

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-04, 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 April 18, 2024 from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD, HARRALD, LEWIS, KEISER, ROEDL

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER FAIR, WILLIAMS (EXCUSED)

STAFF: INTERIM CITY MANAGER JACOBSEN, RECREATION MANAGER ILLG, PARKS MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR FELICE

AGENDA APPROVAL

ARCHIBALD/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

Scott Adams, city resident, commented about planting flowers and noted if the high school isn't using their greenhouse maybe it's better to buy them. Regarding camping on the spit, he doesn't support getting rid of camping to make room for the haul out in the summer. Leave it the way it is and let haul out run in the fall.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS (10 minute time limit)

- A. Presentation on Conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)
Analysis by Karin Marks, EDC Chair and Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Community Development Director Engebretsen and Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) Chair Karin Marks presented on the process used by the EDC in developing the EDC's Strategic Plan and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis. They explained the Strategic Plan outlines the common goals of Commission and Staff, how to work toward those goals, and staff and Commission roles and responsibilities. They shared an example of an EDC near term goal, the tasks assigned to the goal, and how the Commission worked through the task with guidance from the staff. The SWOT was developed for the categories developed as they worked through the goal in their Strategic Plan. The process helped Commissioners understand different viewpoints and areas of commonality. It also gives them the confidence to speak to Commission viewpoints and provides

talking points. Director Engebretsen emphasized the importance of having a Strategic Plan or agreed upon goal in place before working through a SWOT.

In response to questions, Director Engebretsen and EDC Chair Marks explained they use the SWOT more when communicating EDC values outside of the Commission meeting and rely on their Strategic Plan as a guide for developing their agendas because they've agreed on what they'll be working on to accomplish the tasks. They also touched on this commission having a combined focus on Parks Art Recreation and Culture and the Strategic Planning and SWOT for each section to help those who focus more on Parks have a better understanding of the Arts piece, and vice versa.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA All items on the consent agenda are considered routine and non-controversial by the Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission and are approved in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Commissioner or someone from the public, in which case the item will be moved to the regular agenda and considered in normal sequence.

- A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for March 21, 2024 - Please see Supplemental Packet
- B. Letter to the Editor - Bayview Park Upgrades
Memorandum PARC-24-024 from Commissioner Fair as backup.

HARRALD/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS (5 minute time limit)

- A. Parks Monthly Report - March 2024
Memorandum PARC-24-022 from Parks Maintenance Coordinator as backup

Parks Maintenance Coordinator Felice reviewed his report that was include in the packet. In addition to the report he added that the swing set at Ben Walters Park has come apart and a new one is on order. In response to questions he explained he's the only one on staff right now, and they are still accepting applications for summer help. He provided an overview of the work being done near the bathroom across from Bartlett to clean up the area and fence off the parking lot in conjunction with the daycare that's going in at the building next to the bathrooms. They touched briefly on who's responsible for the Fishing Hole ramps and work that Public Works has done in the area.

B. PARCAC Staff Liaison Report - Mike Illg
Memorandum PARC-24-025 from Recreation Manager

Recreation Manager Illg reviewed his report that was included in the packet, emphasizing recent Council actions related to Parks and Community Recreation. There was brief discussion on the \$15,000 that was allocated from HERC roof inspection to materials to repair the HERC roof where it's leaking. They also discussed the informal public conversation about the concept of creating a Friends of Recreation group and the lack of interest at this time. A location for a recreation center has not be finalized yet, and the Council Champions understand the need to identify funding for the Recreation Center project.

C. Community Recreation Report for April
Memorandum PARC-24-026 from Recreation Manager.

Recreation Manager Illg reviewed his report that was included in the packet, highlighting a recent volleyball tournament, Community Wind Band concert, the upcoming Sister City events, and the Safe and Healthy Kids Fair. He also shared the progress on implementing the recreation software.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS (15 minute time limit)

A. Updating the Commission Strategic Plan Document
Memorandum PARC-24-019 from Deputy City Clerk II as backup.
2024-2025 Draft PARCAC Strategic Plan and Goals

Commissioner Keiser provided a memo and proposed revisions to the draft strategic plan in the supplemental packet. The proposed revisions include identifying the goals, objectives, actions, timelines and fiscal notes for the items in the plan. In response to questions about her references to staffing Commissioner Keiser explained she's looking at staff as employees as well as resources like access to consultants.

