

CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

Hybrid Electronic Microsoft Teams, 5:00 pm
BP Energy Center

Agenda for November 11, 2025

Regular meeting #9

1. Call to Order: 5:00 pm

2. Roll Call:

- a. **Present:** Mark Miner, Ted Phelps (tardy, online), Gabbie Jordan, Joe Hackenmueller, Kyle Shedd, Alison Smith, Tyndall Ellis, Rob Clark, Sarah Brey, Kristin Vantrease, Irene Turletes
- b. **Excused:** Gus Gustafson
- c. **Absent:** Clark Saunders
- d. **Staff:** Justin Dipaola-Allen (Superintendent), Ella Fitzwater
- e. **Other guests present:** Rich Greenfield (Peters Creek), Shaun Sexton (regular guest), Bill Sherwonit, Casey Durand, Joe Bear, Lee, Kyle McLaughlin, Jonathan Strong, Judy Caminer.

3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

- a. No changes. Motioned/seconded/approved.

4. Changes to Agenda and Approval:

- a. Tyndall moved to postpone Rendezvous Ridge (item 6a) to next meeting to allow Trails Committee an opportunity to meet and discuss. Will be on December's meeting agenda. Seconded by Mark.
- b. Tyndall moved to add New Business item of non-CAB committee members and ex-officio procedures and status. Now item 7b. Seconded by Gabbie.

5. Public Comments:

- a. Rich Greenfield (Peters Creek): no affiliation with an organization but has been collecting comments for Peter's Creek trail and has copies of comments.
- b. Shaun Sexton (regular guest): no comments or affiliation.
- c. Bill Sherwonit (regular guest): has comments about Rendezvous Ridge agenda item 6a and wanted to remind the CAB of Justin's previous comment about pausing new projects in the park until current trails and facilities can be maintained. Bill also indicated interest in being named as an ex-officio member of the Trails and/or Wildlife Committee and would like more information on the CAB's historical letters of support for CMBR (Chugach Mountain Bike Riders) proposals.
- d. Casey Durand (regular guest): works with local businesses during the holiday season and has approached some owners about partnerships with the CSP and CPF (Chugach Park Fund). For example, Fasteners & Fire Equipment, Inc. has added Ella to a purchase account and are able to decrease the cost of her purchases for the park, the cost difference will be made up by Casey. More park staff can be added to the account. He is also interested in the conversation about agenda item 7b.
- e. Joe Bear (no affiliation): here to observe.

- f. Lee (from Eagle River and representing the South Fork Community Council): Voiced concern about CMBR having too much input to the public process and is uncomfortable that Will Taygan may be compensated for his role as Executive Director of the organization. The CAB clarified his misconception that CMBR is using public park funds for bike-specific CMBR work within the park (they are not). Irene and Tyndall also clarified that privately-donated CPF funds are primarily distributed to hiking trails. Lee admitted that he does not have specific information on the financials of CMBR.
- g. Kyle McLaughlin (no affiliation): here to observe.
- h. Jonathan Strong (Anchorage resident, park user, online): no comment, here to observe.
- i. Judy Caminer (Chugach Park Fund, online): no comment.

6. Old Business:

- a. Rendezvous Ridge and Powerline Pass Reroute Concepts (Trails Committee)
 - i. Moved to next meeting
- b. Nominations Update (Tyndall)
 - i. Gus is following up with some individuals to round out open positions on the CAB.
 - ii. The Nominations Committee will probably wait until the new year in January to bring new members on board.
- c. CASA Update (Gabby)
 - i. Bill Britt is now a member of the municipality's new CASA board. They haven't fully organized to meet yet.
 - ii. No updates from Tyndall's inquiry to the ad-hoc committee in mid-October. There was a proposal to amend the bond to be for construction funding instead of planning funding for Basher Trailhead.
 - iii. There is one more opportunity to comment at the Assembly meetings (Tuesday, November 18). The 6-year capital improvement plan is still up for discussion.
 - iv. Gabbie speculated that the municipality is waiting until after the 2026 budget is finalized to fully organize their new CASA board.
 - v. If CAB members have an opportunity to attend the assembly meeting, please do so as individuals, not as CAB representation as there hasn't been an opportunity for the CAB to have an official position.
- d. AO360 Update (Justin)
 - i. Comment period closed on October 31. This process is being run through the Director's office, not CSP.
 - ii. Justin suspects the Director's office will compile all comments and changes affecting CSP, at which time he will update us on the status.

