

Session 21-08, a Regular Meeting of the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair David Lewis at 5:30 p.m. on September 17, 2021 from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

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

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

#### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Lewis called for a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Chair Lewis noted that the Clerk has requested the agenda to be amended to add Staff Report for Parks Superintendent Steffy under Reports.

ARCHIBALD/ LOWNEY – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

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

#### **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

#### **RECONSIDERATION**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Memorandum from Deputy City Planner re: HERC Feasibility Funding

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title, noting that there would be a worksession by City Council on Monday, September 20, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. on this topic and Ordinance 21-58. He opened the floor to questions and comments of the commission.

There were no comments or questions from the commission.

B. Community Recreation Report - Recreation Manager Illg

Community Recreation Manager Illg stated that he will not be able to attend the worksession on Monday. He commented that he was hopeful Council would approve the ordinance to fund the issuing of a RFP for the feasibility study and engage public involvement or coming up with a plan for a new multi-use community center. He reported that Tim Dillon with KPEDD gave a presentation and provided information on a possible funding source and he will be meeting with the City Manager, Public Works Director, Julie Engebretsen and himself.

Recreation Manager Illg facilitated questions, answers and comments on the following:

- Timeline to form a task force including member appointments
- Issuing a Request for Proposals for a consultant to provide the services and public input required for the application of the available grants
- Major repairs are needed on the HERC facility soon if they are still planning on using it
- Confirmation of receipt of any grant funding prior to demolition of the HERC
- Previous work done by the HERC Task Force focused on the building not really what was needed or wanted by the community, such as the Boys and Girls Club
- The proposed new facility would be a multi-use community center not just for recreation but meetings, classes and more to offer. It would not be another SPARC or even HERC facility

Commissioner Fair requested clarification on the timeline.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided the Commission with the input received from Mr. Dillon regarding the EDA grant and the time line given at Monday's Council meeting.

Chair Lewis recalled Mr. Dillon stating that there would be more opportunity for public private partnerships being awarded the grants. He then requested volunteers for if and when a Task Force was formed and the Commission was invited to sit on it.

Commissioner Lowney volunteered and there were no objections.

Community Recreation Manager Illg continued to review the remainder of his report and stated that they are partnering with The Center for youth programming to be held at the HERC; he will again be assisting with COVID Booster Clinics when time arrives. He then reminded the Commission about the ARPA Conference and encouraged the commission to attend, noting that both he and Parks Superintendent Steffy would be presenting.

C. Parks & Trails Maintenance Report - Parks Superintendent Steffy

Chair Lewis introduced Parks Superintendent Steffy and invited him to provide his report.

Parks Superintendent Steffy spoke to his staff report and commented on the following:

- Camping Summary for August \$24800 August 2020 22000 and August 2019 39500

- Revenue for Camping has been as high as 210,000 and as low as 170800
  - April 1 to August 30 Season \$752440
  - Potential to generate three quarters of a million dollars for just the city campgrounds
- Staffing continues to be a limiting factor in Parks lost three, gained one
- Pay Kiosks are up and running
- Installation of the half pipe was put out to bid but there was no interest from local contractors due to busy schedules
  - Parks Staff will work on it as their schedules allow
- Hickerson Cemetery has been busy
  - First case of the wrong placement of cremains was experience so they were disinterred and reburied in the proper location. Thanks to Rachel Tussey for her assistance.
- Port & Harbor has taken over their portion of the Harbor campground
- Site Accessibility Surveys
- Trails Program with the Independent Living Center at Karen Hornaday Park
- Volunteer beautification for the Bartlett Restroom
- Seasonal transition of restrooms and pulling trash cans from the field
- Rotary memorials are progressing and boulders have been selected for placement of plaques
- Met with Homer Drawdown and made initial selections of murals and requested additional information on how the mural will look
- Alders have been removed from the area between the campground and the playground and will be turned into a berry patch with trails between the two and placement of a picnic area
- Talks ongoing with developer on creating a park within the Quiet Creek Area and that plan/design will be coming before the commission for recommendations

Parks Superintendent Steffy responded to questions from the Commission on the following:

- The number of spaces lost due to displacement of the camp sites at the fishing hole campground
  - Numbers were down, impacted by the closed borders between the Lower United States and Alaska

D. Public Works Director Report - Jan Keiser, PE

Chair Lewis invited Public Works Director Keiser to provide her report for the commission.

