

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH  
Trails Advisory Commission  
September 27, 2021  
6:04 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Trails Advisory Commission was held Monday, September 27, 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:

John Morack	Brian Accola
Richard Shideler (arrived at 6:08 p.m.)	Seth Adams
Geoffrey Orth	Maxwell Plichta
Gail Davidson	David Dean
Leslie Kitchin, Vice-Chairperson	

Comprising a quorum of the Commission, and  
Alexis Fackeldey, Administrative Assistant III, Clerk  
Bryant Wright, Parks and Recreation Trails Coordinator

Excused

Helyn Lefgren	Carol Kaynor, Chairperson
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**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.

Huhkie Lee, of Wasilla, spoke on his political platform for his upcoming Senate run and his ideas for conservation.

James Sweeney, of Chena Hot Springs Road, spoke on the Chena Hot Springs Multi-use trail.

**MESSAGES - continued**

2. Disclosure & Statement of Conflict of Interest

Commissioner Adams stated that he would be putting in the application for the Interior Alaska Land Trust and therefore might have a conflict. Commissioner Adams stated he does not receive a benefit, nor does he have a financial interest in this. Vice Chair Kitchin ruled he did not have a conflict on the Chinook Park letter of support item.

Geoffrey Orth is a board member of the Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation and if the grant is awarded then he would likely be employed by the Foundations as a manager of the project. Vice Chair Kitchin ruled he did have a conflict on the Bonanza Creek letter of support item.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

MORACK, moved to approve the agenda and consent  
Seconded by ORTH agenda as read.

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

Yeses: Accola, Orth, Shideler, Morack, Dean,  
Adams, Plichta, Davidson, Kitchin

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 9 Yeses, 0 Noes

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. \*Trails Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021.

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

**REPORTS**

1. Staff Report by Bryant Wright, Trails Coordinator

Bryant Wright, Parks and Recreation Trails Coordinator, provided an update on the trail plan including a quick overview of the process and schedule. Mr. Wright also provided an update on the Trails Challenge. Mr. Wright added that the new trailhead kiosks will be installed in the next few weeks.

## **REPORTS - continued**

2. Overview of FNSB park facility naming procedure for future consideration of proposing a Charlotte Davis memorial trail by Bryant Wright, Trails Coordinator, and Helyn Lefgren

Mr. Wright provided a report on the code and processes involved in naming a park facility, including a trail, after someone.

Commissioner Morack asked that the presentation be sent to them via e-mail and Mr. Wright stated he would send the code to them.

Commissioner Morack asked if more than one of the name preference type could be included in the title. Mr. Wright said that it seemed like a likely compromise.

Commissioner Morack spoke on some of Charlotte Davis's accomplishments.

Mr. Wright said the trails colloquially called the Little Chena and Potlach Creek trail systems were potential candidates for a renaming.

Commissioner Shideler confirmed that this process does not have to go through the assembly. Mr. Wright confirmed it was only the Parks and Recreation Commission which would have to approve any name changes.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Approval of a letter of support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to develop a trailhead and parking at Skyline Ridge Park.

Commissioner Morack questioned which end of the trail system would be improved. Mr. Wright clarified it would be the Noel Road and MIA street side.

Commissioner Accola inquired where these materials were located, and Commissioner Morack and the clerk helped Commissioner Accola to find it.

Mr. Wright said there were issues with parking and access at Skyline Ridge Park and this would be a big step forward in the effort of resolving these problems. Mr. Wright emphasized safety, legal access, and the least impact on the neighborhood.

**NEW BUSINESS - continued**

Commissioner Morack asked where the Secret Trail was in relation to the proposed parking lot. Mr. Wright pointed it out on the map and explained how it would work in the future.

Mr. Wright also discussed the development of a standard design for a gate that can be locked and will allow for maintenance vehicles if necessary.

Commissioner Davidson asked about the After-Hours Trail and if it was accounted for in the plan. Mr. Wright said it would be have to be done thoughtfully, but the first year or two would be a test of what worked best, including the potential to re-vegetate parts of the trail.

MORACK,  
Seconded by SHIDELER

moved to approve a letter of support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to develop a trailhead and parking at Skyline Ridge Park.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE TO APPROVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT'S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM, ADMINISTERED BY ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION, FOR FUNDS TO DEVELOP A TRAILHEAD AND PARKING AT SKYLINE RIDGE PARK.

Yeses: Davidson, Shideler, Accola, Orth, Adams, Plichta, Morack, Dean, Kitchin

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 9 Yeses, 0 Noes

- 2. Approval of a letter of support for the Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to construct trail connections in the Bonanza Creek area of the Tanana Valley State Forest.

**NEW BUSINESS - continued**

*Clerk's Note: Due to his conflict-of-interest Mr. Orth left the dais.*

Commissioner Plichta asked if this letter of support was pertaining to a different area than one was previously approved. Mr. Wright stated it was for the same project as that letter was approved during the last round of the Recreational Trails Program.