7. New Business:

- a. Term Expiration: Board Member Renewal Interest (Tyndall)
 - i. Gus: yes
 - ii. Joe: yes
 - iii. Mark: yes
 - iv. Ted: work schedule will not allow him to continue his position after this term.
 - v. Gabbie: yes

- vi. Two positions will be open at the end of the year.
- b. Non-CAB committee membership
 - i. Note: Gus, Chair of the Nomination Committee, is not present for the conversation.
 - ii. How can we better incorporate members of the public into committee meetings? Committees don't regularly meet and there are only a few per year.
 - iii. The process outlined in the Bylaws to become an ex-officio member for non-CAB members requires approval from the Director, which dissuades interest. If someone wants to be a member of the committee, is there a less formal way to join?
 - iv. Examples of ex-officio members who are experts in their field: Assemblypersons, DNR representatives.
 - v. Ultimately, members of the public are more than welcome to join on committees but are non-voting.
 - vi. Kyle voiced concern about the committees ballooning to an unreasonable size. Tyndall mirrored sentiment that committee work sessions are normally very focused on a specific project.
 - vii. Mark pointed out that guests who attend meetings are the ones who are by default being included, and it shouldn't be the board's responsibility to reach out and include non-CAB members.
 - viii. Justin offered to post committee reports on public notice as well. Irene cautioned that the public notice isn't a requirement of committees and that this could easily balloon into more of a burden for park staff.
 - ix. Bill pointed out that meetings are hard to put together and trying to find a time for everyone to sit down and discuss can balloon into an impossible task. We should be cautious of putting a burden on people to work more.
 - x. Tyndall emphasized we are struggling to get agendas out ahead of time for even normal board meetings and we have a lot of work to do to get organized. The CAB has taken on more responsibilities over the years, such as the agenda and minutes. These tasks used to be done by staff, now they're done by board members.
 - xi. Kyle cautioned creating a new status for unofficial members and prefers to follow the protocol in the bylaws. Irene agreed.
 - xii. Gabbie asked about whether special interest members need to have expert advice, Sarah referenced the bylaws and clarified that non-CAB members can be *either* of the requirements, and their qualifications do not need to meet *all* requirements.
 - xiii. Joe asked if ex-officio members need to be nominated by a member of the board or can they self-nominate? The process allows for one to lead to the other, similar to CAB members applying and then being recommended by the Nomination Committee.
 - xiv. Sarah suggested having an earlier prepared and distributed agenda and whether we can include the public in committee reports. For the public to participate, they first need to be well versed in the topics. During committee updates, we can feel free to pull guests in during committee updates.
 - xv. Tyndall suggested this topic be deferred to the Nomination Committee but doesn't want to volunteer Gus for something when he isn't present.
 - xvi. Clark recommended modifying the nomination form to accommodate these types of non-voting membership roles.

- xvii. Irene suggested tabling this discussion and wants to research what other CABs are doing and whether they have a standard operating procedure to help guide us. This will also give Gus an opportunity to participate in the conversation.
- xviii. The CAB thanked Bill S. for his patience about the role and Shaun encouraged us to foster public participation as those are the first three directives of CAB members according to the Director's Purpose and Intent document.
- xix. Bill S. mentioned that when he was a CAB member there were members of the public on committees and clarified that the ex-officio option was presented to him at the last meeting, which is why this discussion came up. He would like to participate on the Trails Committee and it's current agenda of the Rendezvous Ridge reroute. He wants to see the process, not influence it.
- xx. Rich Greenfield asked if there could be transparency around posting public comments for notice online. Justin said there's no forum for posting comments publicly, we will continue to attach them to the minutes every month.
- xi. Tyndall moved to include Bill S on the Trails Committee for one month. Kyle seconded. Approved.

8. CSP Staff Report: Justin Dipaola-Allen, Ella Fitzwater

- a. Ella:
 - i. First snowfall, snowplow guys were busy.
 - ii. Seasonal closures: Bird Ridge, McHugh Upper.
 - iii. Reflective tape added on Canyon Road.
 - iv. Staff conducted a trash pickup, brushed back multiple trailhead areas, logged out portions of Peter Creek Trail, and staged snow equipment (sanding, snowblowers, etc) around the park.
 - v. 3 new Public Use Cabins have been tested and are very warm.
 - vi. Future Leaders Summit: More park techs have been conducting leadership training.
 - vii. Ella completed annual performance evaluations for staff members, and everyone has been doing great work in the park.
 - viii. Last week Ella helped facilitate park operations training for all state park staff in Alaska.
- b. Justin:
 - i. Future Leaders Summit: participants are selected by the commissioner; this program is led by DPOR. It's a very high honor to be accepted: Ella and Spencer were selected for 18 days of training, where they explored lots of leadership skills. Last year, Justin co-facilitated the program and this year he is a main facilitator.
 - ii. Winter has arrived and the park is busy getting ready for that.
- c. Ranger report:
 - i. No rangers present today but will probably attend in December.

