

MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 2020 MEETING

- The April 14th, 2020 meeting was called to order at 5:20 PM via teleconference.
- Advisory Board members present: Leslie Jackson, Amanda Kiely, Caroline Seabright, Arika Paquette, and Shelly Acteson
- Staff present: Aaron Ostby, Preston Kroes (via phone)
- The agenda was approved by Arika, seconded by Shelly
- The February 2020 meeting minutes were not completed by the time of the meeting. They will be submitted for review at the next meeting. There was no meeting held in March.
- Correspondence: None
- Persons to be heard: None

STAFF REPORT:

Aaron Ostby reported:

- COVID-19 Response: State Parks are open and will most likely remain open. The request to close the PUC was denied. Notices have been posted asking users to clean before and after use. The number of restrooms open have been reduced to limit exposure but restrooms are available at every facility. There are notices also put up on the restrooms. Hand sanitizer stations have been installed in all restrooms that are currently open. The primary concern has been trying to limit contact between our volunteer hosts and the public. Firewood sales have been put on self-service, payment is now on the 'honor-system' and notices are posted on the Host Cabin asking the public to keep 6' of distance and not to enter their home. The campground is still closed and there have been requests for camping which have been allowed on a case by case basis. No word has been given as to when the campground will officially be allowed to open. Campsites will be blocked off to prevent use until camping is open state-wide.
- Parks have been busy with day-use. Refuge has seen a lot of use and abuse. Totem Bight is the exception. Without the cruise ship visitors there will be more time to do projects at that facility this summer.
- Both our summer park hosts have canceled plans due to uncertainty with COVID19 and travel restrictions. There will need to be more staff time spent at Settlers Cove if we are not able to find local volunteer hosts.
- Did trail repairs at Refuge Cove on areas of the trail damaged by uprooted trees from this winter.
- Notified that we will be allowed to apply for a Recreational Trail Program Grant this year. Initially told we could not apply but they are now allowing a second round of applications. The application will likely be for funding to replace the stairs going up to the waterfall viewing deck.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Leslie Jackson reported:

- Thankful that the parks are open for families to use. Spoke with someone who was using the PUC this weekend and they were grateful to have that as an option for something to do with the kids.

KASPER REPORT:

- Nothing to report

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Kids in Parks Event:** This has been turned into a virtual on-line event. Staff is looking for ideas.
- B. Forage Fest:** Leslie requested input from the Board as to how to proceed. Arika commented that she would be willing to keep working on coordination in case we were able to host the event this year. Suggested the possibility of doing an online event in its place, giving options for people to do activities during the time they are at home. There was discussion regarding keeping the reservation for the North Tongass Community Club and the possibility of continuing on-line events after the on-line bird ID ends. There will be continued discussion at the next meeting
- C. Fleenor Land Exchange Proposal:** Leslie requested information on why the proposal was withdrawn. Shelly did not have a specific reason as to why. There was a brief overview of the proposal for the Board. The letter of support was not submitted to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly, as the proposal was withdrawn prior to the Assembly meeting. Other options for protecting the beach from public sale were discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Digital Bird Walk:** Leslie thanked Arika for leading the digital bird walk. Caroline requested more information regarding the event. Arika explained how and what birds would be posted, with the birds getting progressively difficult towards the end of the week. Ben Limle and Steve Hienel have allowed use of their bird pictures. There will be a drawing every week with a prize of "Birds of Alaska" book given to the winner. Arika suggested continuing the program, to cover other plants or animals after the bird ID portion ends. Aaron noted that Mary from KASPER was concerned about not everyone having access to the Facebook platform. Arika had investigated doing a supplement in the newspaper but it was cost prohibitive. KASPER was still willing to reimburse for the cost of the books.
- B. Tour Season Information:** Shelly gave an overview of current cruise ship cancellations and related operations.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:

- A: Digital Bird Walk Debrief
- B: Kids in Parks Event
- C: Forage Fest

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for May 12, 2020