

Session 20-03, a Regular Meeting of the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair David Lewis at 5:40 p.m. on March 18, 2021 via Zoom Webinar from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska. Due to connection issues the meeting start time was delayed.

**PRESENT:** COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD, LEWIS, ROEDL, LOWNEY, HARRALD, GALBRAITH, FAIR

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:** BLANTON-YOURKOWSKI

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

### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Lewis requested a motion to approve the agenda.

ARCHIBALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

Tom Zitzmann, city resident, attempted to comment on an item but due to technical issues the Commission was unable to hear him speak.

### **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

Karin Marks, city resident, presented her idea to create a pocket park on Pioneer Avenue between the Art Shop Gallery and the Pioneer Inn. She presented pictures of the current site that showed drainage issues and the utility boxes. She was advocating placement of benches and maybe a small shelter or gazebo.

Ms. Marks provided responses and discussion on these points:

- Effects of the frozen overflow to her property (Art Shop Gallery) and the sidewalk
- The parcel has been designated as a park and the Commission has been wanting to make improvements to this area and staff was actually going to look into the feasibility of installing a bench and covered sitting area where visitors and residents could sit and rest
- Incorporate into the upcoming wayfinding and streetscape plan
- Addressing the drainage problem and green infrastructure may not be the answer for this area

**RECONSIDERATION**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes for the Special Meeting on January 21, 2021
- B. Minutes for the regular Meeting on February 18, 2021

Chair Lewis introduced the items listed on the Consent Agenda and requested a motion to approve.

HARRALD/ARCHIBALD - MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Staff Report – Recreation Manager Illg

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and invited Recreation Manager Illg to provide his report.

Recreation Manager Illg provided a brief highlight on the discussion held on the budget and Council appeared to be receptive to hiring additional help, which will be needed for COVID related mitigation when they are able to fully open as well as programming. He announced that he will be participating on the update to the SCORP.

Commissioner Harrauld expressed appreciation for the informative report that was provided. She then questioned the possible use of upcoming funding for mental health that could be used for expansion of community recreation and possibly a recreation center.

Recreation Manager Illg provided some of the details that he has been pointing these options out to the City Manager and Council members as well and then commented on the intent he believes the federal government is trying to prioritize with the COVID funding to communities.

Recreation Manager Illg encouraged Commissioner Harrauld to contact him on speaking points regarding that funding and use.

Recreation Manager Illg departed the meeting at 6:19 p.m. due to a family emergency.

- B. Public Works Report – Public Works Director Keiser

Chair Lewis recognized Public Works Director Keiser and invited her to provide a report to the Commission.

Public Works Director Keiser reported on the following items:

- Preparing for the budget cycle and the April 5, 2021 scheduled worksession with City Council
  - o Identifying parks objectives - there are two objectives one is to serve as the soul of the city by enhancing Homer's relationships with nature, art and culture, through the creative development and cost effective maintenance of Homer's public parks.
  - o The second objective is equally as important, which is that parks supports economic development.
- Identifying sustainable funding and a long term CIP and proposing using some of the HART Trail Funding for the following:
  - ADA Parks Transition Plan
  - Adequate Staffing for year round services
  - Maintaining Parks Facilities
- Require to optimize cost effectiveness in terms of what they do for maintenance:
  - o By staff
  - o By third party contractors
  - o By volunteer labor
- Better leverage to support and encourage economic development

Public Works Director Keiser then spoke about the Road Assessment Report and explained how they developed the tables and how they were ranked and the methodology to rank the city's road. The process in improvements to the roads using the HART Roads Funding. This was presented to the Planning Commission who expressed support for the plan. She noted that this would be presented to Council for their approval of the methodology.

Public Works Director Keiser facilitated discussion and responded to questions on the following points:

- Inclusion of sidewalks in the plan and Svedlund was included as high priority
- The road into Karen Hornaday Park was an actual road and the commission was misinformed in the past.
- Using the rubric for the scoring and a similar rubric scoring for trails
- Keeping adequate funding available for Special Assessment Districts
- Spending of the HART Road fund is to be at an acceptable and sustainable level

C. Parks Report - Parks Superintendent Steffy

Chair Lewis invited Parks Superintendent Steffy to provide his report.

