

Session 20-05, a Regular Meeting of the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair David Lewis at 5:33 p.m. on May 20, 2021 via Zoom Webinar from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS ROEDL, LOWNEY, HARRALD, GALBRAITH, FAIR, LEWIS, AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BLANTON-YOURKOWSKI

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER ARCHIBALD (EXCUSED)

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

A worksession on the Beach Policy was conducted from 4:30 p.m. until 5:20 p.m. prior to the regular meeting.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Lewis requested a motion to approve the agenda.

HARRALD/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

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes for the regular meeting on April 15, 2021

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

FAIR/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 15, 2021 MEETING.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Spring Parks and Beach Walk Through Report

Chair Lewis introduced the item and commented on the attendance by the Commission.

Parks Superintendent Steffy reported on Jack Gist Park improvements and development of a Master Plan. He noted the following:

- Utilities available in the future and developing plans to connect to those in the near future
- Parking and road improvements
- Drainage and consultation with landscape architect
- Removal of the wooden playground equipment and future replacement
- Development of the lower field for tournament games

Commissioner Fair added that they spoke about safety issues and installing new playground equipment to a location closer to the new development being constructed next to the park.

Commissioner Harrauld noted that they spoke about Food Trucks also.

Chair Lewis inquired about the status and Council decisions on allowing food trucks in city parks.

Parks Superintendent Steffy reported that has been divided into two categories:

- Food trucks under a Special Event Permit which allows special exemptions under city code
- Moving forward the Special Event Permit process and regulations are being revised to designate small, medium or large events with pertinent requirements to each type and size of event.
- The second is revising the transient merchant regulations and permit process

Commissioner Fair reported on the visit to the Beach Access at Crittenden and Main Street and noted the following:

- Steep access to the beach, the easement is not designated and constructing a stairway access would alleviate the safety issues
- Better access from Main Street and there are trails and ruts that have become trails to the beach

Commissioner Harrauld reported on visiting the area behind the Bartlett Street/Pioneer Avenue restroom that could be a really nice rest area or pocket area.

Commissioner Fair added that it is a heavily wooded area that would benefit from some clearing and limbing of trees to open it up which would negate the transient residents from using the area for temporary living facilities.

Parks Superintendent Steffy reported on the beach access points the improvements will be determined where they lie in the priority of getting projects done providing as an example the steps that were installed off of FAA Road. He then provided a preliminary plan on improving the area around the restroom at Bartlett Street.

B. Community Recreation Report – Recreation Manager Illg

Chair Lewis introduced the item and invited Recreation Manager Illg to provide his report.

Recreation Manager Illg congratulated the Commission on getting the Ordinance on Personal Watercraft passed. He noted Ordinance 21-26 later on the agenda. Mr. Illg further noted the availability of basketball at the HERC. Additional items that were reported on were as follows:

- Success of the Safe & Healthy Kids Fair
 - o Over 200 people attended – estimated
 - o 20 plus vendors
 - o Planning to conduct the same period each year outside
- Reported on the NRPA and the need for additional fulltime personnel

Chair Lewis commented that Homer services more than 5,000 persons since there are those persons who live outside city limits that use and participate in the programs.

C. Parks & Trails Maintenance Report - Parks Superintendent Steffy

Parks Superintendent Steffy provided his report for the Commission noting the following:

- Camping Revenue 2021- \$2860 2020 - \$1000 2019-\$890
- Self-Pay Kiosks and T-Two Units
 - o Two Units at Dump Stations
 - o Three Units at Campgrounds
 - o Planning to go totally paperless
- Poopdeck Trail ADA ramp from the Independent Living Center was installed
 - o Added neutral bumpers
 - o Worked on drainage and replacing gravel
 - o Numbers of use is being reported and being documented
- Karen Hornaday Park
 - o The road is still atrocious and will not be worked on until totally defrosted
 - o Will work on the campground to get it ready to open for Memorial Day weekend
- Skate Park Agreement and improvements
 - o Agreement in place
 - o Discussions on the location and content of the next Skate Park
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
 - o Governance on Land & Water Conservation Funding Grant
 - o He listed the priorities as connectivity, accessibility and partnerships
- Summer Staffing

Chair Lewis asked about the deadline for removing the large vessels with the exception of the North Pacific. Parks Superintendent Steffy reported that the North Pacific and Hallo Bay will be remaining throughout the summer. He will be reviewing the location and looking at reconfiguring the campground with safety in mind.