Public Works Director Keiser reviewed and fielded questions and comments on the following:

- new program to reduce the carbon emissions of lawn mowers
- development and implement invasive pest management
- no new hardscaping
- using plant materials that would attract wildlife and be attractive
- developing the existing turf such as Superintendent's Park into a pollination garden
- offering education to eradicate the orange and yellow hawkweed
- Percentage of area to remove from the schedule for mowing. These areas are currently kept as turf which could be turned into vegetation such as Triangle Park and Superintendent's Park

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**PENDING BUSINESS**

A. Review and Discussion on Proposed Amendments to the Donation Gift Policy

Chair Lewis introduced the item and deferred to the Clerk.

Deputy City Clerk Krause reviewed the amendments and updates to the policy and then spoke to the new mural policy and procedures. She requested any comments, changes or recommendations from the Commission. She noted that she included the School District Policies regarding art and donations so that the Commission can have it for comparison.

Deputy City Clerk Krause facilitated discussion on the following:

- Art that requires repairs or maintenance and whose responsibility is that
  - o Parks is to review exterior art pieces and report to the Clerk's Office
  - o If art is located in a department then those personnel are to report to the Clerk's Office
  - o Line 209-213 covers this requirement under the section Inspection and Maintenance of Artwork
- Art that is donated for placement outside is to be as vandal proof as possible and be able to weather a coastal climate
  - o The artist is supposed to include the average maintenance costs of the donation so that the Commission and Council are aware of the costs of the artwork
- Acceptance or approval of art prior to seeing the actual artwork.
  - o Groups or artist should be able to provide a conceptual idea of what is being proposed.
  - o Pre-approval by the commission on proposed mural concepts or ideas
  - o A Member of the Commission sits on Selection Committees as well as members of the Parks staff
  - o Concerns with groups presenting ideas that are not defined and the Commission giving the go ahead
  - o All proposed art that is being recommended to be placed on a city maintained facility will need to be presented to the Commission who will forward the application to the City Council for final approval. The Commission can schedule a public hearing to allow public opinion on murals or artwork that may not be accepted or appropriated

ARCHIBALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO ADOPT THE AMENDED AND UPDATED CITY OF HOMER ACCESSION, DEACCESSION GIFT AND DONATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Discussion ensued on the information provided regarding the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. Reference was made to de-accessing donations is addressed on line 215 of the policy and specifically line 241 shows gifting to a non-profit organization.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Dog Leash Lending Program

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Recreation Manager Illg.

Recreation Manager Illg referenced his report included in the packet that the reported that the Friends of the Homer Animal Shelter will provide the leashes that are needed and requested that the Commission install signage for the program. He noted that Parks Staff would be responsible for maintaining the leash supplies and installation of the signs.

Chair Lewis inquired if there was a slogan that could be put on the signage.

ROEDL/LOWNEY MOVED TO EXPEND FUNDING PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED TO PURCHASE LEASHES BE REDIRECTED TO PURCHASING SIGNAGE.

Discussion ensued on outreach and it was noted that information can be distributed through the City website, newsletter and through the City Manager's Report and the city Facebook pages. Additional comments were made on encouragement for enforcement of dog regulations including licensure can be highlighted in the educational campaign.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Letter to the Editor – Topic Selection Draft

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and recommended that the topic should be about the Lend a Leash program and contain information regarding the city regulations.

Discussion ensued on coordinating with the Harbor to have the program available on the Harbor floats, reporting incidents of vicious dogs; dog licenses are available at the shelter, and cost is \$25 for two years if neutered or spayed and \$100 for two years if not and proof rabies is needed; Creating a webpage dedicated to the Lend a Leash program that has links to all the information regarding licensing, leashing, etc.

Commissioner Fair stated that the topic should be a focused piece not an editorial.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided clarification on where in city Code that the reference can be found regarding leashes.

Parks Superintendent Steffy noted that City Code does not specifically state that all dogs must be leashed but that no animal is permitted to be at large and the definition in city code for at large is either leashed or under voice command and that is what makes the leash issue so difficult to enforce in the city.

Commissioner Harrald commented on the value of having definitions in the beginnings of all policies and the like.

Deputy City Clerk Krause reviewed the definition of “at large” as listed in the city code. She noted that the re-write of the Title 20 did remove the voice command.

Commissioner Fair will draft and submit to the Clerk for review and submission. He further noted that when things are left to interpretation then you will not get the all the cooperation that you might ordinarily get.

