A. Roll Call

B. Approval of Agenda

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes for: September 12, 2017

D. Citizen Comments

E. Presentations—None

F. Communications from Borough

G. Action Items
   1. Draft Memorandum Recommending that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Amend the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan to Address Trail Use Designations, Trail Recommendations and the Skarland Trail—Geoff Orth

H. Informational Items
   1. Trail Management Objectives and Trail Classification Matrix for Borough Trails—Geoff Orth
   2. Steps Toward Establishing a Trails Foundation—Helen Lefgren

I. Committee Reports—None

J. Commissioner’s Comments

K. Agenda Setting / Next Meeting
   November 14, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., Blue Room, Pioneer Park

L. Adjournment
October 10, 2017

TO: Karl Kassel
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

THROUGH: Bryant Wright
Trails Coordinator
Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

Re: TRAIL ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PLAN TO ADDRESS TRAIL USE DESIGNATIONS, TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE SKARLAND TRAIL

Dear Mayor:

The purpose of the Trails Advisory Commission, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan (CRTP, 2006, Sect. III(C)(2)) and by FNSB Code 4.112.90, is to advise the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) on trail issues.

To clarify the intent and meaning of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, the Trails Advisory Commission recommends that the FNSB adopt the attached amendment regarding the use of mechanized equipment for construction, maintenance and grooming on non-motorized trails and amending the description of the Skarland Trail (B-15).

Sincerely,

Carol Kaynor, Chair
Trails Advisory Commission
Fairbanks North Star Borough
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PLAN BY ADDING CLARIFICATION THAT MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT IS ALLOWED ON NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS FOR TRAIL CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND GROOMING, AND UPDATING THE SKARLAND TRAIL DESCRIPTION

WHEREAS, The Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan lacks clarity on the role that motorized equipment plays in constructing, maintaining, and grooming non-motorized trails.

WHEREAS, The Skarland Trail description is out of date as the final parcel has now been subdivided and an easement provided.

WHEREAS, Sections of the Skarland Trail are not in the platted easement.

THEREFORE, The following amendments are proposed.

AMENDMENTS ARE SHOWN IN LEGISLATIVE FORMAT. Text to be added is underlined, and text to be deleted is [BRACKETED AND CAPITALIZED]

ISSUE 3: Recreational Trail Use Designations

There are many different perceptions among trail users and property owners about the types of trail uses which are compatible with each other and adjacent land uses. Most frequently, the principal issue of concern has centered around compatibility of motorized and non-motorized trail use. Many homeowners do not consider motorized trail use appropriate in residential areas. In more rural areas where trail use is not as intense, less conflicts are likely to develop between different types of trail use. It is often desirable to keep recreational trails open to a variety of use types, however, if all trails are established for multiple uses, non-motorized trail users may not obtain the recreational experience they desire. In this situation, a system of all multiple use trails can eliminate the desired experience of non-motorized trail enthusiasts, in the same way a system of all non-motorized trails can eliminate the experience desired by motorized trail users. Public comment has indicated a desire for both multiple use and non-motorized trail types.

The non-motorized designation is not intended to prevent a trail from being constructed, maintained, and/or groomed with motorized equipment as authorized by FNSB. The use designations are directed at trail uses, not construction, maintenance, and grooming.

Goal:

Provide for a permanent trail system of both multiple use and non-motorized trails which is geographically distributed throughout the Borough and which can accommodate all trail user groups.

Policies:

1) The Borough will generally not promote development of motorized recreational trails
within residential or urban areas. Exceptions to this policy can be made in cases where a location for motorized trail use is identified which is screened from surrounding residential areas, where a motorized trail can be located within a highway right-of-way or where specifically requested by residents of the area.

Objectives:

a. Identify trails or use areas adjacent to, but not within, residential areas which can be used for motorized recreation.

b. Establish trail use designations which reflect the desires of local residents.

Recreational trails which are established in rural areas as part of the Borough trail System should generally remain available for multiple recreational uses. Exceptions to this rule can be made if a particular type of trail designation is needed to fulfill an identified need or demand.