Parks Superintendent Steffy apologized for not submitting a written report. He then provided a verbal report on the following:

- Participation in the vaccination clinics
- Budget preparation
- Special Event Permit process getting a revamp

- Working with various organizations to conduct their programs outdoors and the area that is being used for the Highland Games could be created into an amphitheater with seating on the hillside down into the field area.
- Pratt Museum wants to develop their trails into a park
- West Homer Trails Story Trail expansion and trying to work a small amphitheater into that project.
- Land Acknowledgement project with the art installation at Bishop's Beach the images have changed a bit since the first presentation. He recommended scheduling a meeting to review the area since it is larger and more hands on interaction.
- Shorebird Festival Planning – working with the Board and the Chamber, activities that were conducted at Islands and Ocean are being relocated to Bishop's Beach, Chamber is leading this however since they are moving many activities outside the Parks Department is getting more involved.
- Peony Festival is in planning dates are July 9-24, 2021 on March 23 at 7:30 p.m.
- Little League and High School Softball will be starting up and both are hoping for a normal year
- Plans are in place that if they are able to start the project in Karen Hornaday Park they are going to be scheduling it so that it does not greatly interfere with Little League
- Summer Bike Rentals
- Discussion with the Homer Council on the Arts regarding mural juries
  - o There are two new retaining walls in town, Main Street/Sterling Highway and Pioneer Avenue at the car wash
  - o Homer Council on the Arts would issue the Request for Proposals, review of submittals and selection process
  - o Recommendations would be presented to the Commission for questions
  - o Submittal to Council for Approval
  - o Staff would like to have this item on the April meeting agenda, Scott Bartlett with Council on the Arts will attend to address concerns and constraints
  - o Discuss the public process being facilitated by a third party
- Social Media Training conducted to expand the city social media presence, the Recreation Facebook Page will become the Parks and Recreation Facebook page and they will be establishing a city wide Instagram account
- Parks will be applying for a recreational trails program grant for the pedestrian trail associated with the Karen Hornaday Park road project.
- Participation on the Review Committee for the Wayfinding and Streetscape RFP

Park Superintendent Steffy facilitated additional discussion on the following:

- Plowing of the trail between the Ramp 3 and Ramp 5

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. Beach Policy Review and Updates
  - Beach Policy with Amendments and revisions
  - Memorandum from PARCAC to Port & Harbor Advisory Commission

- Draft Ordinance Prohibiting Motorized Watercraft

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and then brought forward the issues that Mr. Zitzmann has brought before the Commission in previous years of trash, camping and most recently vehicles being driven in the tidal pools and areas that are harmful to the natural vegetation and wildlife.

Parks Superintendent Steffy noted that those issues have been concerns for a while and we do have a problem on who will provide the enforcement of the policy. He noted that previous remedies such as signage, outreach or city staff have been implemented. He would welcome a discussion on the mechanism on how the city can address these concerns.

Discussion was facilitated on the following issues:

- Enforcement on bonfires, vehicles, dirt bikes traveling in areas that should be restricted
- Negative behaviors need to be reported so that there is support for the revisions needed to the policy
- The policy needs to be something that can and will be enforced
- Bishop's Beach is receiving heavier use by a wide variety of persons causing more interactions.
- Homer is changing, whether is it wanted or not and it is the responsibility of the city to adapt to that change and apply new protocols to responsibly manage the resources that the city manages.
- The amendments that are currently noted in red were recommended from the worksession. The Commission will need to make motions to approve those changes.
- The language for the proposed ordinance from KBCS went to the City Attorney and the City Attorney did not think those stipulations held legal merit.
- The enforcement is limited to launching of personal watercraft.
- Clarification was made that the draft ordinance in the packet had been submitted to the City Manager and forwarded to the Port & Harbor Advisory Commission. This ordinance is limited to the launching of the personal watercraft.
- Specifically limiting the distance that personal watercraft can be used from shore.
- Concerns on language and description of watercraft since there are now motorized kayaks or canoes with motors.

ROEDL MOVED THAT MOTORIZED WATERCRAFT CAN ONLY BE LAUNCHED FROM LOAD AND LAUNCH RAMP IN THE HARBOR.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Parks Superintendent Steffy pointed out that he believed there was adopted legal language of personal watercraft and that there was a difference of whether you sat on it or sat in it, he provided the example of the electric motorized kayak.