Commissioner Harrald commented on thinking this exercise is great at looking at the goals and outlining what needs to happen for the goals to be accomplished, consider what we have the capacity for, and adjust as needed to be realistic. She'd like to start with a SWOT and go from there.

Community Development Director Engebretsen reviewed the EDC's strategic plan and how it's laid out, compared to what's being proposed by in the supplemental packet. Some tasks identified in the EDC plan are done by staff, others are done by Commissioners.

Recreation Manager Illg suggested the Commission consider a first step of prioritizing goals and coming back at the next meeting for the work session with Agnew::Beck. He thinks they'll find a lot of similarities in their priorities. Commissioner Keiser agreed with the suggestion, understanding the draft provided in their packet can be revised by the Commission. They don't have time to do it before their next work session. Her document identifies the type of follow-up that's necessary to accomplish the goals and prioritizing the items will allow them to inform Agnew::Beck what's important to the group.

Commissioner Archibald expressed a priority of increased funding for parks and rec in the budget and questions how they can accomplish that.

Community Development Director Engebretsen explained that ideally the Commission will set their strategic plan over two or three meetings, and be done with it, because the goal is to use those items to set your agendas and work through them. She used the parks funding comment as an example of a goal to understand the budget process. Tasks could include inviting the Finance Director to walk you through the budget pages and explain how the funding flows so everyone on the Commission has that understanding, then make a recommendation to Council for funding.

KEISER/HARRALD MOVED THAT WE TAKE THE DOCUMENT SHE PREPARED WHICH SHE THINKS DOES A GOOD JOB OF IDENTIFYING THE COMPLEX WORK BEFORE THE COMMISSION AND PRIORITIZE THE ITEMS AND HAVE THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR THE MAY 16 WORK SESSION WITH AGNEW::BECK.

Commissioner Keiser commented her concern with the proposed plan was it didn't reflect how much work would be necessary to accomplish the goals. That's what she tried to outline in her document.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

KEISER/HARRALD MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION SCHEDULE A SWOT ANALYSIS PROCESS TO START AT OUR JUNE MEETING.

Recreation Manager Illg asked if they want to hire a consultant, they still have about \$1,000 in their budget.

KEISER/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO AMEND BY SPECIFYING THE FACILITATOR BE FOR THE SWOT BE A THIRD PARTY CONSULTANT TO BE DETERMINED BY STAFF.

There were comments in support of the amendment and of separating the aspects of the Commission including Parks, Arts and Culture.

VOTE (amendment): NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

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

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported the updated site plan wasn't complete in time for the meeting packet and requested postponement to the next meeting.

C. Amending the Fee Schedule for Community Recreation
Memorandum PARC-24-021 from Recreation Manager as backup.

Recreation Manager Illg explained the changes include establishing a yearly pass, contracted instructor classes, special events, and reservation fees for the HERC gym and activity room.

He explained the reservation fees are not rental fees, the reservations are for community partners that are affiliated with Community Recreation to use the spaces, these are groups that have people who have filled out volunteer applications, and had background checks and required training. He also addressed the benefits of the annual pass in ease of use for the regular drop in customer, savings in staff time and credit card fees from processing individual \$5 payments. This pass is for drop in programs only.

In response to a question about the cost of equipment he referred Commissioners to the Community Recreation budget page in their packet and reviewed expenses that occur. He noted the benefits of partnering with the school district and being able to use some of their equipment.

RODEL/HARRALD MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FEE SCHEDULE PRESENTED BY MIKE ILLG.

Commissioner Harrald expressed her support for the annual fee, having been in the position of organizing volunteers and collecting individual payments, and dealing liabilities attached. There is a savings in time and workload.

There was brief discussion regarding fees that have already been approved, confirming the hourly fee for the gym is reasonable and the fee may be higher if the gym was newer.

VOTE: YES: HARRALD, ARCHIBALD, LEWIS, ROEDL
NO: KEISER

NEW BUSINESS (15-20 minute time limit)

A. Mid Biennial Budget Amendments

Memorandum PARC-24-027 from Recreation Manager as backup

Recreation Manager Illg explained that he communicated with Parks Maintenance Coordinator Felice who didn't have any mid-biennium amendments to propose, and reviewed his request to have the part time position go full time. There is funding in the Community Recreation budget to cover all but approximately \$12,000 of the cost. He shared the improvements that have happened since bringing on a part-time permanent employee and benefits of shifting the position to full time.

