



**Kachemak Bay State Parks Citizen Advisory Board
95 Sterling Hwy, Suite 2
Homer, Alaska 99603**

Draft Minutes April 13, 2022
Virtual Meeting on Microsoft Teams at 5:30 pm

Call to Order

Roll Call – Board members present: Nancy Hillstrand, Sue Christiansen, Robert Archibald (Chair), Yarrow Hinnant, Kevin Walker, Louis Dupree, Aron Peterson, Beaver Nelson, Curtis Jackson, Glenn Seaman, Jack Blackwell, Pamela Russell, Monica Alverez.

Board members absent: Kirsten Dixon, Mark Romano, Jeff Lee, and Carol Harding.

Kevin Walker moved to approve the agenda. Nancy Hillstrand seconded.

Minutes of March 9th corrected: Jeff Lee listed twice in roll call. Request to say ‘walk-behind mower’ rather than ‘walking mower.’ Minutes approved as corrected.

Public Comment: None

Committee Reports:

A. State Park Report: Superintendent Jack Blackwell – None

B. Operations Report - Jason Okuly – Report sent via email

C. Friend’s Report – No report.

D. Water Trail Annual Report– No report

E. Eveline State Recreation Site Report- Cameale, The trail counter that was purchased is not functioning in bright lights. Counter has been returned. Hoping for a refund. Counter is being replaced with an infrared counter that will work in bright light. A 30 X 40-inch flower interpretive panel has been completed as well as a Dixon Portlock Glacier panel. Too much snow to plan on an event for Trails Day on June 4th.

G. Cottonwood / Eastland – Aron Peterson – Friends asked for a grant from the Homer Foundation for \$3,699.00 for a walk-behind brush mower. The Friends donated \$500, the Water Trail donated \$200, and two people donated \$50 each for the brusher. It is here. Will be here the last weekend in March or first week of April, Aron invited the board for a vehicle tour to visit Mile 16.8 and to view the area and the sign on Elmers Way first hand.

H. Habitat Committee – No report.

I. Trails Committee – Mark Romano – No report.

J. Wildlife Committee - Sue Christiansen - met and supported a 100-yard setback for the Grewingk and Glacier Trails for trapping be sent to the Board of Game. Sue attended F&G Advisory board meeting and they suggested adding the Diamond Creek Trail to proposal, as well.

4. Presentation on Access to Cottonwood/Eastland Unit - Jack Blackwell

Cottonwood/Eastland Creek is part of KBSP. Alaska State Parks mission is to provide outdoor recreation opportunities and conserve and interpret natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people. Access to resources is part of the mission.

The Trails committee is tasked with providing advisory board recommendations for public access to the Cottonwood Eastland unit. The committee is looking at both short term and long-term solutions. The current management plan is

the 1995 Park management plan. It does call for a trail system and a parking lot trailhead near the Elmer's Way access point. The Department is working on a revision of the plan. The new draft plan does consider additional trails in this unit. There are no designated trailheads at present. The committee was tasked for looking at the entire unit and identified several different sites that could serve as potential trailheads. The focus was on the 17-mile east end area with Elmer's Way, Ratone, and East End Road highlighted as parking lot area potentials. Superintendent Blackwell showed a slide presentation with benefits and disadvantages of the three locations. The Borough does not maintain the roads at present. They are maintained by the residents, who have concerns.

Ultimately, the committee decided to recommend moving the issue forward to the entire advisory board. Next steps are for the Board to recommend an option that will be forwarded to Parks. Parks will review the recommendation and seek funding. Chair Archibald read in comments by the Trails subcommittee.

Option #1 - The Elmer's Way easement (WEST) has direct access to East End Road. No adjacent private property. Cost of access and cost to develop parking relatively high. No one from the public spoke about that location.

Option #2 - North side of East End Road at mile 17.1. No adjacent private property. Public will have to cross East End Road which is a safety hazard.

Meg Ciccarelli - she is not concerned about the distance to the social trail from Option #1 to Option #2 and thinks all options are potentially good ones.

Option 3 - Access is directly from East End Road, one mile from social trails. Must cross DNR land before entering the park. (Initial trail route most exposed to burn areas and ravines).

Jeannie Roach - Asking why progress can't be made now and not wait for HB52. There is a high-speed area on East End Road.

Option #4 - Firebreak parking area of East End Road. Pros are direct access. Cost of developing parking is low. Initial trail route is exposed to burn areas.

Meg - Signs could go up to prevent speeding.

Bill Hague - Snomads board supports the area for multi-use purposes. Recommends this as the best solution.

Option #5 - Ratone/Elmer's Way option.