Objectives:

a. Work with state and federal agencies and local residents to ensure recreational trails established in rural areas of the Borough are available for a variety of recreational uses to the greatest extent practical.

b. Work with state and federal agencies to establish non-motorized trails in rural areas where significant demand is identified.

Where recreational trails are established for multiple uses and use increases to the point where conflicts become increasingly serious requiring use limitations, the primary, original recreational use shall have priority. Where trail rights-of-way are of adequate width, separate lanes for incompatible trail uses shall be established.

Objectives:

a. Retain wide corridors for trails designed for multiple uses whenever possible in order to accommodate separate lanes for incompatible trail uses.

b. Identify the primary recreational uses of trails when designated in order to facilitate future decisions on use priority.
A. SPECIFIC TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan identifies forty-eight recreational trails, or trail systems which are presently established or proposed for public dedication. Individual trails are recommended as: a) state or federal trails; b) components of the FNSB Recreational Trail System; or, c) neighborhood trail systems. Each trail is also identified as generally intended for multi-use or non-motorized uses only (see figure 2). Trails identified as multi-use will normally be available for a variety of both motorized and non-motorized recreational uses. As the designation implies, motorized trail uses will not be allowed on trails designed for non-motorized purposes except for motorized equipment used in construction, maintenance and grooming. Within these general guidelines individual trails or trail easements may be established for more specific use types.

I-B15. Skarland Ski Trail

The Skarland Ski Trail is perhaps the most well-known and firmly established trail within the Borough Trail Program. The trail is primarily a recreational cross-country ski trail. Portions of this system which lie on University of Alaska property are used extensively for competition. [THERE IS ONLY ONE PARCEL REMAINING ON THIS ENTIRE SYSTEM WHICH DOES NOT HAVE A LEGAL RIGHT-OF-WAY. THIS PARCEL SHOULD BE A HIGH PRIORITY FOR FUTURE EASEMENT ACQUISITION. AS AN INTERIM MEASURE, THE BOROUGH SHOULD EXPLORE ESTABLISHING A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE REMAINING LANDOWNER WHICH PROVIDES FOR CONTINUED USE OF THE TRAIL AND EVENTUAL DEDICATION, BUT WHICH ALSO RESERVES THE LANDOWNER’S’ RIGHT TO REALIGN THE TRAIL IF THE LAND IS DEVELOPED IN THE FUTURE.] Where the trail passes through subdivisions, a platted easement was provided in the subdivision process. However, there are places where the trail is in trespass as it strays outside the easement. It is a high priority to resolve these trespass issues.
A Memorandum Requesting that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Develop Trail Management Objectives and Adopt the Alaska State Parks’ Trail Management Handbook.

The purpose of the Trails Advisory Commission, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan (CRTP, 2006, Sect. III(C)(2)) and by FNSB Code 4.112.90, is to advise the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) on trail issues.

The Trails Advisory Commission recommends that FNSB should develop Trail Management Objectives (TMOs) for all trails listed in the CRTP. TMOs provide an easily applied and standardized framework that is acceptable Best Practice among many agencies. This will provide a transparent policy for trail managers, trail users and the public. To process TMOs, FNSB should adopt the Alaska State Park’s Trail Management Handbook as the standard reference. The handbook is derived from interagency accepted practices and definitions, and has been localized to Alaska’s environment and users.

In addition, FNSB should adopt the Trail Classification and Project Prioritization process that the TAC recommended in 2010. This process is derived from methodology used by California State Parks, but has been localized to the Fairbanks area by a TAC committee. This is mandated by the CRTP in Sect III(C)(2)(b) and (c).

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS ____ DAY OF ______ 2017
The Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough) Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) held a meeting in Conference Room on the second floor of the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

Chair Carol Kaynor called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

A. **Roll Call**

   - Members Present: Carol Kaynor, Geoffrey Orth, Brian Accola, Mathew Carrick, John Morack, Helyn Lefgren, Jamie Hansen, Seth Adams, Jerry Rafson, Joni Simpson
   - Members Absent: Larry Morris, Richard Shideler, Jeff Oatley

   Borough Attending: Bryant Wright, Trails Coordinator, Parks & Recreation;

B. **Approval of Agenda:**

   Chair Kaynor suggested the Commission consider two changes to the agenda. Under H. “Informational Items,” she proposed adding a draft memorandum “Requesting that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Develop Trail Management Objectives and Adopt the Alaska State Parks’ Trail Management Handbook” that had been mistakenly left off the agenda. Also, under G. “Action Items” she proposed moving items 3 & 4 (memorandums of support for Recreational Trails Program grant applications) to the top of the list. Because they are time sensitive they should be considered first.

