

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD**  
**CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2015**  
**7:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

The regular meeting of the City of Palmer Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board was called to order by Acting Chair Jan Newman at 7:00 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

Present and constituting a quorum were Board Members:

Dot Helm  
Jan Newman  
Jo Ehmann  
Meggie Aube-Trammell

Excused absence(s):

Helene Antel, Chair  
Stephanie Allen, Vice Chair

Unexcused absence:

Ed Kessler

Also present were:

Sandra Garley, Community Development Director  
Pam Whitehead, Recording Secretary

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** led by Ms. Garley.

**D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved as presented.

**E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The minutes of the Special Meeting of July 9, 2015 were approved as presented.

**F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

**LaMarr Anderson**, Chairman, Palmer Board of Economic Development, welcomed the new board as another advisory body to the Mayor and City Council, and spoke to the intertwined focuses of both boards in joint desires to identify and work together for the betterment of Palmer. On behalf of the BED, he looks forward to a collaborative process building a stronger voice to the Council supporting each other in our recommendations.

**Verda Lewis**, a Palmer resident of many years at 1438 S. Denali Street, addressed the Board discussing vacant parcels of land along the undeveloped road section of S. Denali St. owned by the City that they would like to see turned into an active playground park for children across from the soccer fields. She also talked about an area for parking and bring in a bike path on E. Commercial down the undeveloped S. Denali and along the ice rink (MTA Events Center) connecting with the current bike path on E. Cope Industrial Way. She

has discussed these ideas with some of her neighbors and they are rallying to get it done.

**Don Lambert**, a neighbor to Ms. Lewis, spoke in support of the proposed park project, talking about connecting the trails and paths between the ice rink, soccer fields, with a playground. There are a number of multifamily rental developments in the area with a lot of young kids in their neighborhood that live in the apartment complexes with no place to go but play in the street. The potential is tremendous for the development of a small little playground and there are safeguards that could be put in place, but it would be a welcome attribute to the neighborhood.

**John Berberich**, spoke to the board, encouraging the dedication of the Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields to finally take place, explaining that Kurtis died in Iraq in 2005. He stated that his family has been waiting for 10 years.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Presentation by State Parks Department – rescheduled to a future meeting.
2. Presentation of new park concepts: (Committee of the Whole)

**Board Member Newman** moved, seconded by **Board Member Ehmann**, to enter Committee of the Whole for informal discussion of the following agenda items and to invite any members of the audience to participate if they so wished.

**VOTE ON MOTION: Carried Unanimously.**

[The Board entered Committee of the Whole at 7:18 p.m.; exited at 8:06 p.m.]

Ms. Garley directed attention to Information Memorandum 15-001 in the packet (p. 13) containing information and maps of potential park improvements for the City and further explained background information. Questions of staff and informal discussion ensued concerning the following and other parks in the city.

- a) S. Denali Street by Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Soccer Fields.

The concept is to use this small area for a playground park that would not only give neighborhood children a place to play but could also provide a play area for families of children on one of the adjacent soccer fields.

- b) LAWCON application Kopperud property acquisition.

The City has submitted grant applications to acquire this property. The northern two parcels would provide a natural connection between the trails in and around the Mat River Park and the DOT separated paths along the Old Glenn Highway. The southern parcel will be used for less active recreational uses to protect the eagle(s) nesting in the area. It was the consensus of the Board to support acquisition of this property.

- c) Skateboard Park Improvements.

There is renewed interest in upgrading the elements of the City's skateboard park and perhaps adding other features to make this a more engaging recreational area for teens. See p. 25 of the packet for a concept design of skateboard park improvements.

Ms. Garley explained that the City Council would be looking to receive the Board's recommendations on what should be accomplished concerning these park properties, keeping in mind the cost of maintenance.

Discussion ensued as to priority of the three projects and reaching out for neighborhood involvement.

[The Board exited Committee of the Whole at 8:06 p.m.]

3. **PRCRAB Resolution No. 15-001.** A Resolution of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board in Support of City's Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation Grant Application / MSTPF Letter of Intent.

Ms. Garley directed attention to draft resolution at p. 33 of the packet, explaining the purpose of the proposed resolution and request for a letter of support, noting the timing is short for submission of the grant application.

Board Member Dot Helm recused herself from voting for the reason that she is also a board member of the Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation. As a result, it leaves this board without a quorum vote to pass the resolution at this time. Ms. Garley indicated she would indicate that there is a resolution of support pending and would submit it as supplemental information with the grant application.

**BOARD MEMBER NEWMAN** moved, seconded by **BOARD MEMBER AUBE-TRAMMELL** postpone voting on Resolution 15-001 until the next meeting for lack of a voting quorum.

**VOTE ON MOTION: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Acting Chair Newman, in response to the Mr. Berberich's request for dedication of the Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields, inquired why this dedication has not been done. Ms. Garley explained that this is something that she feels should have been done years ago and that she would like to invite the family, the Mayor, the Board, the Community, and a Military Honor Guard, pick a date, and dedicate this park.

**BOARD MEMBER NEWMAN** moved, seconded by **BOARD MEMBER AUBE-TRAMMELL** to direct staff to work with the family to select a date for the dedication of subject Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields.

**VOTE ON MOTION: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Review of Urban Revitalization Plan.

Mr. Garley reported that Board Members have received a copy of the Urban Revitalization Plan; it is also online on the City's website. This is information for the Board's reference and use. She noted that she felt the community, back in 2002 at the time the plan was developed, did a remarkable job of public input and that this document reflects what the

community wanted to see along the railroad right-of-way.

**H. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

**Board Member Newman** spoke to the email that board members received from Board Member Ed Kessler about his extended absence from Palmer and raised concerns about him not being able to fully participate in board activities for several months; that perhaps he should step down until he returns. Further discussion ensued.

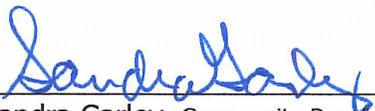
It was the consensus of the Board that Ms. Garley contact Mr. Kessler indicating the concerns raised, and ask if he has a recommendation of someone in his stead that would similarly represent his ideals and values.

**Board Member Aube-Trammell** introduced herself as she was not present at the first meeting and explained why she was interested in serving on this board. She grew up in Palmer and Wasilla and graduated from Palmer High School in 2002, went to UAA, and graduate school at the University of Iowa. Her parents, William and Carol Aube have been very active members of the community for years. She is a musician and has a music studio in Downtown Palmer. She teaches all ages from little kids to the elderly. She participates at the Senior Center, Job Corps, and area schools. She was first attracted to this board because of the cultural aspect, but was also drawn to parks and recreation as she uses the parks and the trail systems. She believes she has a lot of good ideas to share and looks forward to working with everyone. One idea she'd like to put forward perhaps for the next meeting is address the lack of bike racks around Palmer. Brief discussion followed. Ms. Garley will put it on the agenda for next meeting.

**Board Member Ehmman** spoke to the importance of letting the community know about the purpose of this Board and its activities. The more people who know, the better it will be for the community; suggested a regular column or something in the Frontiersman.

**I. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

  
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Sandra Garley, Community Development Director

  
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Jan Newman, Acting Chairman