Commissioner Harrauld questioned the direct costs to the Parks having the derelict vessels in that location. Parks Superintendent Steffy was unsure of the direct revenue losses to the Parks but noted that the area is zoned Marine Industrial and as such the Port & Harbor grants the Parks the recreational use of that parcel. He stated that the Harbor leases or rents the area to conduct work on the vessels and they have been extended. This ability provides an important aspect to the Harbor for vessel owners to have the ability to work on the large vessels instead of having to go somewhere else such as Seward.

D. Public Works Director Report – Public Works Director Keiser, PE

Chair Lewis introduced the item and invited Public Works Director Keiser to speak to the Commission.

Public Works Director Keiser reported on the following:

- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has given approval to install murals on the Airport Terminal building.
 - o She note that the item is on the agenda for approval by the Commission and that it will be submitted to Council for their acceptance
 - o Public Works will continue to work with the Homer Drawdown group to get the mural in place
 - o It is expected to get constructed and created over the 2021/22 winter season and installed in the spring of 2022
- Met with the City Manager and Special Projects Coordinator along with the City Lobbyist and they spoke about the funding coming from the Federal & State, mostly water & sewer money and there is going to be funding for tourist related facility development so she is in the process of lining up projects that would be suitable for those funds such as wayfinding, upgrades and modernization to campgrounds and packaging those into small to mid-sized projects.
- The budget is progressing and will include operational as well as capital funding
- The Commission still has the \$750 to expend with an expiration date of June 30, 2021 Starting July 1st with the new budget the Commission will have another \$1500 to expend until June 30, 2022
- Capital Funding for Parks Projects are included in the budget
- With respect to Recreation Manager Illg's advocacy and passion and support for Parks and recreation she reminded the Commission that they are fully staffed with temporary employees on the park side and they have excellent skills in terms of trail maintenance and we expect to be able to accomplish many projects this summer. They will again carry over a couple of temporary employees through the winter to assist Parks Superintendent Steffy.

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

- Use of tourism funding for bathrooms such as Bishop's Beach and Baycrest
- Use of Federal Funding for Community Recreation Center
- Recommended by Lobbyist to have smaller projects that make a big impact

- Special Projects Coordinator pointed out the Achilles Heel of the Community Recreation Project is the operational costs. That it does not pencil out. The public tax dollar cannot support it without sustainable funding of some kind
- The HERC Task Force made recommendations and yet the facility still sits there with nothing being done.
- Improvement of playing fields to be able to host tournaments which also drives tourism.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. 2021 Beach Policy Update – Review, Amendments and Corrections

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title. He noted that they had this on the Worksession agenda prior to the meeting. He opened the floor for discussion or a motion.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO POSTPONE THIS ITEM TO ALLOW A WORK GROUP TO REVIEW, AMEND AND FORMAT THE POLICY DOCUMENT.

There was brief discussion noting that during the worksession it was agreed that the document was difficult to follow and that it was supposed to be a policy, but in some areas was more like a to do list. It was recommended to create a small workgroup to go through the document and arrange it as a policy with the list of recommendations to be added as an attachment or separate document.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

A brief discussion ensued on the ability to form a committee and keeping the membership to less than a quorum.¹

Commissioners Roedl, Lowney and Lewis volunteered to be on the Beach Policy Workgroup.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Homer Drawdown Peatland Mural project Proposal for the Homer Airport Terminal

- City of Homer Accession, Gift & Donation Policy and Procedures for Art

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and invited Public Works Director Keiser to provide some input on the topic.

