

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 04, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar



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A. CALL TO ORDER

PRAC Chair Ryan O'Shaughnessy called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Josh Anderson, Ren Scott, Danika Swanson, Emma Van Nes, & Paulette Schirmer

Absent: Kaasáank' Andrew Williams, & Portland Sarantopoulos

Staff Present: George Schaaf, Parks & Recreation Director; Lauren Verrelli, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director; Jorden Nigro, Youth Services Manager; Jason Hoffbauer, Engineering & Public Works Engineering/Architectural Associate; Neil Steininger, Assembly Liaison; & Annie Carroll, Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Ms. Schirmer to approve the agenda. *No objections were heard, and the agenda was approved.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes from January 7, 2025

MOTION by Ms. Schirmer to approve the minutes. *No objections were heard, and the minutes were approved.*

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - *None*

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2. February 4 Agenda Overview

G. NEW BUSINESS - *None*

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - *None*

I. STAFF REPORTS

3. Youth Services Update – Presented by J. Nigro

Ms. Nigro began by introducing herself and presenting a short PowerPoint with an overview of the Zach Gordon Youth Services division. The division offers youth sports, camps, and afterschool programs. They are also responsible for running the Zach Gordon Youth Center (ZGYC), and Shéiyi Xaat Hít Youth Shelter. Additionally, they provide housing navigation, rapid rehousing, and support services for local youth. She shared that the Zach Gordon Youth Center served 1,394 individuals, provided thousands of meals, hosted cooking and art programs, and D&D & hiking clubs in 2024 among other events. She then highlighted the Youth Activities Scholarship which provides flexible funding to support youth who want to participate in recreational activities, and their Youth Activities Board which provides CBJ Grant funding to youth serving organizations in Juneau. She continues by sharing that the division offers

soccer, volleyball, basketball and Start Smart Sports for youth with the support of volunteers that put in 1,659 hours of coaching in 2024. She describes the offerings of the Shéiyi Xaat Hít Youth Shelter which is funded by a mix of federal grant funding, Juneau Community foundation funding, private donations, as well as CBJ funding. She concludes by excitedly sharing that the Zach Afterschool program at Cedar Park and Geneva Woods had its first day on February 3 and offers free on-site afterschool programming to youth ages 6-12 with funding from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks how organizations can get involved with the Body and Mind (BAM) Afterschool Program. Ms. Nigro answers that it is easiest if they call the ZGYC or reach out to her at her direct line.

Ms. Scott asked which of the division's programs have federal funding to which Ms. Nigro answered only the housing program.

Ms. Swanson asked if the division has ever worked in conjunction with Youth Court to which Ms. Nigro answered that they just took a young person staying at the shelter to Youth Court for the first time. Ms. Swanson asked how long young people stay at the shelter on average. Ms. Nigro answered that the average is around 11 days, but that the federal grant caps their stay at 21 days max. Ms. Swanson also asked about the ZGYC participating in geocaching last year. Ms. Nigro answered that geocaching was a personal interest of one of their staff, so they decided to include it as part of their summer camps.

4. Marine Park Final Design – Presented by G. Schaaf, J. Hoffbauer, and E. Leonetti of Coffman Engineers

Mr. Schaaf begins by sharing some images of the final design plans for Marine Park. He explains that these designs are the culmination of a multi-year effort to plan for renovations and improvements at the park which hosts nearly a quarter of a million guests each year. He introduced the project manager Jason Hoffbauer, and Ed Leonetti of Coffman Engineers, who were present to discuss the plans and answer questions. The park was built with land and water conservation funds meaning the site is protected in perpetuity for outdoor recreation purposes. Currently the park features a shelter with benches, space for 3 seasonal food vendors, and several tables for visitors. The department held public engagement meetings to gather the public's input on what they wanted to see in the finished park. One of the greatest requested features was a space for public performances which prompted the addition of an elevated covered clamshell stage to the park design. The center of the park will include a large formline art piece by Rico Worl with additional design elements extending into the seating area near the edge of the park. The plans also propose the addition of a children's climbing structure inspired by the form of the Tlingit Gonakadet, or Sea-Wolf. Finally, he explains that the park will incorporate 2 permanent structures for food vendors positioned to prevent the interruption of foot traffic.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asked if there would be any changes to the fee schedule for Marine Park vending. Mr. Schaaf answered that they do anticipate change, but it will require some changes to their regulations, and approval from the Assembly. Currently vendors pay a flat monthly fee, and the department is looking into moving to a concession model where vendors pay a portion of their gross sales.