   **MOTION:** Commissioner Simpson moved to revise the agenda by accepting the second item under H. “Informational Items” and moving items 3 and 4 under G. “Action Items” to be considered first and second. Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

   **Discussion and Objections:** None.

   **MOTION ADOPTED**

   **MOTION:** Commissioner Simpson moved to adopt the agenda as revised. Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

   **Discussion and Objections:** None.

   **MOTION ADOPTED**

C. **Approval of Minutes:**

   **MOTION:** Commissioner Morack moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion.

   **Discussion and Objections:**

   Chair Kaynor provided minor edits and asked to review whether or not she was correctly recorded as making a motion. Mr. Wright said he would double check the audio file and edit as needed.

   There were no objections.

   **MOTION ADOPTED**
D. **Citizen Comments:**

- **Stan Justice** thanked everyone for their work on the TAC and thanked Mayor Kassel for attending. He is still interested in improving Skarland Trail by cutting a bench where needed. The Equinox Marathon has again been forced to reroute a section on Alaska Ski Corporation’s private land at the top of the Alder Chute. This required cutting and brushing a short section of new trail on very short notice, leaving rough conditions, stumps and snags that were easy to trip over. He encouraged FNSB to negotiate a land trade in order to acquire this parcel and keep it open to public use. The top could be used as a park. The ITPC is waiting on DNR to rule on proposed development of an adjacent section line. This appears to be the last option if they cannot get an easement signed with the property owner.

  Chair Kaynor closed Citizen Comments.

E. **Presentations:** None.

F. **Communications from the Borough:**

1. **Greetings and Updates from the Mayor:**

   Mayor Kassel thanked the TAC for their service. One of the projects Borough-wide seeks to address the many and variety of Boards and Commissions. Among these commissions there are different levels of performance and expertise. He strongly believes in the value of commissions and has a working group reviewing their performance. There is a need to standardize commission procedures such as how agendas and minutes are drafted. The TAC is one of the good examples. He reminded that these are legal public meetings and have special requirements that all commissions must abide by. He would like the Mayor’s office to be more in the loop by having meeting packets sent directly to them. He looks forward to getting advice from the commissions and knowing what is going on. The Boards and Commission webpage also needs to be updated and better organized so that information is searchable and more accessible for the public. They are also trying to figure out how clerking at meetings should go and must consider that there are different levels of staff and commissioner expertise at each commission. Many staff and commissioners have to multitask and take on several roles. Standardization might help determine what skills are needed and how they can be provided. Providing actual clerking staff to meetings might free up other departmental staff to be more involved in commission meeting deliberations and get a more consistent results. But the Mayor and working group are looking for suggestions. He brought up that he loves trails and wants the Borough to be more involved and take on more regarding trail management, but he hasn’t been able to get to it. The Borough is in a severe financial situation due to the State pushing expenses onto the Boroughs. The budget is not balanced this year and they have even had to pull money from the School District, which is not a practice we can continue. The Budget was $9 from the tax cap, but the tax cap didn’t account for funding pulled by the State. So the TAC needs to be aware that while we hope to increase involvement in trails, the budget is in the hole. Until finances are figured out, the Borough can’t do anything with the trails program beyond what it has historically done. At this point the Borough instead has to consider major cuts and closures to recreation programs, facilities, or even staff to minimize costs. But he acknowledged even these will only be a drop in the bucket and not fix the problem. While the F-35s will increase the population they will also increase the need for services the Borough provides. And there is currently a maintenance backlog of $300M on just the existing infrastructure, which does not even including what we should be saving to prepare for future
maintenance. So the Borough has some big questions to consider. With this very real financial situation, the outlook is not promising for coming up with money for trails. Commissioner Lefgren mentioned that Parks and Recreation Director Mike Bork had at one point mentioned the idea of a parks or trails foundation that could raise money outside of the Borough. She asked if the commission should look into this and how they should get the process started. Mayor Kassel said that foundations (he used the local Library Foundation as an example) can contribute a lot. He also mentioned that some locals are looking at a “Parks and Arts” foundation. A foundation for trails would also be a cool idea. The commissioners could get involved with those working on a parks foundation and mentioned June Rogers as a contact. Commissioner Morack asked if there was a risk of losing parks or trails staff. Mayor Kassel said that they have to consider that among all the options. But cutting the one staff that serves trails would not be very cost effective considering the impact it would have, especially when compared to what the Borough could save by closing a facility that has some kind of substitute. Commissioner Morack asked about the memos under consideration about taking on a more active management role on trails. Mayor Kassel looked forward to getting these kinds of suggestions from the TAC as they will start setting a precedent for community desires. This would up the workload for Borough staff and increase costs, but the Borough and Parks has no budget to cover that. A greater role in mediating trail disputes also requires more staff time. Our departments are overloaded and constantly reprioritizing. We don’t know the direct cost, but it would all take a lot of additional resources. Commissioner Lefgren asked about potential legal hang-ups to having a Foundation cover some of the trail management costs. Mayor Kassel stated that it would depend on specific trails. Changes to the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan might make maintenance and partnerships more possible. For example, the Borough doesn’t have road powers and can’t spend its resources managing or maintaining Rights of Way that could be construed as a road, which includes trails. This subject is a can of worms that needs to be worked out, but it is not currently making the top of the Legal Department’s priority list. Other communities do manage trails, but in many cases it is not done legally. He does have some swing in setting the legal department’s priorities, but ultimately the Assembly must decide what to do with this information.

