

Session 22-02, a Regular Meeting of the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair David Lewis at 5:32 p.m. on March 17, 2022 from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS LEWIS, FAIR, HARRALD, LOWNEY, ROEDL, ARCHIBALD, GALBRAITH
AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE FLORA

STAFF: DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR KEISER
RECREATION MANAGER ILLG
PARKS SUPERINTENDENT STEFFY

The Commission had a worksession at 4:30 p.m. On the agenda was a presentation and discussion on the proposed multi-use community center with display of three different conceptual drawings.

AGENDA APPROVAL

LOWNEY/FAIR MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

City Clerk Jacobsen stated that there was no scheduled presentations on the agenda. There is a business item on the agenda. She advised the Chair that the Commission can make a motion to amend the agenda but this technically should be noticed and the Clerk's office advised.

Chair Lewis requested a motion.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ADD A PRESENTATION.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Penelope Haas, Kachemak Conservation Society, provided background on the Peatland Mural and the Peatland Project, which is a community driven project that has been in development for three years.

She provided statistical information on how the project has developed and the participation by members and organizations in the Community. Ms. Haas then provided information on how peatlands are valuable to the community and the role that peatlands play in carbon sequestration capacity. She noted that they will be partnering with the City of Homer on Green Infrastructure project and monitoring water activities in the region.

Asia Freeman, Bunnell Street Art Center, reported that they suggested the airport as the location for the placement of a mural since it is due to undergo some renovations and that the entrance would be a suitable locations for the proposed murals. Ms. Freeman continued by stating that the Bunnell Street Art Center has facilitated a number of public art projects with the City and so they issued a request for proposals and received six applications, they created a selection jury that was comprised of two city employees, two members of the project, and two members of the Bunnell Art Center with experience of reviewing proposals. The six proposals were reviewed competitively for durability, message and so forth. Artist Kim McNett, who is deeply imbedded in the science and practice of rendering the ecology of the area was selected for the project.

Kim McNett, Artist, explained her proposal and the process she will use to create two panels that will be installed on the walls of the Homer Airport on each side of the entrance doors. She provided samples of her previous work, how she will compose and depict her work and a sample of the proposed artwork superimposed on the Airport Entrance. Ms. McNett also provided pictures to show her previous work done for the City of Seldovia.

Commissioner Lowney expressed her appreciation for the artists' talent.

Public Works Director Keiser stepped forward and commented that the Public Works Department was able to fully support this project and endorsed it highly, that they will be executing a contract very soon weather permitting to repaint the exterior of the airport and considered this as a 1% for Art contribution to install the lighting and relocate the pay kiosk and do other necessary work to support the installation infrastructure for the artwork.

Commissioner Lowney questioned the fact that the City does not own the airport and how that would play into the potential installation.

Public Works Director Keiser explained that the city leases the airport but is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep which includes the parking lot, the metal sculptures, the bench and pay kiosk. The Department of Aviation is a very silent landlord.

Commissioner Harrauld commented on the idea of the project bringing forth all the new policy and procedures and to review the procedure without the art and appreciated the patience from the group.

Commissioner Archibald expressed his appreciation for the proposal and that he was very familiar with the company product being used by the artist for the design.

Commissioner Fair expressed his appreciation for the artwork and expressed his opinion on viewing the artist's work in Seldovia, which it is very educational and interesting to look at so was excited that they would be getting something similar here.

Deputy City Clerk Krause stated that this item was on the agenda later for action by the Commission in response to the Public Works Director.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Regular Meeting Minutes for February 17, 2022

Chair Lewis requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Parks Superintendent Report

Parks Superintendent Steffy provided a review of his staff report that was provided in the packet. He highlighted the following items for the Commission:

- Books are still rolling in for the little libraries and they are all ready for installation when the ground thaws a little bit more
- Openings for Parks Technicians
- ADA Accessibility for the Poopdeck Trail
- Fishing Lagoon Ramp and dredging, mitigation and safety access
- Rotary Club efforts
- Tim Easton Concert scheduled for August 4, 2022 and planning of the event
- Camping Season starts April 1, 2022
- Charrette with RTCA March 20, 2022 10:a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for the Library Western Lot
- Homer Little League agreement

Parks Superintendent Steffy responded to questions and comments on the following:

