



Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes

Tuesday, December 8, 2020 12:00 p.m.
Harrigan Centennial Hall / Teleconference

Members: Chair – James Poulson, Sarah Lawrie, Barbara Morse,
Brandon Marx, Rich Krupa, Susan Compagno, Ben Hughey
Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Poulson called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: James Poulson, Sarah Lawrie (teleconference), Brandon Marx (teleconference),
Rich Krupa, Ben Hughey (teleconference)

Absent: Barbara Morse (excused), Susan Compagno (excused)

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

Staff Present: Building, Grounds, and Parks Supervisor Michael Colliver (teleconference)
and Deputy Clerk Melissa Henshaw

Others: Sitka Trail Works Executive Director Lynne Brandon (teleconference) and Don
Winchester (teleconference)

III. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 10, 2020

**M – Hughey / S - Krupa – moved to approve the November 10, 2020 minutes as
written. Motion passed unanimously.**

V. REPORTS

Chair: Poulson reported the high winds had many trees down at the Mosquito Cove area.

Members: None.

City Staff: Colliver reported 5 down trees on the Cross Trail and washouts along the trail
system; the CARES crew installed a new culvert; Lower Moller had playground work done;
railing was installed at Whale Park; and next would be Moller shed roof replacement. He
stated the team (16 temporary employees now) had been doing work around the Baranof

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Street cemetery and helping with grading/maintenance issues. He noted he was working on the FY2022 budget.

Assembly Liaison: None.

Other(s): Lynne Brandon with Sitka Trail Works stated that 8,458 feet was complete on the Cross Trail but work had slowed recently due to weather. She noted a couple of big trees came down near Granite Creek and Trail Works was trying to figure out how to help Sitka Conservation Society with the Mosquito Cove downed trees.

VI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (For items OFF the agenda - Not to Exceed 3 Minutes)

Don Winchester from Anchorage stated he had been involved with putting in the Sitka Baseball field (Upper Moller Field) in 2012 and was excited and working with Brandon Marx to get Sitka playing American Legion. He spoke to maintenance especially with regards to the need of maintenance on the high use areas. He said there should be extra rubber pellets (not sand) to be spread out and raked on the field to extend the life of the field. He estimated replacement of the field at \$1 million. Discussion continues in item B. Upper Moller Field Use.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Upper Moller Field Use

Marx stated as a user, he would volunteer to assist in the maintenance and noticed that Anchorage fields were softer.

Winchester went over concussion protocol and the parameters that the field needed noting it could be as simple as bringing in rubber pellets and raking it in. He told of what worked for him personally with regards to maintenance as one user group that received a break to maintain the field. He would sit with the subcommittee to work on a MOU. He told of the destruction that sunflower seeds had on the fields and that he had banned them in Anchorage.

Colliver relayed the lack of agreements with fields and stated the subcommittee could be a good place for a program to be developed. He said that Public Works does have pellets. He thought to have a MOU with user groups for maintenance. He said that staff does work on the field three or four times a year which wasn't enough.

M - Marx / S - Lawrie moved for the subcommittee to work on all different aspects (i.e., MOU, proposal, budget) of the Upper Moller field maintenance with pellets and regular testing. Motion passed unanimously.

Lawrie wondered if the field use policy needed to be changed. Marx thought it may be something to add to the policy, but he would look at it. He thought rules could to be set

out in policy. He suggested to brainstorm different ideas and noted the importance of testing.

C. Funding

Henshaw clarified that there was a subcommittee set up for Lower Moller field at the August 11, 2020 meeting with the suggestion of community members and two members of the Parks and Recreation Committee. The minutes stated Morse had expressed interest and Marx stated he would be a member if no one else was interested with Poulson as an alternate. Marx said he would reach out to get the subcommittee started.

Richie Richardson stated his interest in working on the subcommittee and thought that Randy Hitchcock maybe interested as well.

Chair Poulson told of the 2011 turf study done on Lower Moller field and in order to get it updated it would cost around \$7,000 which wasn't slated in the budget.

Marx would like to have Lower Moller Field and the renewal of the study as a priority and to be funded. Hughey was in support. To be revisited at item F.

D. Lower Moller Field

See above.

E. CARES Act Funding as it relates to Parks and Recreation

Not discussed – Colliver reported under reports.

F. Goals Matrix

Lawrie rated her top priorities and mentioned that some seemed more like goals. Henshaw relayed for Morse since she was unable to attend the meeting: to keep requesting that projects are included in the Legislative Priorities, that the Moller Complex should rank among the highest priority, and noted the list of accomplishments was impressive and should be updated. Chair Poulson said he went through and marked what was done and things that were in progress. He gave the option of having a separate meeting to rank everything.

Colliver thought that the goals need to have clear guidance rather than looking at big picture i.e., make the community more walkability. He felt that the \$7,000 taken from the operating budget to be used to update Lower Moller field may only provide guidance and may not be what the Committee would want. He wondered how to focus energy and funds to better utilize existing infrastructure and spoke of looking at and focusing on for example, maintenance for closed playgrounds.

Hughey agreed and felt that with the influx of federal funding, the need to be ready with a list of projects to tackle as a short-term needs assessment but to also have a long-term strategy of shovel ready projects.

Brandon told historically the Parks and Recreation Committee *supported plans* for the larger, broad project list. She thought to have outreach to assist in prioritizing and noted the need to think about the future of the community. She would like to have outdoor recreation seen as significant by the community. She told that in the past, the Parks and Recreation Committee helped sponsor a tax increase.

Chair Poulson noted the need of big picture ideas and small projects. He felt it was safe to say Lower Moller had always been on the radar as a priority and most of the Committee recognized that it should be a priority.

M - Marx / S - Hughey moved to make Lower Moller a priority on the matrix and to make it a shovel ready project as soon as possible. Motion passed unanimously.

Marx thought outdoor recreation and sports provided a tangible benefit and specifically the turf fields for kids of all ages and families.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

G. Update of the Sitka Conservation Society Transitional Employment Program

Hughey provided a report and photos for an update of the Sitka Conservation Society's Transitional Employment program. He stated that projects were being wrapped up as the 18th would be the last day for workers.

IX. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (For items on or off the agenda - Not to Exceed 3 Minutes)

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Add Dog Park misuse to the next agenda. The next meeting would be January 12.

Hearing no objection, the Chair Poulson called the meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

Attest:
Melissa Henshaw, Deputy Clerk