Chair Lewis requested further clarification for lines 43-44 and noted that personal watercraft should be inserted and requested a motion to make that amendment.

HARRALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO INSERT THE WORD PERSONAL BEFORE THE WORD WATERCRAFT IN LINE 44 UNDER THE GOALS SECTION OF THE POLICY.

A brief discussion ensued on the proposed amendment to this section since it refers only to keeping vehicles out of the lagoon area. Staff pointed out that the Commission did not make any motions at the last meeting to amend the policy to add a section regarding personal watercraft that is still needed. Further discussion concluded that they should add a statement under the Goals section regarding Personal Watercraft only being allowed to be launched, landed and retrieved from the Harbor and are prohibited from beach areas. It was also asked if this was not addressed in the Tariff or in another section of Homer City Code.

Commissioner Lowney requested that the information be brought to the Commission on the possible existing regulations and then requested the motion on the floor to be read again.

Commissioner Archibald provided an alternative suggestion for verbiage, "internal combustion driven vessel" stating that nomenclature would be more accurate.

Parks Superintendent Steffy commented that they will probably see by next season electric driven watercraft that are capable of raising safety concerns and if the Commission concerns are speed of operation and size of craft or if the concern is pollutants then the recommendation is sufficient.

Commissioner Roedl stated that battery operated watercraft are already available and then added that they will soon be dealing with electric bikes that can do 30 mph on the trails too.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Deputy City Clerk Krause confirmed that she will research and have any information on existing regulations on motorized watercraft for the April meeting.

Commissioner Lowney recognized that there were additional amendments with questions in the policy and would like to address them.

Chair Lewis reviewed page 32 of the packet, lines 225-227 for the Commission.

Parks Superintendent Steffy facilitated a discussion on whether the intent is to remove the platform to remove the hazard and possible liability or is the intent for habitat remediation of that area.

Commissioner Lowney also noted that the paragraph also deals with placement of dredge spoils in the area.

Parks Superintendent Steffy responded that placement of dredge spoils opens up numerous questions and the requirement for permits and possible effects of placement of those materials into that ecosystem.

Further discussion ensued on just striking from Area 2, Item E, lines 225-227, removing the platform and acknowledging that the area is already designated as a park.

LOWNEY/HARRALD - MOVED TO KEEP THE PORTION ON DESIGNATING THE AREA AS A PARK BUT STRIKING THE REMAINING PORTION OF THAT SECTION.

Further discussion on the fact that Louie's Lagoon is already a park so all that is really required is to clean up the area.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD - MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO STRIKE LINES 225-227, ITEM E AND DISPOSE OF THE PLATFORM.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. (Amendment) NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

There was no further discussion on the main motion as amended.

VOTE. (Main) NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lowney addressed Lines 231-235 which references the map on page 37.

Deputy City Clerk Krause will contact Deputy City Planner Engebretsen to get confirmation on the easement and bring it back for the April meeting.

Chair Lewis then proceeded to Line 253-258 and asked staff if this has been accomplished. Parks Superintendent Steffy facilitated a discussion on the tasks as outlined were accomplished and while they could be refined and improved this section could be deleted.

Commissioner Roedl commented on the airport beach access and spoke about adding additional space to allow parking spaces. He acknowledged that he did not have his packet in front of him and he was not sure where they were at in the policy.

Commissioner Lowney requested that Commissioner Roedl hold his request since they were talking about Mariner Park right at the moment.

Chair Lewis redirected the discussion to Section B under Area 4, Lines 253-258 and requested a motion to strike or amend since that has been completed.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVE TO STRIKE LINES 253-258 FROM THE BEACH POLICY HAS IT HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Lewis introduced the next amendment, adding a recommendation to dredging the opening to Mariner Lagoon on a biennial period and that funding be included in the Fiscal year budget. He further noted that this was requested by Public Works Director Keiser. He requested a motion.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO AMEND THE BEACH POLICY TO ADD ITEM B RECOMMEND DREDGING THE MARINER LAGOON OPENING ON A BIENNIAL PERIOD AND INCLUDE FUNDING IN THE FISCAL YEAR BUDGET.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lowney noted the typographical error on line 261 stating that it should reflect Area 5, not Area S.

