



Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 12:00 p.m.
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Members: Chair –Ben Hughey, Candace Rutledge
James Poulson, Brandon Marx, Rich Krupa,
Steve Black, Katherine Prussian
Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Ben Hughey, James Poulson, Candace Rutledge, Katherine Prussian, Brandon Marx, Rich Krupa, Steve Black

Absent: None.

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher (Absent)

Staff Present: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Municipal Clerk, Kevin Knox, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, and Connor Dunlap, Facilities Division Supervisor

Others: None.

III. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 11, 2025

Marx moved to approve the February 11, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

V. REPORTS

Chair: None.

Members: Poulson and Hughey commented on the progress on the Sawmill Creek project.

City Staff: Kevin Knox, Parks, and Recreation Coordinator reported on after-school programs and spoke about the new membership cards that had been introduced for punch passes and monthly memberships. Connor Dunlap, Facilities Division Supervisor, reported that the renovations of the planting beds at Harrigan Centennial were underway, with plant stock expected to arrive soon. He mentioned that a full-time position had been posted in the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Division, and a summer seasonal temporary position would be posted soon.

Assembly Liaison: None.

Other(s): Ben Hughey, Sitka Trail Works reported that over \$40,000 was raised for a trail crew in town to make up for terminated service.

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

None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Presentation by Lisa Busch on increasing art in City Parks

Lisa Bush from the Fari Weather Cove emphasized its ability to inspire, foster engagement, and positively impact the quality of life for both residents and visitors. She noted the community's existing art outlets and public art installations but expressed a desire to do more. And suggested that public art could beautify unsightly spaces and reflect the community's values, using examples from other communities. She also mentioned the economic benefits of public art, citing a study that showed visitors spent 20% more when public art was present.

The committee discussed forming a subcommittee to evaluate public art installations, focusing on location selection, approval, and funding through grants or visitor tax money. They agreed to create a list of potential sites for public comment and considered involving the city. They also acknowledged the need for maintenance and the temporary nature of the installations.

C. Commercial Land Use Permits

1. UnCruise Adventures

Marie Schelton, the owner, gave a briefing on her business activities.

Poulson moved to recommend approval of the commercial recreational land use permit as requested by UnCruise Adventures (subject to the proposed conditions of approval) and hereby make the required determinations regarding this use as listed in SGC 14.10.030(B)(1-3). Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. Beyond the Dock Tours

Kealoha Harmon, the owner, gave a briefing on her business activities. She mentioned her tours were small private groups, with a maximum of six guests.

Black moved to recommend approval of the commercial recreational land use permit as requested by Beyond the Dock Tours (subject to the proposed conditions of approval) and hereby make the required determinations regarding this use as listed in SGC 14.10.030(B)(1-3). Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

3. Lone Eagle Resorts

Darryl Bouchard from Lone Eagle Resorts presented their plans for a 4-day, 4-night experience, with a maximum of 6 guests per boat. The committee expressed satisfaction with the enforcement of permits the previous year, which had led to a better experience for all parties involved.

The Committee discussed the feasibility of this limit, considering the size of family groups and the need to stagger boat arrivals. And agreed to implement the condition to prevent overcrowding and manage the number of people in the small area.

Marx moved to propose the following conditions of approval: to limit the maximum group to 6 for Baranof Warm Springs Dock. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Prussian moved to recommend approval of the commercial recreational land use permit as requested by Sound Sailing (subject to the proposed conditions of approval) and hereby make the required determinations regarding this use as listed in SGC 14.10.030(B)(1-3). Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Sitka Sunshine Kayaks

Black moved to recommend approval of the commercial recreational land use permit as requested by Sitka Sunshine Kayaks (subject to the proposed conditions of approval) and hereby make the required determinations regarding this use as listed in SGC 14.10.030(B)(1-3). Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. SEAK Adventures, LLC

Charlie Jordan provided a brief overview of his business activities.

Marx moved to recommend approval of the commercial recreational land use permit as requested by Alaska Luxury Tours (subject to the proposed conditions of approval) and hereby make the required determinations regarding this use as listed in SGC 14.10.030(B)(1-3). Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

D. Amending Title 14 "Streets, Sidewalks, and Public Places" of the Sitka General Code by amending Chapter 14.05 "Public Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities, Land , and Trails

Knox provided an overview of the outdated code governing public use of parks and Recreation facilities. Several factors prompted the update, included: Outdated regulations, expanded responsibilities, need for modern administration, increased usage, and administrative clarifications. The Parks and Recreation Committee recommended adopting the changes to the code, including moving Tom Young Cabin reservations online and transferring responsibility from Public Works to Parks and Recreation. Prussian thanked staff their hard work on this item.

Prussian moved to recommend the revised ordinance to the Assembly for adoption. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

E. Parks and Recreation Facilities Fee Schedule

Knox provided a background on the most current fees. Hughey question how do the fees compared to the Hames Center. Prussian wondered about the potential gift options for passes.

Prussian moved to recommend to the Assembly to proceed with the adoption and Implementation of this fee schedule. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting would be on April , 2025, at noon in Harrigan Centennial Hall. Hearing no objection, Chair Hughey called the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Attest:
Jess Earnshaw,
Deputy Municipal Clerk