Commissioner Morack and Chair Kaynor noted that they were pleased the trails coordinator Mr. Wright has been doing a great job and has been increasing activity and presence on the trails. Mayor Kassel also acknowledged Mr. Wright’s efforts. Commissioner Carrick asked about the feasibility of land trades for easements. Mayor Kassel said that was preferable over acquisition by purchase, but it does still cost staff tome to coordinate such a trade. Commissioner Lefgren asked if a new staff member assigned to commissions would be like the Assembly Liaison. Mayor Kassel said the commission now reports to the Mayor and better clerking would help with the lines of communication. They should consider the Mayor’s office a part of the commission.

2. Updates from the Trails Office:

Mr. Wright updated the TAC about the completed work at Skyline Ridge Trail as well as plans to coordinate a volunteer event to restore the Goldstream Connector Trail. The FNSB will be coordinating with REI and Alaska Trails and other local trail interests to advertise and conduct the event. Staff is coordinating with other departments to hire an equipment operator to rework this trail prior to volunteers coming in with hand tools. Staff installed some additional signage at the suggestions of Commissioner Morack. A funding ordinance will be considered by the Assembly
on September 14th to provide match funds for Phase II of restorative work on the Skyline Ridge Trail. TAC members are encouraged to testify with their thoughts. The Air Force still plans to cut a new trail entrance to Cranberry Ridge Trail within the platted trail easement off September Court. Work should take place in the next couple weeks. Staff has staked out the easement and trail path.

G. **Action Items:**

1. *Review of a Memorandum Supporting the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department’s Application to the Alaska Recreational Trails Program for Grant Funding to Complete Construction of Eagle Trail at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area*—Carol Kaynor

**MOTION:** Commissioner Adams moved to approve the memo pending discussion and Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

Discussion and Objections: The memo is written in support of the Borough’s application to the Recreational Trails Program to complete construction of the Eagle Trail at Tanana Lakes by raising the surface with a compactable material for a smooth, finished tread. To expedite discussion, the memo was projected for the TAC to view and edited in a word processor concurrently. TAC members made several minor phrasing, spelling and grammatical changes. There were no objections.

