

CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

(Microsoft Teams Electronic Meeting)

DRAFT--Minutes of the March 8, 2021 Meeting

REGULAR MEETING # 3

1. Call to Order: Ryan Yelle called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. **Roll Call & Introductions:**

Present: Jeff Bidinger, Lauren Boldrick, Rob Clark, Fallon Connolly, Tyndall Ellis, Trond Jensen, Haley Johnston, Charlotte Levy, Dave Hart, Nicole Schmitt, Irene Turletes, Matthew Worden, Ryan Yelle.

Excused: Claire LeClair, Dorn Van Dommelen

Absent:

Staff: Mario Pagni and Dan Beutel. Additional Division staff present: Judy Bittner and Cory Glover with the Office of History and Archaeology

Public: Rich Todd (Anchorage Ski Club), Ann Herman, Ann Riordan and Kyle Shed.

3. Changes to Agenda & Approval: The agenda for the March 8 meeting was approved.

4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the February 8, 2021 meeting were approved.

5. **Public Comments:**

- Ann Herman asked about the status of the Middle Fork Trail-has there been further work done on the trail since last summer? Mario Pagni responded: Alaska Trails did some work last season continuing a planned re-route and he will follow up with more information for the April meeting.
- Ann Riordan-encouraged the CAB to utilize hard copy notices at trail heads in addition to the digital methods of public outreach discussed at last meeting.
- Kyle Shed-appreciate that at the February meeting the Access Committee chair expressed interest in access to the park in the Brewster Drive area; supports improving access in this area of the park.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Anchorage Ski Club Strategic Plan**-Dan Beutel reported that Division staff have reviewed the ASC's strategic plan and that it generally looks good. The park superintendent, Ben Corwin, is the one who will provide a final determination on the plan. Rich Todd (President of the ASC)-the plan was developed with input from park staff and his board. As the first plan submitted under ASC's new concession contract with the state, Rich notes that the ASC was particularly focused on defining the group's vision, mission and purpose for managing the area into the future. One of the action items in the strategic plan is to develop a master plan to guide development over the next ten years. ASC plans to hire a consulting firm to develop this plan and there will be opportunity for public input as that plan is developed. He asked the CAB to recommend that the park superintendent approve the strategic plan submitted by the ASC for Arctic Valley. Jeff Bidinger, Chair of the Planning Committee reported on the committee's work. They determined that the strategic plan submitted by ASC was consistent with the Chugach State Park Management Plan and that it met requirements of the concession contract. The committee drafted a

letter of support for the CAB to consider; the letter was distributed to the CAB. A motion was made to approve the letter of support for the ASC Strategic Plan. The motion was approved.

7. New Business:

- a. **Chugach State Park Anniversary Update** Wendy Sailors reported that the 50th anniversary celebration scheduled for June, 2020 in Arctic Valley has been re-scheduled to July 31, 2021. It is likely that some of the event will be virtual and some in person; it will depend on what the current requirements are for public gatherings. Components will include: fun, food, music, kid's events and a mountain run.
- b. **Renaming Proposal for North and South Suicide Peaks** Judy Bittner (Office of History and Archaeology) explained that the Alaska Historical Commission considers all requests for geographic place name changes within Alaska. The Commission conducts public outreach when a request is received and because the place name changes for North and South Suicide Peaks are located within Chugach State Park Judy and her staff are seeking input from the CAB sometime before the Commission meets in May or June. Cory Glover noted that the Dena'ina names proposed as new names for the two peaks translate to Heaven's Breath/Big Sky/Breezy Area. An ad hoc committee was formed to develop a recommendation for the board's consideration at the April meeting. Dave Hart volunteered to chair the committee and the following members volunteered to serve: Lauren Boldrick, Irene Turletes, Jeff Bidingier, Nicole Schmitt and Rob Clark.

8. Staff Report:

Mario Pagni (Acting Chief Ranger)

- Ben Corwin has been hired as the new Chugach State Park Superintendent;
- Interviews were held last week for the Administrative Assistant job recently vacated by Elise Johnson;
- Recruitment is underway for the vacant Park Ranger II position (Ben Corwin's former job);
- Trail staff is recruiting for two ACC crew positions;
- New front country ACC was recently hired;
- Recruiting for a new Hillside caretaker; this position helps clean latrines on the Hillside and includes lodging at the Glen Alps caretaker facility—Mario requested help in getting the word out about the position;
- Ranger Crockett injured his shoulder at work and is on light duty;
- Numerous reports of vehicle thefts in the park in addition to thefts from fee stations; a suspect in vehicle break-ins in the park as well as in areas in the Valley was recently apprehended;
- Possible bear sighting at McHugh but rangers did not see any evidence of bear activity in the area;
- Rangers investigated potential trapping violation in Bird Creek; no evidence observed;
- Some reports of ATV/Snowmachine operation in closed areas in Meadow Creek and Eagle River;

9. Committee Reports:

- **Access (Trond):** He is looking for ideas and thoughts on the Brewster Drive access; please email or call him;
- **Budget (Claire):** N/A
- **Nomination (Lauren):** N/A
- **Seward Highway Design (Dorn):** N/A
- **Trails (Irene):** Irene is working with Jack Mosby regarding technical adjustments to the CAB's letter of support for the Muktuk Marston Trail. Irene also shared a request from Jack that the CAB post Alaska Trail's public notice about the trail on the CAB's Facebook page.

- **Chugach Park Fund (Haley and Claire):** The committee met with Ben Corwin and Tim Gurnett to discuss the park's priorities for trail work in 2021 and 2022. For 2021 the CPF is focusing on funding and/or fundraising for Little O'Malley, Middle Fork and some brushing on high priority trails as identified by park staff. The Anchorage Women's Petroleum Club partnered with CPF over the past year and has raised around \$4000 for the Fund during that time.
- **Wildlife (Charlotte):** Board of Game will hold a special meeting on March 18; the agenda for that meeting includes consideration of authorization for the antlerless moose hunt in the park.
- **Planning (Jeff):** N/A
- **Outreach (Matt):** The CAB's followers on Facebook grew by about 250 so Matt encouraged anyone who hasn't yet to invite their contacts to check out the CAB's FB page.

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:21PM