- ii. Rangers responded to an injury (broken ankle) on Eklutna Lakeside Trail along with the Fire Department. The individual tried self-rescuing, ultimately a Good Samaritan helped them out safely.
- iii. Albert Loop Trail at the ERNC is officially back open as of today and they've been monitoring it with game cameras.
- iv. Illegal camping on Seward Highway, participants fined with using the park without paying.
- v. Rangers responded to a triple fatality car crash at Portage.
- vi. Rangers assisted APD to locate a prowler.
- vii. Various boating control, driver safety issues, and hunting checks have occurred.
- viii. Rangers conducted Hunter Pass familiarization before snowfall.
- ix. Camper that was dumped in the park has still no leads.
- x. Search and rescue on Flat Top: AMRG was doing rescue training on that site at the same time. Quickest rescue ever.
- xi. During the past month, citations have been issued for: violating park closure, failure to pay fees, camping in undesignated area, and failure to present insurance.
- xii. Special hunts in the park:
 - 1. RM435 for Upper Ship Creek: any bull rifle hunt closed on November 5th because the quota was taken.
 - 2. DM 466 for McHugh: antlerless moose hunt, 3 harvested in the week of November 6th. That hunt is approximately half over.
 - 3. DM467 for McHugh: antlerless moose issued, 5 permits issued but no additional information on quota.
 - 4. Both DM466 and DM467 are muzzle loader or shotgun only.

d. Questions for Staff:

- i. Mark asked for clarification on trail closures for fat bikes. Justin confirmed Middle Fork will be opened on November 15th for fat biking only. If signs can be put back up that would be appreciated, as STA has given misinformation about the trail being open to all uses since the signs are gone.
- ii. Tyndall asked if there are any updates on citations for Arctic Valley users on military land, as there was a user cited by the military. Justin had no updates but encouraged everyone to get download the app (JBER Connect) because the registration is only \$10/year and confirmed if users don't have the permit they'll be cited. The Arctic Valley boundary is right at the edge of their parking lot.
- iii. Shaun presented letters and community correspondence to Justin, which included some items that the CAB hasn't seen. Gabbie will attach to minutes and include CAB letters of support for December 2024 for clarification.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Access (Bill): Access to state parks is mostly happening within the municipality, not the state. Gave a background on CASA and gave an update on the municipality's proposed fines to landowners who block access to public easements (for example, Stewart Trailhead).
- b. Budget (Tyndall): None.
- c. Nomination (Gus): None.

- d. Seward Highway Design (): None.
- e. Trails (Gabrielle): Committee will meet before December CAB meeting and consider all the input from the public.
- f. Chugach Park Fund (Kyle): had meeting with Justin on October 20th to review the work done this last year. Also 6 volunteer events. Confirmed 2026 priorities and are awaiting cost estimates. 2026 will focus on Lost Cabin Trail and Wolverine Ski Bowl. Justin described the thought process: Prospect Heights was paved last year, Basher is under study and hopeful that the lot will be expanded, and they wish to provide trail improvements in the places where access has been improved. There will be six volunteer events next year, Justin encourages the volunteer events to be on trails that have been recently improved to keep them well-maintained for as long as possible. He is also hoping for one at Falls Creek, but that is logically challenging because volunteers may be exhausted from the hike in before they start working. 2027 CPF goal: paid crew for Wolverine, 2028 is Near Point. CPF is co-hosting Trail Trails on March 17th.
- g. Wildlife (Gus): Gabbie updated for Gus: all is quiet. Corey Stantorf will be attending January's meeting and presenting on the collaboration between CSP and ADF&G. Justin explained that CSP manages the land within the park, ADF&G manages the fish and wildlife, and DOT manages public roads. CSP is unique in this, as Denali, for example, doesn't have that resource.
- h. Planning (): None.
- i. Outreach (Rob): None.
- j. Ram Valley (Rob): None.

2. Alison was encouraged to reach out to committee chairs. If no chair for her desired committee, she can let Irene know by next meeting.

10. Adjournment: Motioned/seconded by Bill/Tyndall