- Upcoming Homer Electric project on the Spit will interrupt pedestrian traffic more so than vehicle traffic
- Concerns with parking on the spit encroaching into recreational and camping areas and the solutions that will be used

B. Recreation Manager Report

Recreation Manager Illg noted that he provided a written report in the packet and provided information on the following:

- Volunteer program currently has 110 people who assist in opening, closing and provide supervision for the recreational programs and activities and they could not have these programs without these volunteers.
- The agreement with Little League is not complete there are a few small items to be ironed out but hopefully once this is complete they can use this as a template for other user groups.
- City Manager Executive Assistant will be helping create the catalog

Recreation Manager Illg facilitated discussion and comments on the following:

- use of other community facilities during the summer when the Homer High School roof is being redone
- The Little League will have the agreement at Karen Hornaday Park
- He agreed to help Commissioner Fair on writing a letter to the Editor regarding the City Volunteers

C. Public Works Director Report

Public Works Director Keiser provided her verbal report to the Commission. She informed the commission on the following:

- Mid-year budget adjustments will be at the April Council meetings, Public Works will be requesting the following:
 - Funding for third party custodial services for the Homer Spit and Pioneer Avenue Restrooms
 - Additional funding for an experienced gardener to look after the city landscaping requirements
 - Issuing the Invitation to Bid for the Main Street Sidewalk Project
 - Issuing a RFP for City Engineers to submit proposals for Ben Walters Sidewalk Project
 - Ms. Keiser explained the process for design one year, build the next
 - ADA Accessibility for the Fishing Lagoon and received a proposal submitted by HDR and will be seeking funding
 - Working with Jenny Carroll to put together a list of alternative transportation projects that qualify for special funding that the Alaska Department of Transportation (AKDOT) has available
 - These are projects that are listed in the Homer Non-motorized Transportation and Trails Plan
 - A Senior Planner with AKDOT has stated that there are city projects that would rank high in the scoring.
 - Funding is similar to the funds received for the Soundview Avenue Sidewalk project
- City Council passed the Charles Way Special Assessment District for water and sewer. This project will fund the water and sewer service to Bishop's Beach Park for restrooms but will not fund the construction of the restroom. Funds will need to be found to construct the restrooms.
 - Design for the Special Assessment District will be completed and then hopefully construction later this year
- City Council Visioning Event
 - Identifying City Council priorities which will provide a roadmap for what Public Works is going to do over the next year

- Described finding the 2020 Council Visioning Event Listing which started her down the path to reviewing the topics
- Council will release the results of the visioning event within the next 30 days
- High priorities for the City Council are:
 - Sidewalks and Trails - Connectivity
 - Future of the Recreation Program and what it looks like with and without the HERC and with or without new recreation facility that is being planned
 - Volunteers Action Plan – incentivize and recognize the volunteers
- Public Works and Planning are looking at major platting of dense subdivisions around Jack Gist Park
 - New Residents are going to expect something new, useful and different and the City needs to know what to expect
- Parking Study for the Harbor did not find any new additional parking
 - reviewed areas that could be developed into new parking lots
 - would reduce current parking
 - decision on what is going to take priority
 - making a presentation to City Council soon to get direction
 - negotiating a cost on that now

Public Works Director Keiser handled comments and questions on the following:

- Paid Parking was included in the parking study
 - Port & Harbor Commission and the Harbormaster believe that slip rentals should be close and one space should be included in the rental
 - ADA Parking
 - Tourist Parking
 - Competing interests creates a morass of issues and there are no simple solutions
- Connectivity and a marriage between the Planning, Economic Development and the Parks Commission is need and believed to be required due to the increased development.
- Creation of over slope development for pedestrian walkways was not being talked about but is a novel idea.
- Final Approval requirement from the Kenai Peninsula Borough provides another barrier that is just not understandable why the City must get that approval
- Previous discussion by the Commission on the development of that parcel for a pedestrian access from the subdivision to the park is still being worked with the developer
 - Development group create by the City Manager with Planning and Public Works
- Prior history of angry neighbors next to Jack Gist Park relative to the potential new subdivision
- Mindful of the boundaries of Jack Gist Park and where things are in the park
- Speed Limits on East End Road
 - Updating the Transportation Plan and the Homer Non-motorized Transportation Plan
 - Plans to put in the sidewalk to McNeil Canyon School
 - Complaints to AKDOT about the increased speed limit

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Review and Approval of the Updated Gift, Donation, and Art Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and invited Deputy City Clerk Krause to provide her report.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided a summary of the updates to the policy and then highlighted the changes to the section on murals that was amended after intensive review and with the City Attorney's recommendation.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO ADOPT THE REVISED AND UPDATED GIFT, DONATION AND ART POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDED FORWARDING TO CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.