¹ The City Attorney has advised that no committee or workgroup should meet without those meetings being advertised and recorded. Even if the number in the group was less than a required quorum. A member of the advisory body speaking one on one with staff did not require or constitute a meeting.

Public Works Director Keiser provided a summary of her memorandum regarding the Homer Drawdown group proposal to install a mural which will educate the public on the importance of protecting and preserving Homer's peatlands. She requested a resolution of support from the Commission.

Discussion was facilitated by Chair Lewis between Commissioners and Staff regarding the concerns of approving a concept with no knowledge of the proposed concept; straying outside the existing approved procedures and policy; public receptiveness of the end product not being favorable; Environmental projects can be viewed differently by everyone; awareness that the existing policies and procedures need revisions to address the right of refusal; adding another policy on public private partnerships; and inviting the Homer Drawdown group to make a presentation to the Commission.

Deputy City Clerk Krause will contact the Homer Drawdown Group and arrange for them to present to the Commission.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED THAT THE PARKS ART RECREATION AND CULTURE ADVISORY COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE HOMER DRAW DOWN PROJECT.

There was a brief discussion on having the presentation from the group.

HARRALD/LOWNEY MOVED TO AMEND TO ADD WITH THE CONDITION THAT IT COMPLIES WITH THE ESTABLISHED DONATIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND THE COMMISSION RETAINS THE APPROVAL OF THE CONTENT.

There was additional discussion on the letter of support or document contain a copy of the current policies and procedures for donations.

VOTE. (amendment) NO. HARRALD, LOWNEY, FAIR, LEWIS, ROEDL, GALBRAITH

Motion failed.

LOWNEY/FAIR MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ADD SUPPORTS THE HOMER DRAW DOWN PURSUIT OF FUNDING FOR ART.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. (amendment) NON-OBJECTION. UANNIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. (main motion) NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Review and Recommendation on the Donation of a Memorial Bench

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided a review of the memorandum in the packet.

Discussion ensued on the necessity of this application being approved by the Library Advisory Board, following the process it will then be forwarded to City Council and the timeline for installation.

LOWNEY/HARRALD MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED MEMORIAL BENCH IN REMBRANCE OF ALL MISSING WOMEN AND CHILDREN CREATED BY BRAD HUGHES TO BE PLACED AT THE HOMER PUBLIC LIBRARY.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Ordinance 21-26, Amending Homer City Code Extending the No Wake Zone throughout City Tidelands and Closing Louie's Lagoon and the Entrance of Beluga Slough to Motorized Vessels.

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

ROEDL/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE AS WRITTEN.

Discussion ensued on this ordinance covering a lot of points with some Commissioners expressing concerns on enforcement abilities and the opinion that there is not going to be a lot of people wanting to use jet skis in the bay but that time will tell.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

D. Memorandum from Deputy City Clerk/ADA Coordinator re: PARC Assistance with Self Evaluation

Chair Lewis introduced the item and invited Parks Superintendent Steffy to provide input.

Superintendent Steffy provided a brief overview of the requirement of developing a parks and trails ADA Transition plan as part of the overall ADA Transition Plan. He then provided a brief example of Bishops beach access barriers to the boardwalk and that an inventory and assessment of all the facilities.

Chair Lewis stated that the ADA Committee is asking for a Commissioner to check all the trails and parks to see where we need to upgrade.

Deputy City Clerk Krause explained that the ADA Compliance Committee along with Parks Superintendent Steffy will be performing the self-evaluation of the City Parks and Trails for ADA Compliance and the Committee requested that a Commissioner or two be asked to work with them over the summer to get this accomplished since they know the trails and parks. She further reported that the ADA Committee will be prioritizing a list of parks and trails at their June 10, 2021 regular meeting at 4:00 p.m. and it would be beneficial if the Commissioners could attend that meeting as well.