Commissioner Adams asked for a summary of this project. Mr. Wright presented a map and provided a summary of the project including that the trails would be solely for recreational use and would support the Alaska Long Trail concept.

Commissioner Dean asked if, by motorized use, Mr. Wright was discussing ATV's and snow machines or something else. Mr. Wright clarified that he was discussing ATV's and snow machines and it would not be open to public access for Jeeps or similar vehicles. Mr. Wright also mentioned that Forestry had opened some Forestry roads for full-sized vehicles.

DEAN,  
Seconded by MORACK

moved to approve a letter of support for the Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to construct trail connections in the Bonanza Creek area of the Tanana Valley State Forest.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE INTERIOR ALASKA TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION'S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM, ADMINISTERED BY ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION, FOR FUNDS TO CONSTRUCT TRAIL CONNECTIONS IN THE BONANZA CREEK AREA OF THE TANANA VALLEY STATE FOREST.

Yeses: Shideler, Morack, Adams, Dean, Accola, Plichta, Davidson, Kitchin

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 8 Yeses, 0 Noes

**NEW BUSINESS - continued**

*Clerk's note: Mr. Orth was invited back to the dais.*

3. Approval of a letter of support for the Interior Alaska Land Trust's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to restore trails in the Chinook Park.

Mr. Wright provided an overview of the project and presented a landscape architects depiction.

Commissioner Morack asked if the trail was on private land. Mr. Wright said it was on Interior Alaska Land Trust property. Commissioner Morack asked for clarification on what the letter would be supporting. Mr. Wright stated that the land has a legally established public purpose, and the letter would be supporting efforts to develop trails in the area.

Commissioner Adams, having been given permission to answer questions by the chair, stated it was a private parcel held by the Interior Alaska Land Trust and was situated between Justice Door and the transfer station along Chena Pump Road. Commissioner Adams also stated the ATV trail in question is located on the western boundary and Mr. Wright traced it on the map. Commissioner Adams said that the reconditioning of the trail was integral to make the park usable, and it was a very nice parcel best visited in winter.

Commissioner Davidson encouraged everyone to visit the trail as it is very nice.

Vice Chair Kitchin stated that it would be nice for the students at Woodriver Elementary to be able to use this trail.

PLICHTA,  
Seconded by SHIDELER

moved to approve a letter of support for the Interior Alaska Land Trust's grant application to the Recreational Trails Program, administered by Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, for funds to restore trails in the Chinook Park.

**NEW BUSINESS - continued**

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE INTERIOR ALASKA LAND TRUST'S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM, ADMINISTERED BY ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION, FOR FUNDS TO RESTORE TRAILS IN THE CHINOOK PARK.

Yeses: Adams, Davidson, Plichta, Orth, Morack, Accola, Shideler, Dean, Kitchin

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 9 Yeses, 0 Noes

4. Approval of a memorandum of support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department's trail project nominations for the Fairbanks North Star Borough's FY 2021-30 Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Wright provided an overview of the program's nominations and the reframing some of the projects that were included on the list. Mr. Wright stated it was being pitched as a Trail of the Year Program. Mr. Wright further clarified that adoption will not mean a project will be entirely funded by the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Mr. Wright provided a brief explanation of each item on the nominations list.

Commissioner Morack asked for clarification on whether the proposed Peede Road subdivision was still happening. Mr. Wright stated it was not and the trail system was proposed to be developed on that land instead. Mr. Wright also said the parcel had been previously nominated by the Land Management Department for sale, but plans have been changed. Mr. Wright also said that this list of projects has been submitted and he was looking for renewed support for the projects from the Trails Advisory Commission.

Mr. Wright emphasized the importance of surveying trails so that their legal bounds are known and laid out in the Trail Plan. Mr. Wright also enumerated the benefits of the surveys for future development and subdivision.

Mr. Wright roughly figured the amount of access in miles that was missing from the Trails System. Mr. Wright laid out the costs associated with the trails.

Commissioner Morack asked if the list was organized in order of priority and Mr. Wright stated it was not and that priorities would be determined by the Trail Classification Matrix.

**NEW BUSINESS - continued**

MORACK,  
Seconded by ORTH

moved to approve a memorandum of support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department's trail project nominations for the Fairbanks North Star Borough's FY 2021-30 Capital Improvement Program.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE A MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT FOR THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT'S TRAIL PROJECT NOMINATIONS FOR THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH'S FY 2021-30 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

Yeses: Orth, Plichta, Morack, Accola, Shideler, Adams, Dean, Davidson, Kitchin

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 9 Yeses, 0 Noes

**EXCUSE FUTURE ABSENCES**

NONE

**COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Morack welcomed the new commissioners.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Trails Advisory Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

APPROVED: November 22, 2021