

Seward State Parks Citizen Advisory Board

Work Session Notes

November 15, 2023 5:30-7:30 pm

AVTEC Culinary Academy, 809 Third Ave, east entrance, third floor

I. Call to Order (note: at the last minute, there was no quorum, but the Board members and staff present agreed to continue as a work session.)

- A. Call to Order at 5:40 pm: Chair Griswold
- B. Volunteer minutes-taker: Nick Jordan
- C. Roll Call: Carol Griswold, Nick Jordan, Mark Luttrell
- D. Board members absent: Bob Barnwell, Tom Miller, Cliff Reid, Mica Van Buskirk
- E. State Park Staff: Superintendent Hans Rinke (phone), District Ranger Jack Ransom, Park Specialist Michael Burmeister (phone)
- F. Public Present: Amy Haddow, Robin Collman
- G. Minutes Approval for October 18, 2023. Chair will email to Board for approval.
- H. Agenda Changes and Approval: no action may be taken

II. Public Comments: Amy Haddow expressed interest in joining the Board; her experience with the Seward Community Foundation and familiarity with Seward area state parks would be an asset to Board. Jack gave her information on applying. She noted a lot of potholes in the parking lots. Robin Collman noted he is responsible for removing fishing line from collection containers around Seward, including LPSRS. He suggested moving the existing container closer to the main trail. He also consistently picks up litter at LPSRS, which the Board appreciated. He was impressed with the Eagle Scout Kids Don't Float racks at LPSRS and at Bear Lake and ordered the posters for them.

III. Board Contact and Correspondence with Public: none reported

IV. Reports:

A1. Staff Report: Hans Rinke, Tom Anthony, Jack Ransom, Michael Burmeister:

New Superintendent Hans introduced himself and hopes to attend in person soon. He reported that the North Fork Tonsina Creek riprap/bridge project will start late winter or spring. Callisto PUC repairs from the flood have not been contracted yet, but it will remain in the same vicinity in a safer location. Relocating the Tonsina PUC to a safer location away from ocean erosion is a high priority but finding a feasible new site is difficult. Hans talked to Design & Construction staff about the Lowell Point parking issues and is still learning about the background from the previous Superintendent. This is a capital request that will hopefully get funding in the next few years.

Jack Ransom: Jack and Mike have been trying to address the two PUC issues and determine how to mitigate the damages. State parks may try to use the stockpiled gravel this fall to fill the potholes and grade the upper parking lot while use is low. Gravel doesn't last long; paving part of it is worth consideration. Since the upper parking lot is a Tsunami Evacuation Site, the Borough contracts with Metco to keep it plowed. Maintaining the lower parking lot is also important as it is also needed in the

winter to avoid fines/towing for parking on the road. Jack will contact Metco and Tom Miller about maintaining the lower parking lot as well. Jack talked to locals about parking issues who noted that the rainy summer kept numbers down. Jack noted the outstanding Eagle Scout projects in the park: Kids Don't Float board at LPSRS, (which has become a swimming beach), tent platforms at North Beach, new latrine at South Beach, safety improvements at the Fort. In answer to a question from Amy, he noted that remote latrines are moved to a new hole when full; sawdust and campfire ash are added to aid in composting; it costs \$3000 twice a year to pump the LPSRS latrines; waste management is challenging.

Mike Burmeister: The trail crew worked on the Rainforest Trail, repairing tread damage caused by initial poor siting, poor drainage, and excessive rainfall and mud. They didn't get as far as they wanted due to the challenging trail conditions and weather. The work on the Alpine Trail was extended to next year's grant due to marginal conditions, new issues, and rain. A helicopter hauled a mostly empty but heavy Knack Box to the trail junction; next year they will have more helo support to set up a spike camp. He hopes to have the same trail crew for next summer. The grant extensions spread the funding over multiple years and simplify the process of hiring in a tight timeline by being able to offer the jobs ahead of time; the grants are approved on March 15 and funding available April 15. The Board suggested that this a good strategy to consider in the future. The Sierra Club volunteers worked at Thumb Cove, dealt with rot issues, painted the latrine, and cleaned.

A2. Other updates: deferred from October meeting

- i. SCORP and Lowell Point parking situation and other local projects: no updates
- ii. Tonsina Cabin relocation funds approved in July, but may be more than the \$50K. Need a contractor who can actually do the project, hopefully in the spring. It all comes down to funding.
- iii. PNZ Construction marine mammal observation platform at Lowell Point: PNZ will be in touch next year prior to cruise ship dock dredging project.
- iv. Plan to widen access at boat launch (clear tree and alders): needs more discussion on pros and cons
- v. Metco contract to plow lower parking lot this winter: may be able to find funds in budget. Discussion on receiving a mini-grant from the Seward Community Foundation possibly through a local non-profit.
- vi. Evaluation of lower parking lot credit card machine: batteries were dead this fall and it needs to have a better solar range, possibly by installing auxiliary panel to the kiosk roof, or by using new backup batteries. Board asked about revenue, but unfortunately, the park does not see the particular numbers; perhaps in a few years. Hans noted that statewide, revenues are up 20%.
- vii. Could interesting Trail Reports be shared with CAB and Park website? Mike noted that it is posted on the website, but is hard to find. He will email the reports to the Board. He writes 2 reports per month in June, July, and August, and one in the fall. Board suggested a short report could also be posted to the Seward Daily Trail Report with a link.
- viii. Could Spruce PUC at Thumb Cove be renamed to Prospect PUC? No, too