Commissioner Keiser asked where the money would come to make up the short-fall. Mr. Illg explained it will come from the general fund fund balance. Ms. Keiser shared her opposition to the proposal based on the funding shortfall.

Other Commissioners commented in support of making the request and shared benefits they've seen with the part-time position in place.

ARCHIBALD/ROEDL THAT PARCAC SUPPORTS THE REQUEST TO ADJUST THE CURRENT HALF-TIME 0.5 PTE TO A FULL TIME ONE FTE FOR FY2025.

VOTE: YES: ARCHIBALD, LEWIS, ROEDL, KEISER, HARRALD

Motion carried.

B. Scheduling the Spring Park Beach or Park Walk Through

The Commission discussed scheduling and locations. They agree to conduct their park walk through on May 23, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. and visit Karen Hornaday Park.

C. Fishing Hole Campground

Memorandum PARC-24-028 from Port Property Associate as backup.

Community Development Director Engebretsen provided a brief history of the uses on the spit related to camping and vessel haul out in the area around Pier One Theater. Council adopted Resolution 24-024 requesting input from PARCAC and the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission (PHAC).

They reviewed the tasks outlined in the resolution for the PARCAC and PHAC and the demands for use of the area as a year-round haul-out facility along with the need for affordable camping on the spit.

Commissioner Archibald commented that there aren't any guarantees that a haul out would happen in the near or mid-term based on costs to upgrade the area and questions of sustainability for a large

operation. There is revenue stream for camping and why would we give that up until we see tangible evidence there will be an improvement there.

Commissioner Harrald expressed her frustration on the matter. They were just talking about quality of life issues and developing their SWOT, and this is making decisions based on economics of a business to make money. Since she's been on the Commission campsites have been absorbed for a lot of different reasons. She understands the winter use as industrial. She and many others recreate out there a lot and it's hard to imagine where people can do those things in the summer. There's something beyond economics that comes into play with this decision.

The question was posed, there are other camping options; how important is it that the City provide a large amount of camping spaces as a landowner. There were responses that the private campgrounds are more expensive, city campgrounds don't provide facilities for RV's and offer more affordable camping opportunities for visitors. People who are camping are spending money in town and the city receives sales tax.

Commissioner Archibald noted the Kachemak Bay Water Trail put a lot of effort into the pavilion out there that enhances the experience out there. Sandblasting isn't conducive to the enjoyment of that area when people are picnicking and camping.

Commissioner Keiser agreed with others that there is an obligation for the City to provide camping and recreational opportunities for our residents and visitors. The information from Pier One indicates they'll be there for three more years, and may be able to extend five more years. Pier One doesn't want to be there, but they don't have many options. We need to help them find a more appropriate place because if they weren't there, it would open up a huge camping area.

Commissioner Roedl appreciates both sides. He remembers tent camping with his family because it's what they could afford. He also understands the need for the haul-out and that it will bring some jobs to Homer. Having to bring generators into to work on their boats in the winter is challenging so he agrees with bringing in some infrastructure to help support hauling out in the winter.

There was no action required tonight. A memo summarizing their discussion will come to their next meeting for review.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Creating Community Gardens for People of All Ages
- B. PARCAC Annual Calendar 2024
- C. City Manager's Report for City Council April 8, 2024
- D. City of Homer Newsletter for April 2024

Chair Lewis agreed to report to Council.

Commissioner Keiser asked about updating the Commission calendar with other items the Commission should work on. She was encourage to connect with Recreation Manager Illg and Chair Lewis about adding items to the agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

Scott Adams, city resident, commented in support of seasonal use between the campground and the haul-out. He suggested a senior and family rate in the fee schedule, and feels the HERC can be refurbished and continued to be used for recreation. He also requested a survey of B Street and consideration of building a viewing platform, its public land and they should use it.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Recreation Manager Illg introduced Lucas Parsley in the audience who applied for the open Commission seat.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Archibald and Chair Lewis had no comments.

Commissioner Harrald shared appreciation for the audience tonight, that's what this is for.

Commissioner Keiser thanked staff for being there and thanked Mr. Parsley for coming and considering serving on the Commission, and Mr. Adams for his comments.

Commissioner Roedl also thanked the audience for being there and the group for a good meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission Chair Lewis adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is **Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.** A worksession is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

Melissa Jacobsen, Interim City Manager

Approved: _____