Public Works Director Keiser interjected her interpretation of the mural process; how the mural policy will not be applied to current donations or pending actions involving art; that the amendments were brought forward by the concerns of the City Attorney regarding civil actions surrounding a mural located on the East Coast; and clarified what individual points of concern regarding the proposed mural was brought forward by the Commission previously to bring them to this meeting.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Proposed Donation of Art to the Municipal Art Collection

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and requested a motion and second.

Chair Lewis noted that he spoke to Deland Anderson, Commissioner Roedl noted that he spoke to him also.

ARCHIBALD/ROEDL MOVED TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL ACCEPT THE DONATION OF ART FROM DELAND ANDERSON AND INCLUDE IN THE HOMER MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION WITH INITIAL PLACEMENT AT THE HOMER PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR AN INDETERMINATE LENGTH OF TIME.

There was a brief discussion on the consent obtained from the artist for their artwork to hang at locations other than the library.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Homer Non-motorized Transportation and Trails Plan 2022 Supplement

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and invited Parks Superintendent Steffy to speak to the Commission.

Parks Superintendent Steffy made a presentation on the proposed supplement to the adopted Homer Non-motorized Transportation and Trails Plan (HNMTTP).

Parks Superintendent Steffy facilitated questions and comments on the following topics:

- Encouraging maintenance of state roads and sidewalks
 - plowing and snow removal are conducted differently by state and city
- Karen Hornaday Park northern parcel would be a destination
 - framework is not in place regarding connectivity
- High School connections hit dead ends
 - High need and used by the students for connectivity
- East West Town Center
 - Great option and really needed
 - Preference for some separation between sidewalk and the roadway to avoid being sprayed with water from puddles
- Crosswalks are really needed
- Signage for trails
 - Wayfinding and Streetscape plan will provide some trailhead signage
- Town Center Area
 - CIRI has sold their parcel to the Owner of Save U More
- Beluga Slough Trails
 - May receive pushback from supporters of the wildlife
 - Boardwalks should have railings to keep pedestrian off the wetlands
- Svedlund ranking in previous rubric and ranking
 - Funding issue only
 - Other have more issues that need to be addressed to make it happen such as drainage, access, etc.
- Lee Street
 - Public Works will review see if connectivity can be made between Lee St and Kachemak Way
- Trails in new and established developments
- Ben Walters Sidewalk is heavily used and needed and vehicle speed on that side road and by pass from East End Road
- Signage for the Trails to remind pedestrian to stay on the trails
 - New Trails signs will be installed this spring
 - Approved Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan
- In 2016 there were 4-5 options to get up the hill now there are only one way to get to the top or bottom
 - Does the city have the ability to maintain the new trails when completed
- Reference to the City Council Visioning Event regarding the Town Center Area and the new ownership
- Potential MOU with the School District and utilizing existing relationships with the people involved at the School District and Borough
- Parking for Trail Heads at minimum two parking spaces
- After the city plows and leave berms and residents would be willing to remove those berms as stewardship
 - Some issues were resolved with snow removal placement

- Contact with private businesses snow removal companies
- Issuing a new Trails Map and or QR Code Access

NEW BUSINESS

A. Donation of Proposed Mural for Placement on the Homer Airport Terminal Building

Chair Lewis introduced the item and noted that they had a presentation and those members of the public who presented had left the meeting. He then requested a motion and second.

ROEDL/FAIR MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE CITY COUNCIL ACCEPT THE DONATION OF THE MURAL ON PEATLANDS.