Jeannie - She expressed concern that there has been a bias to use the Ratone/Elmer's Way option. There is a bus stop at the top of the hill and trash on roads has been a problem.

Meg - Showed a slide show of Elmer's Way, her property, and a blind curve. She is concerned with the density of neighbors, wildlife, and other obstacles that make this a poor choice.

Jeannie - Pointed out that going up a hill, one cannot see traffic coming down so there is an implied safety issue on Ratone.

Board Comments:

Aron - Can't park along Ratone or Elmer's Way. His first choice is to create a parking area on State Park property at the lower part off the road. His first choice is Ratone.

Sue Christiansen - Have Parks encourage the Borough to upgrade / maintain Ratone and Elmer's Way. Option #1 for starters, till neighborhood issues are resolved. Perhaps as park use grows – it can continue developing parking areas, with # 4 as her next choice.

Nancy Hillstrand - Neighbors should be considered. First choice is the ILMA. She rejects Ratone and Elmer's Way.

Curtis Jackson - Public process should be addressed with local buy-in.

Glenn Seaman - Concerned about the use of Ratone and Elmer's Way. He prefers Option #1. Maybe in the short term Option #2 as an interim option.

Beaver Nelson - Agrees with Glenn and Bill Hague. He is in favor of Option #1 (Elmer's Way).

Kevin Walker - Agrees with Option #1. The 400-feet is already cleared.

Louis - Feels Ratone needs to be brought up to Borough standards. Making trails from a parking area that is further away should not be an impediment. Would like to look at the sites without snow.

Yarrow Hinnant - rejects all options of crossing the road. Elmer's Way West option is a great option, but the cost might create a long-distance project.

Robert - Parcel A (ILMA) is his first choice.

Sue Christiansen made a motion to recommend West Elmer's Way to DPOR. Curtis Jackson seconded the motion. Aron mentioned that there is no place to park at that location. Private land on the right, DNR on the left, the road is difficult.

Sue Christiansen withdrew the motion.

Louie recommended postponing action until next meeting. Glenn agreed.

5. Bylaws:

Aron made a motion to approve our bylaws. Nancy seconded. Unanimous approval.

6. Board of Game:

The Board approved unanimously a proposal to be submitted to the Board of Game regarding limiting trapping 100 yards from Glacier Spit Lake Trail, Saddle Trail and Diamond Creek Trail.

7. Ground Truth Alaska:

A meeting was facilitated to continue forward with the Tutka Backdoor Trails. It was agreed to hire a professional trail consultant. A letter of support was requested going to American Trails to support a grant to hire Trail Specialists as consultants. Jack Blackwell mentioned that State parks supports the grant application. Sue recommends a line to emphasize that this is a wilderness park, not a state park with the trail to minimize impacts to the Wilderness Park as much as possible.

Kevin Walker mentioned that planned trails are good for everyone.

Aron made a motion to pass the letter in support of the grant funding the consultants to work with Ground Truth Alaska. Kevin seconded.

Public Comments

Meg - Reiterating concerns of parking at the end of Elmer's Way. She expressed that a parking lot will bring a nefarious element and visual pollution to her neighborhood. She offered to help the Board with visits to her neighborhood.

Jeannie - Reiterated what Meg said. Coming into her neighborhood would alienate the residents there.

Board Comments:

Sue Christiansen - Nothing to add

Nancy Hillstrand - Thanked the public. Wants the Board to understand the difference between the Wilderness Park and a State Park.

Curtis Jackson – This is Marine Mammal Awareness Week at Land's End.

Glenn Seaman - Thanked Parks and Ground Truth coming together to work with each other. Thanked the team working on the Cottonwood/Eastland issue.

Beaver - Nothing to add

Aron Peterson - We need to create trails.

Kevin Walker - We are good at creating trails.

Louis Dupree - Thanked everyone and agrees with Aron.

Robert - We can get started on a trail selection when the snow is gone and potentially apply for grant money.

Jack - Trail subcommittee has been meeting about once a month and that has been a good process. Jack recognized Mark Romano.

Pam - Reminded the Board to review applications. There are five applications for five positions. Board members who are not candidates review applications and come up with recommendations.

Sue Christiansen - asked the staff to investigate the Option #1 right of way on Elmer's Way (west) off East End Road a little bit further, if possible. She thinks they could get volunteer dirt workers, etc., if it could be enlarged, big enough for cars to park and turn around.

Next meeting on May 11th will be 1/2 hour earlier to discuss applicants.

Robert asked for a motioned to adjourn.

Sue made the motion.

Meeting was adjourned.

Transcribed by Kirsten Dixon April 15th 2022