**MOTION ADOPTED.**

2. *Review of a Memorandum Supporting the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department’s Application to the Alaska Recreational Trails Program for Grant Funding to Improve Roadside Trailheads and Wayfinding*—Carol Kaynor

**MOTION:** Commissioner Adams moved to approve the memo pending discussion and Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

Discussion and Objections: The memo is written in support of the Borough’s application to the Recreational Trails Program to improve trailheads, wayfinding and trail entrance tread for trails in the Goldstream Valley. To expedite discussion, the memo was projected for the TAC to view and edited in a word processor concurrently. TAC members made phrasing, spelling and grammatical changes. Chair Kaynor also kept an edited draft. There were no objections.

**MOTION ADOPTED.**

3. *Review of a Memorandum Recommending that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Pursue an Active Management Policy for Trails Contained Within the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and for Trails With a Public Recreational Easement*—Geoff Orth

**MOTION:** Commissioner Morack moved to discuss the memo and Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

**Objections:** None.

**MOTION ADOPTED.**

Discussion: The memo is written advising the Borough to pursue a more active role in management of platted and Category B trails in the Borough. To expedite discussion, the memo was projected for the TAC to view and edited in a word processor concurrently. TAC members made several minor phrasing, spelling and grammatical changes. Other notable changes or point of discussion: Commissioner Hansen and Commissioner
Adams noted that the memo should be specific in addressing Category B trails. She and Mr. Wright helped clarify the significance of the corresponding trail categories. He added that the TAC should carefully consider which trails they are suggesting the Borough have a more active role in based on this categorical system, and that the categories don’t always account for existing jurisdictions (for example many Category B trails are RS2477 ROWs). Mr. Wright noted that while the Comprehensive Plan intends for dedicated trails to be managed recreational facilities, many trails listed in the plan are not yet fully dedicated. He suggested this memo account for that. Commissioner Lefgren noted that this would be too limiting, as very few trails are fully dedicated and so she preferred to keep the explanation broad. Commissioner Orth and Commissioner Adams preferred this as well. Commissioner Orth further explained that this memo aimed to refer to trails as “facilities” to reinforce the Borough’s responsibility to manage them as they do parks or other facilities. He said this memo came out of dissatisfaction with how the Borough handled Skarland Trail by asserting they did not have management authority to determine what could and couldn’t occur on the trail. Commissioner Rafson said that we’re getting the point across and don’t need to get too detailed. If the Mayor or Legal have issues with specifics, they can be addressed later. Commissioner Morack worried that this motion would be premature without fully understanding what “active management” means. He suggested they define what that should be. Chair Kaynor suggested that this memo would be a broad approach and that later memos that are in the works will better define how management should look specifically. Commissioner Adams added that how trails would be managed will be a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Orth also suggested that this broad memo would give the Borough some flexibility to decide on a course of action.

MOTION: Commissioner Orth moved that the TAC vote on whether to sign and send this memo as amended. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion.

Objection: None. Chair Kaynor called for votes. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

MOTION ADOPTED.

4. Review of a Memorandum Concerning Discharge of Warm Water into the Chena River—Seth Adams.

MOTION: Commissioner Adams moved to approve and send the memo after discussion and Commissioner Orth seconded the motion.

Discussion and Objections: This memo is written to recommend the Borough oppose the discharge of warm water by the Chena Power Plant into the Chena River so that the river could be usable as a winter trail. To expedite discussion, the memo was projected for the TAC to view and edited in a word processor concurrently. Commissioner Adams mentioned there were only very slight changes since this was reviewed last meeting. TAC members made several minor phrasing, spelling and grammatical changes. Chair Kaynor also kept an edited draft. There were no Objections.

MOTION ADOPTED.

H. Informational Items

1. Review of a draft Memorandum Recommending that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Amend the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan—Geoff Orth