Public Works Director noted for the record that there were two murals to be placed on each side of the doors.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. 2022 Commission Annual Calendar
- B. Memorandum from the PARC Advisory Commission to City Manager re: Green Cemetery
- C. Parks are Essential Public health Infrastructure, February 17, 2022 Published in the March national parks & Recreation Association e-zine

Chair Lewis noted the items in the informational materials. There was no discussion or comment from the Commission.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Adele Person, city resident, stated that she wanted to add a few thoughts to the presentation by Matt and she heard a great discussion among Council and that that connection ups Svedlund really connects all of senior housing and all of that neighborhood, connects north and south walking quarter that has Poopdeck Trail and then up to Fairview Avenue, maybe that's not as urgent as I heard Jan say, with all the development in that east, west Fairview quarter, which is also really important, but it's super high on the priority listing and it's really, really highlighted in the Homer Non-motorized Transportation and Trails Plan. She further commented that she liked the Beluga Slough recommendation but it's a boardwalk and as such it seems expensive and not as much as a priority. Ms. Person stated that she can also see how that can be both controversial and amazing but also wanted to let everyone know about the recently formed 501c3 non-profit, Homer Trails Alliance, a group of people formed the organization to be an advocacy group for pedestrians and trails; putting together some of the efforts being made across the community. The group is creating a website and doing a lot of mapping and want the Commission and staff know that there is such a non-profit working on these same issues and they can collaborate as time goes on and maybe share resources and work on GIS mapping, ways of printing things, and web development for residents. Just really excited to share this information.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Parks Superintendent Steffy commented that he was invited to attend the Homer Trails meeting but had a conflict, the Homer Trails Alliance will have meetings the third Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. He further stated that the Commission can expect a fresh report every meeting going forward. Sandy from the Homer Trails Alliance will also be attending Commission meetings. The meetings will be held in the Library Conference Room.

Recreation Manager Illg explained what an e-zine was for Chair Lewis and that he will continue to find relevant articles to include as informational materials and how recreational opportunities are connected. He wanted to report that they did partner with the Center over Spring break and they had 25 kids participate in programming, expressing it was very successful. Mr. Illg reported that he is also working with HR on creating a six month temporary position for a recreation specialist with an emphasis on youth programming since that is what the community needs.

Deputy City Clerk Krause commented that they did a great job, good meeting and noted that it is still daylight out.

City Clerk Jacobsen commented it was nice to see everyone tonight.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Fair commented that it was very exciting for all the sidewalks and trails for the city and especially the idea of improved connectivity, so that is really good thing and as a bookkeeping thing he announced his intended absence for the May commission meeting.

Student Commissioner Flora commented that all the ideas of all the new trails is exciting and that you can never have enough trails. Thank you.

Commissioner Galbraith expressed his appreciation at being able to attend in person and it was a great meeting.

Commissioner Harrauld expressed her appreciation to the city staff and that she was always impressed with everything that is happening and grateful to live in this lovely city.

Commissioner Archibald stated it was a good evening and expressed that Jan always livens things up when she comes in, he expressed that he knew she had a lot on her plate but it was great having her at the meeting.

Commissioner Lowney expressed her appreciation for all the trail work being done up on Baycrest trail system by Commissioner Fair and Mark Scholenberg are absolutely fabulous. She stated that she saw some additional flagging up there today as she was skiing and it looked like another trail was going to go through. She commented on how that area was becoming very used in summer and winter. She stated that she talked with Mark on a trail that was put in about six years ago and wanted to schedule a time to walk that trail with Commissioner Fair. Ms. Lowney then commented that in looking at the artwork provided by artist Kim McNett and just thinking about this mural that is going in at the airport,

all she could think about was the signage that the city has at Bishop's Beach which is just so unproductive in terms of getting the message across to people and how very unsightly it was and she recently had a conversation about the importance of driftwood with a 19 year old who previously, while interested in biology and marine life, never expressed an interest in stewardship, and I thought wow, he got that from Homer because in Hawaii it's not that important. Adele Person wanted to clarify that the Homer Trails Alliance meetings are meeting on the third Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. in the Library Conference Room, not Thursdays as previously stated. She noted that they also meet by Zoom. Ms. Lowney then commented on the funding program that was set up with the city for doing trail work and believed it would be really wise for this group to know about that so that some of the work the group is doing can be funded and make it easier for them to move forward with these projects and while it may have to go to City Council for approval it is nice to have a group out there pushing for that.

Chair Lewis stated that he has been involved in city government since 2008 and since being on the Commission having Matt and Jan come on board he has seen lots of things moving a heck of a lot faster than what they have been doing and wanted to express his appreciation and thank them. Thank everyone basically that was involved with it.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next regular meeting is Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. There will be a Commissioner training worksession at 4:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: _____