Deputy City Clerk Krause facilitated questions from the Commission on the following:

- Worksheets will be provided that outlines the requirements
- They will also cover trails but not all trails such as the Reber Trail

Chair Lewis requested volunteers to work with the ADA Compliance Committee.

Commissioner Lowney expressed her interest in working on this but was hesitant to fully commit since it was the summer.

Chair Lewis stated that he could fill in when Commissioner Lowney was unable to as he worked with the last group that performed the self-evaluation for the other city facilities.

Parks Superintendent Steffy explained that the city is not require to have all trails or parks accessible just a certain amount and with some equipment accessible and that they will be prioritized.

Chair Lewis commented on the requirements for bathrooms and parking spaces.

Deputy City Clerk Krause will provide the meeting invites to the Commissioners for the next ADA meeting in June.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. 2021 Commissioner Attendance at Council Meetings & Annual Calendar
- B. City Manager's Report for the May 10, 2021 Council Meeting
- C. Ordinance 21-23, Amending HCC 19-20.020, general Rules, Adding Launching, Landing or Retrieving of Motorized Watercraft is Prohibited from City Owned Beaches except for Official Business Use or Authorized by the Harbormaster
- D. Resolution 21-27, Authorizing the City or Apply for a State of Alaska Recreational Trails Program Grant in An Amount up to \$150,000 for Funds to Construct an ADA Accessible Entrance Trail in Karen Hornaday Park.

Chair Lewis requested a volunteer for the May 24, 2021 City Council meeting. Commissioner Harrauld volunteered to attend.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Recreation Manager Illg congratulated Ella for graduating High School and being able to go to Hawaii for college. He requested that she recruit her replacement.

Deputy City Clerk Krause commented on having a good meeting with lots of different issues on the agenda and congratulated the Commission for getting through it all.

Parks Superintendent Steffy echoed the sentiments on a good meeting, very productive and thanked the Commissioners for their time.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Student Representative Blanton Yourkowski commented that she has approached a member of the Student Council and believes that she will be a really good candidate for this position, she is outspoken regarding the issues in this town and will pass on the information to her.

Commissioner Fair commented that he was very appreciative that this meeting was only 90 minutes since their meetings have been pretty long lately. He then wished Ella the best of luck moving forward.

Commissioner Lowney expressed her thanks and appreciation for Ella being on the Commission and looks forward to having someone fill her seat because she believes having a student voice has been very critical and appreciated having someone with a voice for art since that was Ella's concern, on the Commission was great too. She then commented on keeping the idea of a dog park on their radar since they had not addressed that issue yet; her excitement on tourists and tourists dollars and hope that they can find good productive ways to spend those dollars; she would like to see the Public Works Shopping List to expend the funding that the Commission has available. Ms. Lowney suggested maybe donation to Community Fireworks for the Parks Commission funds and then provided comments on the educational opportunity for the protection of driftwood during an art project on the beach with students and teachers. She added that the Commission should review the art policies and procedures to include a process for refusal since it is not covered in the existing document and maybe creating an art bank for rotating art similar to the State offices.

Commissioner Harrauld expressed her thanks to Deputy City Clerk Krause for the packet, it was very informative and that information assisted her in the meeting tonight. She then expressed her appreciation for Parks Superintendent Steffy and Public Works Director Keiser and all their hard work. It was really great on the park walk to see all that through their lens and it helps to understand the decisions that are made and what is going on. She expressed her appreciation for the programs that are being implemented by Public Works to make things easier. Commissioner Harrauld further commented on assisting the groups to get the art projects moving forward; the success of the skate park; recreational programs kicking in for the summer; cruise ships being allowed to come. She expressed her appreciation for Ella serving on the Commission.

Commissioner Roedl expressed he was looking forward to meeting in person again and thanked Deputy City Clerk Krause for her technical expertise and getting him connected for the meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Lewis commented on reading an article on the youth of the world are doing more for Climate Change than the old folks. He expressed his appreciation for the staff and thanked Ella for her service.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled on Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

Renée Krause

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: *June 17, 2021*