Discussion: Commissioner Orth said that the trails Plan did not intend to prohibit motorized maintenance by the “non-motorized” use designation. He said those use designations only refer to recreational uses and the Trail Plan does not adequately address maintenance uses. He added that prohibiting motorized maintenance would be
unreasonable. He used the example of having to use hand saws to remove naturally fallen trees as an example of why the non-motorized designation does not apply to maintenance. He also noted that with the Subdivision of Magoffin estates, the Skarland Trail is now fully dedicated with an easement. The old description of the trail in the Trails Plan is now out of date and needs to be changed to reflect this. This memo will address these two deficiencies of the Trail Plan. Commissioner Morack worried that until the Borough resolves its management role and decides exactly how it will manage the Skarland Trail, this still leaves the prospect open for just anyone to come in and work on the trail with any equipment. It seems like it’s “No Man’s Land.” Commissioner Adams agreed with Commissioner Morack. He is supportive of the work that has been done by Mr. Justice, but he noted that this highlights that someone can still come in and do trail work in an unsatisfactory way. He noted that this doesn’t distinguish between someone using an unnecessarily large bulldozer on a trail versus hiring a skilled and experienced trail builder to use smaller, more appropriate (yet also motorized) equipment. This is an important distinction that needs to first be worked out. Commissioner Carrick and Commissioner Orth suggested that they could add to the memo that such maintenance could be done “as authorized by the FNSB.” The Commission was overall in favor of this addition. Commissioner Morack thought a better process should be setup to make these authorizations. Commissioner Accola suggested this process would unfold as the Borough deliberates over previously passed memos. Commissioner Adams highlighted that a volunteer would then have to go to the Borough (or whomever) and get permission to do proposed work on trails. Mayor Kassel revealed a number of options for how to go about this. For example, some commissions have quasi-judicial powers and are assigned to make certain kinds of decisions on behalf of the Borough. These commissions and this process generally include some kind of appeal process. If someone is dissatisfied with the commission’s decision, they could appeal to a higher authority such as the Mayor, Assembly, or Supreme Court, depending on how the code is written. Though he does not necessarily suggest it, as an example, it may be an option for the TAC to arbitrate certain kinds of trail management decisions in this fashion. As it is, the TAC has the authority to make recommendations, but those are not binding. This could be changed in Borough code. He added that when the TAC says the “Borough” should be the authority, the burden is on the Mayor to decide who and what exactly that means. He suggests the TAC consider specifically how they want to see this adjudication process unfold and through whom.

MOTION: Commissioner Adams moved to make this an action item for the next meeting’s agenda and Commissioner Carrick seconded the motion.

Objections: None.

MOTION ADOPTED.

2. Review of a draft Memorandum Requesting that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Develop Trail Management Objectives and Adopt the Alaska State Parks’ Trail Management Handbook—Geoff Orth

Discussion: Commissioner Orth introduced this memo and topic. Trail Management Objectives (TMOs) were originally designed by the Forest Service and have been adopted by multiple agencies. Alaska State Parks has adopted and localized the TMO framework into their Trail Management Handbook. The Trail Classification Process was adapted from a California State Parks example and localized to the FNSB by TAC members. He suggested that one person such as an intern put this together. Commissioner Adams suggested that once the TMOs are in place, the FNSB would pursue partnerships to take care of the trails according to the agreed upon specifications. He added that most of the required maintenance would be as simple as brushing to keep the trail open and not very
complicated. He wished to keep this idea on the agenda for discussion. He thought that while important, when looking stepwise at a course toward trail management, this step should occur after active management is pursued (first) and after they find some way to allow people to work on the trails under the auspices of the Borough (second). Commissioner Morack agreed and thought it should stay on the agenda for discussion for when precursory items have been resolved. He would also like to take a more careful look at it. Commissioner Rafson suggested they move on to comments and agenda setting.

I. Committee Reports: - None

J. Commissioner’s Comments:
Commissioner Carrick: Enjoyed the Summer trails Challenge.
Commissioner Accola: None.
Commissioner Rafson: Thanked Mayor Kassel for attending.
Commissioner Morack: Noted that the agenda was complicated and hard to follow. He was pleased with the work that had been done at Skyline Ridge.
Commissioner Hansen: Looks forward to digging into the TMOs.
Commissioner Orth thanked Mayor Kassel for attending.
Commissioner Adams: Thanked Mayor Kassel for attending and complimented the TAC for a good meeting. He likes the direction these discussions are going and thinks questions about the Borough’s role in active management of trails is of utmost importance.
Commissioner Simpson: Thanked Mayor Kassel for attending, the TAC for their efforts, and Mr. Wright for his work in the Trails Program.
Chair Kaynor: She thanked Mayor Kassel for enlivening the TAC to get through a packed and important meeting. She thanked the TAC for being so engaged and thought the TMOs seemed very logical.

