

CALL TO ORDER

Session 25-08, 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 October 16, 2025, in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD, HARRALD, KEISER, LEWIS, PARSLEY, ROEDL, STEFANO & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE OSTROM

STAFF: RECREATION MANAGER ILLG, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR KORT, LEAD PARKS TECHNICIAN FELICE & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Lewis requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

KEISER/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

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

LEWIS/HARRALD MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ALLOW PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Kevin LaHaye spoke on behalf of the Friends of the Homer Skatepark, alluding to a nonprofit that the Friends have created that the city could potentially benefit from for fundraising purposes for the future recreation center. He added that it could be a mutual benefit for both the city and the Friends in that the city could potentially make the skatepark a priority of the proposed recreation center site development.

Penelope Haas spoke on behalf of the Kachemak Bay Conservation Society, stating that she is hopeful the Commission will assist the City Council and the Planning Commission regarding Title 21 and the Comprehensive Plan. She requested the Commission to look at existing protected lands, parks, and trails to think about how they could be improved.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS (10-minute time limit)

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for September 18, 2025

HARRALD/PARSLEY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 18, 2025.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

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

A. Parks Monthly Staff Report – Chad Felice, Lead Parks Technician

Lead Parks Technician Felice provided the Parks Monthly Staff Report, covering the following items:

- Finished up the middle portion of the Poopdeck Trail
 - Met with Councilmember Aderhold regarding a potential trail easement
 - Discussion with the owner of Bay Realty regarding limbing up the spruce trees that are encroaching the trail
 - Potential for the trail to become ADA-compliant
- Recap of Renaissance Fair
- Recap of camping at Karen Hornaday Park
 - \$28,110 in revenue and no criminal activity reported

Mr. Felice answered questions regarding the upper Poopdeck Trail, camping on the Spit (estimated total of about \$250,000 in revenue), circular bench at the western lot, and the posts on the Storybook Trail.

Other discussion topics included rumors about a new hazardous waste disposal site in the state and success of the mobile bathrooms at Jack Gist Park and Karen Hornaday Park.

B. Community Recreation Monthly Report – Mike Illg, Recreation Manager

Recreation Manager Illg provided the Community Recreation Monthly Report, covering the following items:

- Programming and special events
 - Ski Swap 2025 & Telluride Mountain Film
 - New Cornhole program – 35 participants on the first day
- Ongoing discussions with Brian Partridge and Jill Burnham at Kenai Peninsula College to enhance student access to community recreation programs

There was a brief discussion regarding the viability of a volleyball program for the college students.

C. Monthly Staff Report – Mike Illg, Recreation Manager

Recreation Manager Illg provided the Monthly Staff Report. He noted that an ordinance was introduced to create a capital budget expenditure of \$10,000 for an endowment fund at the Homer Foundation. He also spoke to a resolution in which City Council has agreed to select two city-owned properties downtown as potential locations for a new community recreation center.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Parks & Recreation Policies & Procedures Document

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Recreation Manager Illg, who provided a summary explanation of his memorandum included in the packet.

KEISER/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO FORWARD THE PARKS & RECREATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES DOCUMENT AS DRAFTED TO THE CITY MANAGER FOR DISPOSITION IN THE DUE COURSE OF PROCESS TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

There was brief discussion regarding whether this item should be seen by the City Manager for legal review prior to being seen by the City Council.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of the City's Adopt-a-Park/Trail Program

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Recreation Manager Illg, who provided a summary explanation of his memorandum included in the packet. Lead Parks Technician Felice informed the Commission that he was instructed by the City Manager to table this program for the winter. Other discussion topics included budget amendments, potential revisions to the Adopt-a-Park agreement, and the legal procedure for adopting a park. There was consensus among the Commission to postpone this business item to the Commission's March meeting.

B. Park Walk-Through November

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

The Commission agreed to schedule a park walk-through from Ohlson Lane to Bishop's Beach on November 20th at 4:30 p.m., prior to the Commission's Regular Meeting.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. 2025 Annual Calendar

B. Ski Swap 2025

Chair Lewis noted the informational materials. There was discussion about discussing the biennium budget in early spring (March) and approving the 2026 meeting schedule for the Commission at the next meeting in November. Recreation Manager Illg provided a reminder for the Commissioners who have terms expiring at the end of the month to get their applications for re-appointment in if they are seeking it.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3-minute time limit)

Lou Stewart, city resident, noted that he is pleasantly surprised to see the progress the Commission is making on adding Woodard Creek to the Adopt-a-Park list. He noted that Woodard Creek is Homer's largest watershed, and that he intends to have eyes on the park and be able to do maintenance, if necessary, as prescribed in the Adopt-a-Park program. He voiced his continued support for Woodard Creek Park.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Pettit noted that it was a good meeting and that he will be moving out of the state at the end of the month.

Recreation Manager Illg thanked the Commission for a great meeting and noted that many other Alaskan communities and cities are facing the same challenges regarding the pool and theatre funding issues. He recalled a group of people in 2007 called *Recreate Rec*, who raised \$8,000, which were matched by the city, to complete a recreational needs assessment.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Lord voiced her opposition to supporting a Homer High Pool and Task Force, adding that the city doesn't have the funding to take on running the pool and theatre at the high school. She further reasoned that if it isn't a direct municipal service then the city shouldn't be leading the charge, though it would be appropriate for the city to have a seat at the table during discussions.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Student Representative Ostrom questioned if it would be within reason to have a third party or private company monetize the pool. He encouraged everyone to attend the ski swap.

Commissioner Archibald noted that the recreational service area was tried once already but didn't succeed due to a lack of information. He shared his disappointment that the Commission wasn't more involved in the Comprehensive Plan process. He spoke to the Land Allocation Plan and the need for the plan to identify areas that create pocket parks.

Commissioner Harrauld asked if there is a way to publicly recognize employees that go above and beyond.

Commissioner Parsley noted that he wants to learn more about recreational service areas. He referenced a situation involving the running club, which encountered difficulty obtaining local matching funds because the funding match was considered a governmental responsibility.

Commissioner Lewis noted that the Kenai Peninsula used to be one of the top educational areas in the state, adding that it's gone downhill due to a lack of funding. He reasoned that if the city wants funds and can't obtain a recreational service area, then it might be worth urging the Borough to allow the city to impose a bed tax.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Lewis adjourned the meeting at 6:54 p.m. The next regular meeting is **Thursday, November 25, 2025 at 5:30 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.

Zach Pettit, Deputy City Clerk II

Approved: _____