Mr. Anderson asks how vendors are chosen for the highly sought after spots at the park. Mr. Schaaf answers that the department puts out a request for interest and interested vendors submit a permit application and proposal which is then graded. If a concession model is established the vendors who provide the best level of service to the public, and best revenue for the city, would be selected.

Ms. Swanson asks if vendors who have received the vending location in the past would be given the first opportunity to use the new kiosks. Mr. Schaaf answers that under the city's current regulations currently permitted vendors do not get preferential treatment or priority for future permits and must apply and be reviewed every year. Ms. Swanson then asked how many guests would fit in the park to

watch the performance on the stage. Mr. Leonetti answered that you could likely fit up to a few thousand people in the park observing, and approximately twenty-five people on the stage.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asked for an overview of the estimated cost of construction and Mr. Schaaf answered with a rough estimate of 4.5 million for construction costs paid by marine passenger fees, and a total project cost of 7 million.

Mr. Anderson asked if there was a process for picking the theme, or consideration of the 1% for Art process. Mr. Schaaf answers that there was not a 1% for Art committee formed for this project and that the selections were at the discretion of department staff. They attempted to remain consistent with the Downtown Wayfinding Project that was recently completed so the new park would integrate well with new additions in the downtown area.

Ms. Van Nes acknowledged that the park design integrates a sleeve for the seasonal Christmas tree, and expressed her satisfaction that the tree will remain a tradition at the park for locals to enjoy. She then asks what the timeline is for this project. Mr. Schaaf answers that upon approval of funding they anticipate the park to be closed for an entire year.

Ms. Schirmer asked if the statue of Patsy Ann will be retained, and Mr. Schaaf answered that the statue will not be affected by the project and is not within the construction area.

5. Dimond Park Field House Maintenance Update— Presented by G. Schaaf

Mr. Schaaf shares that the department received two letters from the public expressing concerns about the water leaking from the roof at the Dimond Park Field House (DPFH). He presents them with a memo from Nate Abbott, the department's Building Maintenance Supervisor, explaining that the issue is largely caused by condensation due to a lack of thermal breaks between the exterior roof structure and the interior fixtures. He explains that they are aware of the dangers of water on the track, and corrosion of the fire sprinkler system, and asserts their commitment to getting a plan together to address the issues. A financial analysis is being conducted on two potential solutions. The first option would be to remove interior insulation and install thermal breaks, and the second option would be a full roof replacement with new insulation.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy asks how much has been spent on previous roof repairs and Mr. Schaaf answers less than fifty thousand dollars.

J. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Anderson shared that the Youth Activities Board met a few weeks ago to discuss their grant packets that will be coming out this month and held an open meeting for grantees to ask questions. The scoring will take place in March, and they will be awarding grants in March and April. He also shared that they recently approved emergency grant funds for the Glacier Swim Club. Their emergency contingency fund is in place for situations like these where organizations need a little help getting to the finish line to participate in special events.

Ms. Schirmer shared that the Lands Housing & Economic Development Committee met and discussed shared use of the Floyd Dryden Middle School by Tlingit and Haida and the University of Alaska for the purposes of childcare. Additionally, the Juneau Animal Rescue is leasing property near Don Abels which will give them more space. She also shares that while attending the Assembly meeting, she learned that vehicles which are Impounded in place are examined only by line of sight, meaning they could have undiscovered dangerous materials such as weapons and drugs inside them which is a cause for concern.

Mr. Steininger shared that the Assembly met and spent much of their time discussing flood response, eventually voting to move forward with the Local Improvement District (LID) process. They also discussed and ultimately denied an applicant who had applied to purchase a strip of parkland. Discussions regarding

the playground at Dzantik'i Heeni concluded with a request that the school district provide more options at different price points after reviewing the previous design with a rough cost estimate of 1.8 million.

Ms. Swanson thanked Mr. Schaaf for the in-depth facility tour he hosted on January 18. She enjoyed seeing the inner workings of the facilities such as the boiler room, and pool filtration system.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy concluded by encouraging the PRAC to attend the upcoming Jackie Renninger Park public meeting on February 11 to see the park's concept designs drafted with community input.

K. NEXT MEETING DATE - March 4, 2025.

L. ADJOURNMENT – With no further business to discuss the committee meeting adjourned at 6:37pm

Respectfully submitted by Annie Carroll on 2/28/2025, approved at the 3/4/2025 PRAC meeting