- expensive to change all the brochures.
- ix. Update on paid secretary: discussion about possible options including a high school student for extra credit, draw straws, assign rotating schedule, pay an individual, hire ACC staff, use adaptive technologies. Could be a lot of administrative work for staff. Jack will ask about the community service required for ninth graders. This might be another Seward Community Foundation mini-grant opportunity as it's a community benefit.
 - x. Bering Sea gold dredge assistance to move Callisto PUC? Nick noted it is not certified to operate a commercial business in Resurrection Bay.

B. Committee Reports

1. Local issues (except parking) (Nick at LP/Tonsina, Tom at Marine Parks): Nick addressed owner of a vehicle on the beach at high tide and in the grass, and a harmless individual along Tonsina Trail all day that made a few hikers nervous. Carol noted beach barrier rocks need to be lifted every year to prevent vehicle access.
2. Mining (Cliff, Bob, Carol): no updates
3. Legislative Committee (Bob, Mica): Carol will email letters of support. Needs include new latrines to replace old tanks that have saturated concrete and inadequate gaskets that let in rainwater; new parking lot bumpers; emergency shelter and workshop; check SCORP letter for more deferred maintenance needs.
4. Board Recruitment Committee Mark (membership chair), two vacancies for 9-member Board: Two people present and three others considering.

D. Goals for 2023-24 Updates: discussion about reorganizing the list to legislative priorities at the top and keep others that we can check off. Latrines need to be replaced. Update of CHSRA Management Plan is a Division request for the DMLW staff; conduct a consistency assessment to determine what has changed. (Lots!)

1. Continue to pursue Lowell Point Parking plan: SCORP draft still awaiting final approval as of November 8: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/scorp.htm>
2. Continue to pursue resolution of Tonsina Creek mining issue: Case file so convoluted, may be best to start over.
3. Support funding for deferred maintenance of existing PUCs and infrastructure and emergency funding to move the Callisto PUC for FY25 by November 2023
4. Support funding for relocation of Tonsina PUC: Approved in July?
5. Support Friends Group, whether locally or statewide: in SCORP comments
6. Update Parks website: re high tides, stove fuel, slides, and other changes: Tonsina PUC section was moved and approved on 02-22-23, sent 3-2-23; in progress
7. Maintain laminated tide charts at kiosks (Carol, Nick): continuing
8. Explore new public-use cabin locations: Board voted unanimously 2-22-23 not to support this; area has enough, locations are difficult, deferred maintenance and relocations of existing PUCs are expensive and difficult. Mica later proposed new locations at Thumb Cove north end, Fox Island Spit, South Beach CHSRA, North Beach

south side, Tonsina Point between bridges or near the campground pavilion.

9. Support installation of tent platforms in park: determine locations and include in grants. 2-22-23 Board supported Eagle Scout project to provide tent platforms. 2023: two installed at North Beach.

10. Support ASLC meeting with all Resurrection Bay stakeholders: Nick, pending.

11. Update of 1998 CHSRS Management Plan, especially with the addition of Fort McGilvray Historic District on December 22, 2022, and send letter of support. Draft letter by Chair 3-15-23, Chair emailed Board-approved letter to Director Gease on 3-17-23, no reply.

12. Support a Fort McGilvray Historic Preservation Master Plan and Interpretive Plan, and alternate funding opportunities as recommended by DPOR Shawna Popovici.

13. Support mooring buoys in the Park.

V. New Business:

a. Discuss possible ribbon-cutting ceremony for Fort McGilvray Historic District in May: Discussion of program at Branson Pavilion or at Library/Museum. Could be part of the Resurrection Bay Historical Society program, and show USACE video of the construction, and PowerPoint presentation. Mike noted the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation's Office of History and Archaeology received a national award for their work in the nomination. Mike will email a copy of the official letter.

<https://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/pic/releases/9.25.2023%20AK%20Office%20of%20History%20and%20Archaeology%20Receives%20National%20Award.pdf>

b. Carol: PUC journals are an invaluable resource. Are journals archived in a safe location? Might they be scanned to preserve them digitally? Possible future revenue source. Jack noted that they are kept in a safe place for future use. Fireside reading fundraiser suggested by Board.

VI. Old Business: none

VII. Informational Items: none

VIII. Public Comments: Is there still active mining at Tonsina? Yes, the miner was trying to sell his claim and equipment this summer.

IX. Adjournment

A. Board Comments: Mark appreciated that Amy and Robin attended. Nick hoped for a quorum next time. Jack noted that nine members would be nice as we were down to four tonight. He will forward application.

B. Date/Location of next meeting: Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 5:30 pm, AVTEC Culinary Academy.

C. Adjournment at 7:20 pm.