Chair Lewis directed the Commission to the next amendment, Lines 296-297 regarding the junk vehicles on the beach. He expressed that he did not have a knowledge of the vehicles and opened the floor to discussion.

Commissioner Harrauld stated that the vehicles are just a little west, past West Hill Road on Bishop's Beach they are pretty torn apart and rusted out, buried under the sand, almost completely. She reported that maybe with some volunteers and ATV's that the vehicles could be pulled out of the sand but it did not hit her top 10 to do's for the community right now.

Commissioner Lowney suggested keeping it in the policy but not specific to Bishop's Beach.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO INCORPORATE THE LANGUAGE REMOVE DERELICT VEHICLES FROM CITY BEACHES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Lewis stated the next recommendation is to move the History section to beginning of the policy as an introduction.



LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO RELOCATE CONTENT OF LINES 300-320, HISTORY TO THE BEGINNING OF THE DOCUMENT AFTER LINES 24-32, PURPOSE AND INTENT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Harrauld noted that line 164, on page 31 of the packet regarding firewood was overlooked.

Chair Lewis noted the recommendation was to strike the portion regarding the City providing firewood or amend it to allow firewood concessions or provide alternative options. He then requested input from Parks Superintendent Steffy.

Parks Superintendent Steffy facilitated a discussion on the attempts to provide and allow firewood concessions. He is still considering the options since he has to weigh in staff time that would be involved for some of the options considered. Mr. Steffy provided details on what was done previously in arranging supply of firewood with a third party contractor and the difficulties in that arrangement.

Chair Lewis noting the time and requested that the Commission continue their review and revisions at the April meeting.

There were no objections from the Commission.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Memorandum from Public Works Director re: Karen Hornaday Park Proposed Parking Improvements

There was no discussion on this item by the Commission or Staff present.

- B. Memorandum from Public Works Director re: Allowing Mobile Food Vendors in City Parks

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and open the floor for discussion.

Parks Superintendent Steffy requested that this item be postponed at this time due to other work being done on Special Event and Itinerant Merchant Permitting. The goal is not to have to construct concession stands in city parks.

Commissioner Harrauld commented on benefits to the community, small business and the city overall to allow food trucks into city parks.

- C. Memorandum from Public Works Director re: Mariner Park Lagoon Dredging

There was no discussion on this item by the Commission or Staff present.

#### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. City Manager's Report for February 22, 2021 City Council Meeting
- B. City Manager's Report for March 8, 2021 City Council Meeting
- C. 2021 Commissioner Annual Calendar and Attendance at City Council Meetings
- D. Roads Assessment Report Summer 2020

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

#### **COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Parks Superintendent Steffy commented that he had so much to say but would not share most of it, he expressed his appreciation for the parks and public works staff and the city moving in amazing direction at this time in many ways. He commented on all the energy for parks and not just parks but how parks connects with everything in the community that he believes has not been recognized before. He stated that he is hungry, motivated and energized for the next two year budget cycle. Mr. Steffy expressed his appreciation for Public Works Director Keiser's support and acknowledged her one year anniversary with the city. He recalled her arrival the same week he relocated to the Mariner Shack to avoid the zombies.

Public Works Director Keiser reported that the April 12<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting was going to be a very important meeting as there would be several items regarding Parks on the agenda that included Karen Hornaday Park Sidewalk, road and financing plan which was in the packet.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Roedl commented that it was a good meeting and he enjoyed working with everyone.

Commissioner Fair echoed Commissioner Roedl's sentiments.

Commissioner Harrauld commented that they were in the golden age of parks right now with so much going on, that it is really very exciting. She expressed that they have a dream team in staff and that everything is falling into place and she expressed being excited for the direction that it was going.

Student Commissioner Blanton –Yourkowski commented that it was a great meeting.

Commissioner Lowney echoed Commissioner Harrauld's sentiments.

Commissioner Archibald reported that Recreation Manager Illg will be involved with updating the SCORP and explained what the document was and the importance to the state and that it gets renewed

every five years. He reported that without that document they would not get LWCF grant funding which is very important.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Lewis commented that it was a very productive meeting, enjoy the weather and get out there for some skiing as the trails are great.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

*Renee Krause*

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: *April 15, 2021*