K. Agenda Setting for the October 10th, 2017 Meeting:
   • Presentations: None.
   • Communications from the Borough
   • Action Items:
     1. Draft Memorandum Recommending that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Amend the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan to Address Trail Use Designations, Trail Recommendations and the Skarland Trail—Geoff Orth
   • Informational Items:
     1. Trail Management Objectives and Trail Classification Matrix for Borough Trails—Geoff Orth
     2. Steps Toward Establishing a Trails Foundation—Helen Lefgren
   • Committee Meetings: None.

L. Adjournment: Chair Kaynor adjoined the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Submitted by,

R. Bryant Wright, Trails Coordinator
FNSB Parks & Recreation
September 29, 2017

TO: Darcy B. Harris  
Alaska State Trails Program  
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1380  
Anchorage, AK 99501  

THROUGH: Karl Kassell  
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

Re: Letter of Support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department’s Grant Request for Funds to Complete Eagle Trail at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area

Dear Ms. Harris:

At its September 12th, 2017 meeting the Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough) Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) passed a motion to support the Borough’s grant request for funds to complete construction of the Eagle Trail in Tanana Lakes Recreation Area.

Until recently, the area now known as the Tanana Lakes Recreation Area was an area known for illicit activities such as illegal dumping and drug dealing. Since the community adopted this area for parks and recreation, it has quickly become one of the most popular recreation areas in the Borough parks system with more than 200,000 visitors each year who come to walk, bike, ski, view wildlife, fish, boat and swim. Tanana Lakes has a uniquely close proximity to urban Fairbanks and the trails provide year-round outdoor recreation and exercise. The non-motorized Eagle Trail is one of the park’s most popular but suffers from wet, soggy conditions until midsummer. For several months, the loop of trails and roads around the park is interrupted by this wet section of trail. Finishing and raising the surface of the Eagle Trail will allow trail use to continue year round.

The TAC supports the Borough’s grant request to complete the Eagle Trail at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Carol Kaynor, Chair  
Trails Advisory Commission  
Fairbanks North Star Borough
September 29, 2017

TO: Darcy B. Harris  
Alaska State Trails Program  
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1380  
Anchorage, AK 99501

THROUGH: Karl Kassel  
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

Re: Letter of Support for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department’s Grant Request for Funds to Develop Roadside Recreational Trailheads and Wayfinding

Dear Ms. Harris,

At its September 12th, 2017 meeting the Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough) Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) passed a motion to support the Borough’s grant request for funds to improve roadside trailheads in the Goldstream Valley and Goldstream Hills.

The Goldstream Valley and surrounding hills host several recreational trails identified in the Fairbanks North Star Borough’s Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan including: the Big Eldorado Creek Loop, Eldorado Creek Trail, Eldorado Ridge trails, O’Connor Creek and East Ridge Trails, Cranberry Trail, Tanana Valley Railroad Trail and trails in the Goldstream Valley Open Space and Public Use Area. This expansive, diverse and interconnected network of trails serves a wide variety of recreational trail users throughout the year with the most heavy use during winter for snowmachining, dog mushing, cross country skiing and winter biking. While the most dedicated trail users know these trails by heart, much of our community may be missing out due to lack of awareness about where and how to access these trails. Trailhead signs and maps are nonexistent, many trail entrances need brushing and hardening, and safe space for trailhead parking is limited. This project would improve visibility of the trails so that visitors can find and enjoy them. Trailhead information will help encourage responsible seasonal trail uses by visitors both new and old.

The TAC supports the Borough’s grant request to improve access to trails in the Goldstream Valley by improving roadside trailhead signage, wayfinding, and trail entrance surfacing.

Sincerely,

Carol Kaynor, Chair  
Trails Advisory Commission  
Fairbanks North Star Borough
September 29, 2017

TO: Karl Kassel
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

THROUGH: Bryant Wright
Trails Coordinator
Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

Re: TRAILS ADVISORY COMMISSION REQUESTS THAT THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH MAYOR OPPOSE THE DISCHARGE OF WARM WATER INTO THE CHENA RIVER BY THE CHENA POWER PLANT

Dear Mayor:

The purpose of the Trails Advisory Commission, per FNSBC 4.112.090, is to make suggestions to the Mayor on trail issues in Fairbanks on behalf of a broad constituency of FNSB trail users. For this reason, we would like to add our voice to the discussion surrounding Aurora Energy’s Chena Power Plant discharge of warm water into the Chena River, which prevents the river from freezing during the winter months.

