digital controls for the ice plant at Treadwell Arena in February, following an unscheduled closure due to a failure of the old system. The new controls are standardized with other CBJ facilities, allowing remote operation and adjustment of key building systems. Thanks to the efforts of the staff at Treadwell Arena and Facilities Maintenance, we were never in danger of losing the ice during this incident; however, a number of private rentals were canceled as a result.

Speed skating lessons are being offered every other Sunday at 2:45 p.m., with the next session on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Each one-hour session costs \$15+tax and speed skates are included.



We are planning to offer a range of activities this summer while the ice is out at Treadwell Arena, including pickleball, floorball, and roller skating beginning the week of May 20<sup>th</sup> – stay tuned!

### *Youth Services*

Registration for Start Smart Baseball & Softball (ages 3-4) opened Friday, March 1 at 12 p.m. We are offering 25 spots at a cost of \$40 each (scholarships are available).

Zach Gordon Youth Center's Spring Break Camp offers a week of adventure at Juneau Pools, Treadwell Arena, Dimond Park Field House, and more! As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, we still had 2 spots available. The camp takes place March 18-22 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., offering kids safe activities while school is out and parents are working.

#### *Dimond Park Field House*

Family Fun Nights hosted by AEYC-SEA continue to be a hit at the Field House, drawing hundreds of kids and their grownups.



#### *Parks & Landscape*

With summer dates opening up 90 days in advance, demand for the Amalga Cabin has increased. The cabin has been booked nearly every day since it opened, reflecting not only its popularity, but also its low rental price. While we may never meet demand for cabins like this, we are committed to building more and keeping prices affordable for everyone in our community. This summer we expect to finalize the location of a second public use cabin, with construction planned for 2025.

We are aware that some folks have been unable to book the Amalga Cabin and have shared some tips with the public, including:

- Reservations open 90 days out and the next available date is released every evening at 6 p.m.
- The reservation site works best on a computer, where you can view all available dates (it's not unusual to see no availability because the cabin is almost always 100% booked).



- To improve your chances, log in a few minutes before 6 p.m. and then refresh your browser at the top of the hour.

It's also worth busting a few myths:

- The lack of availability is not because people are securing multiple reservations. There is a three-rental limit per person, per year. This is enforced by the reservation system and monitored by our staff.
- We have confirmed with our reservation system provider, CivicRec, that reservations are not being scooped up by "bots." Reservations also are not being scalped online. Many of our staff are members of various local groups on social media (i.e. Juneau Cabin Swap on Facebook) and would catch this behavior.
- There is not a problem with the availability calendar online. If no nights are available, it's because they are booked. Summer bookings are much more popular than winter, typically going a minute or two after 6 p.m. In winter, however, reservations might be available for hours or even days. In the last 12 months, there were only 4 nights where the cabin wasn't rented.
- We believe offering a new reservation each night at 6 p.m. gives everyone the best chance of success. Offering a bucket of reservations (i.e. 6 months of availability) all at once would mean some folks might have to wait half a year to try again. It also could encourage no-shows or forgotten reservations that other people could use.
- Finally (and I can't believe I have to say this), P&R staff are not accessing the system to book reservations for themselves before the public has a chance. We use the same system and play by the same rules as everyone else, which is why I've only been able to book the Amalga Cabin once since it was built!