**B. Scheduling a Fall Park or Beach Site Visit**

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and asked when the Commission would like to schedule the walk through and where.

Commissioner Lowney recommended that the Commission visit Bishop’s Beach. She noted that Rika Mouw is working on architectural drawing of possibilities for that park; parking has always been an issue, bringing water and plumbed restrooms to the park. She commented on some of the issues and development that could be discussed and provide some input for the planning.

Commissioner Fair agreed and added that signage is needed. He recounted an incident with someone driving the wrong way. He believed that the placement of signage and flow of the use of that park. He will not be able to attend unless it is after the October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion ensued on selecting two dates and final choices were September 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. or October 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m. Those dates were acceptable to Ms. Mouw and parks staff would make sure that additional amenities were available for their use to review maps and drawings.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Annual Calendar
- B. City Manager’s Report for September 13, 2021

Chair Lewis volunteered to attend the next Council meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Deputy City Clerk Krause thanked the Commission for reviewing and looked forward to hearing the slogan for the Lend a Leash program suggesting Commissioner Flora could get recommendations from the students. She then announced that the Library and Friends of the Homer Public Library are soliciting art to be hung in the Library and the RFP’s are due on September 30<sup>th</sup> so they will meet to pick the art sometime in October.

Commissioner Roedl volunteered to serve on the committee.

Recreation Manager Illg stated that it was a good meeting, he will work with Matt on the Leash program and he will not be attending the October or November meetings.

Public Works Director Keiser reported that the most complaints that they get is dogs off leash in campgrounds and she would support and fight for the requirement that all dogs must be on leash in campgrounds. She then announced that coming soon, not sure when, homelessness and homeless persons camping in restrooms and using campgrounds as encampments and other park space as encampments as the City Manager is working with the Kenai Peninsula Homeless Coalition to collaborate on what our homeless issues are in the community and try to figure out solutions and we are bringing forth our concerns about camping in these unconventional places.

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

Commissioner Archibald thanked Commissioner Fair for his taking on the letter to the editor and sharing his creative abilities.

Commissioner Galbraith apologized for arriving late he could get onto the Zoom meeting. It was a good meeting.

Student Commissioner Flora thanked the Commission for having her and apologized for being quiet today but appreciated learning what the Commission does and looks forward to being on the commission.

Commissioner Roedl stated it was a good meeting and will need a reminder about the Committee he volunteered for.

Commissioner Lowney welcomed Sidney and appreciated her comment about being quiet tonight and looks forward to having her participation in future discussions. She stated that it has been insightful to tour our parks through the eyes of ADA scenario and it really brings to light how difficult it is to navigate and it would not take too much to harden areas to bring ourselves up to standard. She will continue to bring information forward to the Commission on the progress. This brought to her attention on a visit to Jack Gist Park and the plan by Dr. Bell to build a restroom concession and umpire area and the Council member was unaware that plan was out there. She is not sure if the Commission dropped the ball or the city or what happened. She is excited to see that the HERC is back in the Council agenda. She congratulated Commissioner Harrauld in her performance in Pride and Prejudice.

Commissioner Fair welcomed Sidney to the commission.

Commissioner Harrauld stated she really appreciates the work that the Parks staff is doing, she believed that there is a lot of pro-active things happening. Looking at the management of lawns and going battery versus gas, that may seem small, but are actually really big shifts in how we look at our parks and how we manage parks. She really appreciates that shift. Commissioner Harrauld expressed that she thinks it's because the City has a really dynamic staff that that's happening. She also expressed

her appreciation for the work that the Deputy City Clerk Krause has done to make our policies look like they do, and to make them make sense to us and the other people who follow them because that's just not easy. She thanked Sidney for signing up, meetings are hard at any age, but after a long day of school, I imagine, this is even harder and can be a lot of talking and listening. I do think a lot of what we're talking about with dogs and parks came from our last student representative, so that you do have a lot of opportunity for input to help the Commission and city find direction. She continued by stating that she really appreciates the art in park marriage. Whether it's burning basket or just doing a play in the middle of the forest, you know, the people who came to that it was actually more the outside component was the thing that made that experience wonderful because it just opened up the space. She further expressed her appreciation for having the parks and seeing them from an artistic view and use of the parks is endless and the more they can remind the City Council that the better.

#### COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Lewis stated it was another great meeting, and expressed his appreciation for the Staff and Sidney for stepping up noting that this will look really good on the college resume too.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 16, 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 II

Approved: October 21, 2021