Were the Chena River to freeze, it would provide a ready-made trail through the heart of Fairbanks’ residential areas, outskirts, and downtown. It would instantly become the most accessible winter trail in Fairbanks, and serve the most people. It would provide crucial connections between trail systems in Fairbanks, while serving the most user groups – from dog mushers to nordic skiers to the racers finishing the Iron Dog (which could have its finish line in downtown). Preventing the Chena River from freezing severely limits outdoor winter recreation in a city that is known for it.

The FNSB Trails Advisory Commission, while not directly responsible for recommendations involving the Chena River, recognizes that the pursuit of outdoor recreation opportunities is vital to the promotion of the economy, quality of life, and the overall health and well-being of the people of Fairbanks. Just as summertime floats down the Chena to one of the restaurants that fronts the river is a Fairbanks tradition, so could be ski or snowmachine trips to those same establishments.

The FNSB Trails Advisory Commission asserts that encouraging the growth of formal and informal river-based trails is congruent with the Commission’s purpose, and so we make this request. This discharge also has a direct impact on the accessibility of two trails in the FNSB Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, the Noyes Slough Trail and the Chena Slough Trail, which places this issue directly into our purview.

We on the Commission understand that this is a complicated problem with significant and broad-spectrum economic implications, that Aurora Energy is permitted to pump warm water into the Chena under the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation’s Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (permit no. AK0053333), and that finding an alternative to this discharge is not simple. But as representatives of a broad constituency of trail users in Fairbanks, we simply add ours to the voices requesting that a new alternative to this discharge be found.

The FNSB Trails Advisory Commission recommends to the Mayor that the Fairbanks North Star Borough formally request the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to deny the renewal of Aurora Energy’s permit to pump warm water into the Chena River.

Sincerely,

Carol Kaynor, Chair
Trails Advisory Commission
Fairbanks North Star Borough
September 29, 2017

TO: Karl Kassel
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

THROUGH: Bryant Wright
Trails Coordinator
Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

Re:Trail Advisory Commission Recommendation that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Pursue an Active Management Policy for Category B Trails Contained Within the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and for Trails With a Public Recreational Easement

Dear Mayor:

The purpose of the Trails Advisory Commission, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan (CRTP, 2006, Sect. III(C)(2)) and by FNSB Code 4.112.90, is to advise the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Mayor on trail issues. At its September 12th, 2017 regular meeting, the FNSB Trails Advisory Commission passed a motion to recommend that the FNSB pursue an active management policy for certain trails in the FNSB.

The following documentation supports active management by FNSB of Category B trails and those trails that have a recreational easement granted to the public:

1. FNSB has parks and recreation powers (FNSB Code 1.12.050.5)
   - Memo from Asst. Borough Attorney Wendy Doxy to TAC members, 2/9/2016, p. 1

2. FNSB has platting and land management powers (AS 29.40.040 & AS 40.15.030)
   - Memo from DNR Natural Resource Manager AJ Wait to Wendell Shiffer 5/10/2016

3. Recreational trails with public easements are held in trust by FNSB and managed for the public benefit (AS 40.15.030)
   - Memo from DNR Natural Resource Manager AJ Wait 5/10/2016
   - Memo from Asst. Borough Attorney Wendy Doxy 2/9/2016, p. 3

4. Recreational trails listed in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan (CRTP) are public recreational facilities (CRTP p. 10)

5. FNSB’s CRTP has stated that Category B trails will be managed by the borough (CRTP pp. 9–10)

   The TAC therefore recommends that the FNSB take an active management position under its "parks and recreation" powers in regards to Category B trails and those trails that have a recreational easement granted to the public.

Sincerely,

Carol Kaynor, Chair
Trails Advisory Commission
Fairbanks North Star Borough