

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA**

**SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
7:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The special meeting of the City of Palmer Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Helene Antel at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present and constituting a quorum were Board Members:

Helene Antel, Chair
Stephanie Allen, Vice Chair
Jo Ehmann
Dot Helm
Jan Newman
Meggie Aube-Trammell

Unexcused absence(s):

Edward Kessler

Also present were:

Sandra Garley, Community Development Director
Pam Whitehead, Recording Secretary

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: led by Director Garley.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved as presented.
It was noted that the topic of bike racks was inadvertently left off this agenda and will be added to the October agenda.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:
The minutes of the August 6, 2015 Regular Meeting were approved as presented.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:
There were no audience members wishing to speak on a topic not on the agenda.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Presentation on local parks by Damon Hampel, Park Ranger, State Parks Division of Department of Natural Resources.

Damon Hampel, Park Ranger stationed in the Mat-Su Valley, demonstrating from a parks map of the area, gave a presentation focusing primarily on those parks located in and around Palmer. The State owns and controls the parks but partners with contract vendors for daily operations and general light maintenance. The contractor retains a percentage of the camping fees. Examples of contractor-maintained parks are Finger

Lake, Matanuska Glacier, Kings River. Mr. Hampel discussed Hatcher Pass, Independence Mine State Historic Park, and Summit Lake. The management plan consists of a mixture of park units, historic units, borough land, state land, all operated as a state park. The Hatcher Pass area is one of the most widely visited parks in the state. Park Rangers are contracted through Fish & Game to manage the Little Susitna and Big Susitna Public Use Facilities.

Mr. Hampel responded to board member questions and brief further discussion ensued. Public information can be found on the DNR website regarding all the state parks including management areas such as Hatcher Pass; trifold flyers can be obtained at park offices and visitors centers; also the Public Information Center staff can answer any questions. In response to board member question, Mr. Hampel offered the following recommendations for the Board's consideration: 1) Regardless of any decisions made for parks, always project out the cost of maintenance and upkeep; 2) specifically assign enforcement of park rules/regulations and recommend writing it into code; 3) consider partnership assistance for maintenance/management, especially groups or agencies where there would be mutual benefit and reinvestment back into the park. Further questions concerned park signage. The Board thanked Ranger Hampel for his time and presentation.

2. Plans for Dedication of Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields.

Ms. Garley updated the Board on plans for the memorial of the soccer fields located behind the MTA Events Center. Berberich family members are currently considering what they would like said on the memorial plaque. When the wording is finalized, the City will purchase same. The family has requested that the formal dedication be on a Saturday in the spring at a time when there are kids on the fields playing soccer. Target dates are May 7 or 14, 2016. She emphasized the importance this matter not getting dropped, noting that this family has been waiting for 10 years.

Board member Aube-Trammell moved, seconded by **Board member Allen**, to table consideration of this Dedication of Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields until and be added as an agenda item on the Board's February, 2016 meeting.

Vote on Motion: Carried Unanimously.

3. Request to place Memorial Bench honoring Margie L. Gabrielle along Shane Woods Trail presented by Staci Manier.

Staci Manier and **McKenna Wyatt**, United Way of Mat-Su, spoke to the Board requesting permission to place a memorial bench and picnic table along the Shane Woods Memorial Trial in honor of Margie L. Gabrielle, a woman who deeply loved her family and community and was very active in the community. As there are benches already along the Shane Woods Trail, they are open to another park for placement, but would request it be where families frequent. The plaques will read: "In Memory of Margie L. Gabrielle, March 5, 1960 to June 22, 2014, Your life was a blessing, Your memory a treasure." Margie made everybody feel good, made everybody feel happy. The table and bench would be kept simple, but they would like to add an accent color of

hot pink in some manner. United Way staff will be committed to upkeep of both items which will support continuing use of the park.

Ms. Garley informed that that the City currently does not have a set policy or protocol for placement of memorial items and that development of such policy is one of the missions the City Council has assigned to this Board, which will be a topic discussed next and developed over near future agendas.

Questions and further discussion ensued with regard to timing and development of policy and procedure. United Way was hoping to get it accomplished this Fall, but would be amenable to waiting until Spring if it meant doing it right. The Board would like to first establish a standard policy and create consistency so that when people come with these generous proposals, they can be more easily and timely considered.

Ms. Garley directed attention to five examples of municipal policies in the packet to guide discussion of potential policy; suggested the board enter committee of the whole for an informal discussion to give her guidance as to board recommendations.

Board member Newman, seconded by **Board member Aube-Trammell**, to enter Committee of the Whole for open discussion of potential policy for donated park improvements serving as memorials in the City of Palmer. There were no objections.

[The Board entered Committee of the Whole at 7:45 p.m.]

The Board discussed various policy elements of the examples provided, asked questions of staff, noted what they liked and disliked of the elements as far as being right for Palmer, whether the policy should be developed in phases or should it be comprehensive at the start. Consideration mentioned for inclusion: adoptions of roads, parks, commemorative plaques, picnic tables, park benches, donations of art, signage for trail markings or park signs, donations of playground equipment, contractors who donate use of time and equipment to create or maintain a park, other donations subject to review by the Board.

Mr. Garley will create a draft master policy with priorities identified (benches, picnic tables, plaques) for the next meeting. Board members Antel and Aube-Trammell offered to assist.

[The Board exited Committee of the Whole at 8:11 p.m.]

4. Request for Letter of Support for the nomination designating the Matanuska Colony Community Center Historic District a National Historic Landmark.

Ms. Garley reported that this a request from Darrell Lewis of the National Park Service for a Letter of Support to move a nomination forward that would add a designation of National Historic Landmark to the Palmer Historic District. She further explained background information and the national historic significance, directing attention to copy of the proposed letter in the packet for the Board's consideration and approval.

Questions of staff and discussion followed.

Board member Allen moved, seconded by **Board member Aube-Trammell**, for approval of the letter of support for the nomination and authorize the Chair of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board to sign it.

Following brief further discussion recommending minor grammatical changes in the second paragraph: insert City of Palmer, delete "we believe" and add to the end of the last sentence: "in the nation."

Amendment:

Board member Ehmman moved, seconded by **Board member Allen**, to include the amended language as stated.

Vote on Amendment: Carried Unanimously.

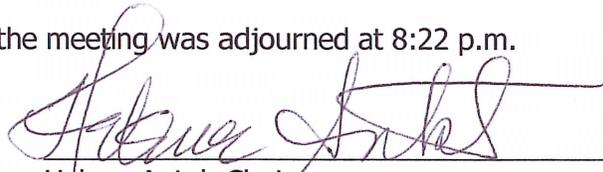
VOTE ON MOTION AS AMENDED: Carried Unanimously.

H. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

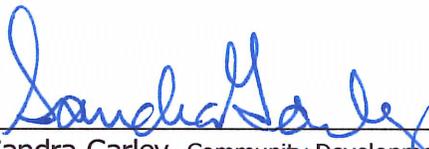
There were no additional comments by Board members.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.



Helene Antel, Chair



Sandra Garley, Community Development Director