

Seward State Parks Citizens Advisory Board

Minutes

Tuesday, December 9, 2014 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Seward Community Library Museum, Seward, Alaska

I. Call to Order

- A. The meeting was called to order by Chair Walker at 5 pm.
- B. Roll Call: John Eavis, Carol Griswold (minutes), Mark Luttrell, Pat O'Leary, Benjamin Pister, Terry Rude, Dan Walker
Board members absent: Mark Dalpes
State Park Staff present: Jack Blackwell, Jack Ransom
Public members present: Andy Bacon, Paul Pacquette
- C. Minutes Approval: September 2, and November 19, 2014 approved
October meeting did not have a quorum
- D. Agenda Changes and Approval:
Carol asked to add 2015 goals, inserted after Committee Reports
Correction to September 2nd minutes re: letter to legislature

II. Public Comments/Presentations: none

III. Reports:

A. State Park Staff Report: Jack R has been focused on interviewing the 15 applicants for seasonal position. Jack B has also been busy with interviews for various positions. The State Parks Director is in DC now, but will make the appointment for the Seward position soon. Former Governor Parnell's budget was brought forward and changes are expected with the new administration and lower oil revenue. Operations budget is still preliminary and uncertain with possible cuts. Capital budget has no new funding for Parks except for Federal pass-through funds. A minimal \$3M/year for deferred maintenance on essential items is expected to continue, with \$60M of projects waiting. Letters from the Board to the governor, legislature, and our representatives are important and appreciated.

B. Committee Reports:

1. Lands and Property: Mark L reported on the October 6th scoping meeting with Carol and John. The committee needs information on each park unit, its size, boundaries, and description. Jack R will get the MLW maps and the green lands catalog of state park land to the committee soon. Jack B will help the committee understand the process of nominating land for addition to parks and creation of new park units. Dan noted that Fourth of July beach and Box Canyon are listed on our goals from May 2014.

2. Education and Interpretation: Carol recapped a recent site visit to Lowell Point State Recreation Site with Terry Rude (attached). Jack B noted that there are limited funds available for sign replacement under deferred maintenance through Design and Construction in Anchorage. Jack R will find the LPSTRS Sign Plan and get it to the committee for reference. He will also ask D and C for their input on updating the website, kiosk signage, and signs with board assistance. Terry noted the template is

important as some elements are fixed like the totem pole logo. Carol will pursue Seward updating the LPSRS information in the on-line Kenai Peninsula Wildlife Viewing Guide. Dan noted that current park information could also be added to the Alaska App.

3. Public Use Cabins: Carol asked about the possibility of adding yurts as a less expensive State Park PUCs as a pilot project to generate funds and test out potential sites for future cabin sites. The discussion concluded that public and park staff reception of concessionaire-run yurts in Kachemak Bay State Parks is mixed, and that traditional cabins remain much more popular with lower maintenance costs. If State Parks did operate a PUC cabin on MWL land adjacent to Tonsina SRS, parks would receive the revenue. Tonsina watershed is identified for recreation in the management plan.

4. Legislative: Dan signed the letter written by Benjamin to the government re: the need for a replacement landing craft. Jack B will take it to Homer tomorrow for their board meeting and get their signatures. Valdez might join with Seward and Homer. The Board voted to have Dan draft versions of the letter to send to the legislature and to our representatives. The committee plans to meet soon.

IV. Old Business

Mine Cleanup Report: Mark L gave a recap of the abandoned mining sites with photos. Holly Chalup at MLW has been very responsive and is very interested in getting it cleaned up. The mine is now officially abandoned and the process for clean up must first be vetted by the legal department. Jack R offered to call Steve Russell to see if DEC would be interested; they might if there was substantial fuel on site. Mark L reiterated that there is not much fuel left in the drums, but he did not explore the contents of the lower site structure under the collapsed blue tarps. Carol sent contact information to MLW for the Alaska National Guard Joint Operations Center and the USCG Command Center, Sector Anchorage. Jack R again offered State Parks assistance if needed. John said to keep pressure on MLW until it is cleaned up.

Tom Kain Certificate of Recognition: Carol reported that she attended the Seward City Council meeting last night to receive Tom's C of R from Mayor Jean Bardarson on his behalf. She said the audience applauded, which is rare. The board signed the letter of commendation written by Dan to send to Tom with the certificate. Dan will scan the certificate and send copies to Jack R for the Director, the newsletter, and for our records.

V. New Business

1. Standard Format for Agenda and Minutes: Carol presented the case for this, and the Board voted to adopt her format as presented.

2. Letterhead: Terry noted that other state parks have letterheads, but we do not. Jack B will get us examples to look at.

VI. Correspondence none

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VII. Public Comment

Andy Bacon has experience with the yurts in KBay State Park and noted that site selection and maintenance is critical. He too thought the cabins were more popular.

VIII. Adjournment

A. Board Comments: Mark L said how much he enjoyed a hike to Tonsina today and really appreciated the trail maintenance and our local State Parks. Carol agreed, noting Lowell Point beach could easily have remained private property unavailable to the public. Terry noted that there is a Facebook Page, Seward Daily Trail Report, to read and post comments on local trails. Dan appreciated Benjamin's letter and co-chair job last month. Happy holidays from the Board.

B. Date/Location of Next Meeting: January 13, 5-7 pm, Culinary Arts Building Banquet Room. Dan, Pat, and John will not be able to attend.

C. Motion to Adjourn: Adjournment at 6:27 pm

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Field Trip to Lowell Point State Recreation Site
Interpretation Committee Members Terry Rude and Carol Griswold
Monday, December 1, 2014 10 am to 12:30 pm

Problems: Missing signs, inaccurate signs, damaged signs, poorly located signs.

Signs are expensive and need to be prioritized.

Alaska State Parks has a Lowell Point State Park Recreation Site Sign Plan that we should use for reference.

The large paper signs in the two LPSPRS kiosks are easier and cheaper to replace and should be revised first. The committee will have recommendations.

Smart phones have made the Internet much more accessible and useful. The State Parks information on this area's parks needs to be updated and corrected. This should be added to our 2015 goals.

Recommend that new signs have the oval Alaska State Parks Logo with the mountains and eagle for branding to differentiate the brown signs from the Forest Service and National Parks.