

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH
Parks and Recreation Commission
September 20, 2021
5:02 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held Monday, September 20, 2021, in the Mona Lisa Drexler Assembly Chambers of the Juanita Helms Administration Center, 907 Terminal Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

ROLL CALL

There were present appearing telephonically and in person:

Andrew Culley	Linda Unsicker
David Mongold	Judith Shiffler
Ben Roth	Jason Witt, Vice-Chairperson
Mark Oldmixon, Chairperson	

Comprising a quorum of the Commission, and

Sharon Wittenkeller, Administrative Assistant III, Clerk
Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director

Absent

James Lounsbury

MESSAGES

1.a. Citizen's Comments on agenda items not scheduled for public hearing.

NONE

1.b. Citizen's Comments on items other than those appearing on the agenda.

NONE

2. Disclosure & Statement of Conflict of Interest

NONE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

SHIFFLER,
Seconded by MONGOLD

moved to approve the agenda and consent
agenda as read.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA AS READ.

Yeses: Unsicker, Roth, Witt, Culley, Mongold,
Shiffler, Oldmixon

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 7 Yeses, 0 Noes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. *Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2021.

Without objection this measure was read by title and approved under the consent agenda.

REPORTS

1. Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director, Report.

Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director, introduced himself and provided status updates on events at the Carlson Center, noting they are ready for their first UAF hockey game, and summer projects at Pioneer Park, which included the train trestle and Presbyterian Church.

Discussion ensued on the location of the Presbyterian Church and other buildings located within Pioneer Park.

2. Update on the rules for duck hunting at Tanana Lakes.

Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director, provided an overview and history of duck hunting at Tanana Lakes. Mr. Hayes explained in 2018 the Parks and Recreation Department and the Parks and Recreation Commission worked together to address the issue of hunting at the Tanana Lake Recreation Area (TLRA). After multiple public hearings, meetings and surveys, the Parks and Recreation Commission sent out a memo on May 24, 2018, allowing for shot guns to be used at TLRA. The Parks and Recreation Commission established general guidelines for duck hunting within TLRA. Parks and Recreation Department has since followed the guidelines, placing signs up which note the rules and guidelines throughout TLRA, informing users of the allowed and restricted uses. The rules and guidelines can also be found on the Parks and Recreation website. Mr. Hayes explained if a school group is visiting it may not be an ideal situation.

Chair Oldmixon commented on a statement posted on Facebook of a user feeling as though they were being shot at, at Tanana Lakes, noting they felt the pellets of a shot gun breeze by their face.

Chair Oldmixon expressed completing regular review of guidelines and policies such as the review of alcohol allowed in parks is an important practice.

Commissioner Roth commented on a similar situation and experiences with shot guns allowed at Creamer's Field.

Commissioner Unsicker provided a brief history update on duck hunting at Tanana Lakes. The update included an explanation of how the Parks and Recreation Commission originally recommended to not allow duck hunting at Tanana Lakes. Duck hunters were promised by a previous Mayor, before they were elected as Mayor, that they would be allowed to duck hunt at Tanana Lakes which is how it was approved.

Commissioners and staff further discussed the following:

- Providing more drastic notice and education to the public as to the timeline of duck hunting season prior to users entering the TLRA during the hunting season.
- School group outing scenarios and permission from the Risk Department to visit on the lake as a school group.
- Signage placed at all entrances to TLRA to inform the public of the hunting season.
- Signage placed throughout the park and parking lots.
- General parks rules posted within TLRA.
- A suggestion of noticing individuals in-person at park entrances to educate users of the risk.
- Duck hunting as an allowable activity in the same vicinity as a playground.
- Firing across the lake.
- Further suggestions to educate users were:
 - Yellow warning sign that flips down at driver's height.
 - Partial roadblock by constructed sawhorses, blocking the center lane, used only for the purposes of posting notice of duck hunting season and the length of the season.
 - A sign on the trails, on either side of the lake, forewarning users that it is duck hunting season.
 - Post temporary signs or obstruction anywhere a trail meets any edge of the water or in the area of the water.
- Whether it is allowable to shoot across the lake and trails.
 - It is not allowable to shoot across trails.
- Hunters need to educate themselves on where the trails are located.
- Number of trailheads.
- Timeline of duck season.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review and Make Recommendations on the Pioneer Park Draft MasterPlan.

Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Director, explained the memo addressed to the Commission requesting support for the project and plan. Mr. Hayes provide a presentation on the Pioneer Park Draft Master Plan, focusing on where the park has been, the future of the park, and the overall goals and phases of the plan. Mr. Hayes concluded the presenting noting, the plan aims to take care of what they have currently at Pioneer Park, grow for the future and begin to look at how to connect other facilities in the area by the river, and make sure this is one large recreational facility.

Questions and discussion ensued on the following:

- What differentiates the current draft master plan from other plans presented or attempted in the past.
- Life left of the Centennial Building and the Bear Gallery.
- Amount of feedback received on the plan.
- Types of surveys conducted.
- Revenue ventures and responses of ways to drive revenue.
- The new trail by the skate park is a nice addition and the improvements of cleared underbrush by the dog park are great.
- Where would the ball fields within Phase III of the project be relocated too.
- Maintenance responsibilities of the ball fields.
- Great work has been accomplished with the plan.
- Attention and support allocated to the Salmon Bake and Canoe Alaska within the plan, including ADA accessibility improvements.
- Whether there is a percentage of sales charged to lessees of the cabins.
- Cabin lease scenarios.
- Charging for parking, create limits on some to access the park.
- On page 24 of the presentation, what does it mean when it says owned by Salmon Bake, owned by Carousel, etc.

ROTH,
Seconded by WITT

move to provide a letter of support on the Pioneer Park Draft Master Plan to the Parks and Recreation Department and Mayor Ward.

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROVIDE A LETTER OF SUPPORT ON THE PIONEER PARK DRAFT MASTER PLAN TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND MAYOR WARD.

Yeses: Witt, Shiffler, Unsicker, Culley, Mongold, Roth, Oldmixon

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 7 Yeses, 0 Noes

EXCUSE FUTURE ABSENCES

Commissioner Lounsbury and Commissioner Culley are excused from the October 19, 2021 meeting.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Roth inquired about the status of the Carlson Center Advisory Commission.

Commissioner Mongold noted the Pioneer Park Draft Master Plan is great plan.

Commissioner Unsicker congratulated Mr. Hayes on his new position and noted her excitement for the plan.

Commissioner Culley commented the Pioneer Park Draft Master Plan looked good.

Commissioner Shiffler stated based on the accomplishments of Mr. Hayes with regard to Pioneer Park, it will be wonderful to have him as the Director of Parks and Recreation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Parks and Recreation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.