

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH
Chena Riverfront Commission
August 25, 2021
12:03 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Chena Riverfront Commission was held Wednesday, August 25, 2021, in the Mona Lisa Drexler Assembly Chambers of the Juanita Helms Administration Center, 907 Terminal Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

ROLL CALL

There were present appearing telephonically and in person:

Diana Campbell	Robert Henszey
Julie Jones	Wade Binkley
Lee Wood	Gregory Barker
Annette Freiburger, Vice-Chairperson	Buki Wright, Chairperson

Comprising a quorum of the Commission, and

Sharon Wittenkeller, Administrative Assistant III
Kellen Spillman, Acting Community Planning Director
Brian Charlton, Acting Parks and Recreation Director
Andrew Ackerman, City of Fairbanks Engineering Department
John Netardus, State of Alaska DOT&PF Engineer/Architect II
Ashley Carrick, Executive Director for the Tanana Valley Watershed Association
Donnie Hayes, Parks and Recreation Department Manager of Pioneer Park
Jewlz Barker, Tanana Valley Watershed Association Consultant

MESSAGES

1. Chair's Comments

Chair Wright announced Brenda Naaktgeboren's resignation from the Commission.

2. Communications to the Chena Riverfront Commission

Kellen Spillman, Acting Community Planning Director, reiterated Brenda Naaktgeboren's resignation from the Commission. Mr. Spillman stated there are three vacancies currently on the Chena Riverfront Commission and explained the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Works is asking for local planning approval for the Gaffney Airport Richardson Steese (GARS) Interchange Project. Mr. Spillman noted there are five open positions within the Community Planning Department and further explained,

MESSAGES – continued

Jackson Fox, of Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning, was not able to attend the meeting and he was filling in for him.

2.a. Status updates on the Chena Riverfront Commission Project List

Mr. Spillman provided updates on the projects from the Chena Riverfront Commission Project list. The updates consisted of the printer brochures for Chena Riverfront Riparian Zone education, Chena River safety signage, Pioneer Park, the Downtown Plan, the riverboat dock downtown, the GARS Interchange Project, and the Tanana Valley Watershed Association projects.

Commissioner Campbell requested clarification on the Downtown Plan and Mr. Spillman gave an overview of the plan.

Commissioner Wood asked if there was a dock at the Big I Pub and Lounge. Discussion ensued and it was decided by Chair Wright that the discussion of the downtown docking sites would be added to the next meeting agenda in order for the commission to have a full discussion.

2.b. Status of the State of Alaska Chena River State Recreation Site (Wayside).

Mr. Spillman inquired whether Commissioner Henszey had information on this item. Commissioner Henszey requested an update from the State Parks on the closure of the Chena River Wayside Campground this summer. Mr. Spillman said he would reach out to Ian Thomas, Superintendent for Northern Region State Parks.

2.c. Status of the Graehl Park "Park-a-Year" preliminary concepts and planning.

Brian Charlton, Parks and Recreation Project Coordinator, asked the Commission for their input on ideas for the Graehl Park when it is updated next year. Mr. Charlton explained the basic concept for the park as it is currently envisioned. Mr. Charlton also stated that the Parks and Recreation Department is working with the Rasmuson Foundation in order to secure additional funding for the upcoming design and building process.

Commissioner Campbell stated the Rasmuson Foundation helped pay for some of the renovations at the Fairbanks Native Association and she offered photos to the commission if there was interest.

Mr. Spillman asked whether Mr. Charlton would be requesting a letter of support from the commission. Mr. Charlton stated a letter of support would be welcome, but he was uncertain if the letter of support would fit within the timeline.

3. Citizens Comments

3.a. Citizen's Comments on agenda items not scheduled for public hearing.

John Netardus, AK DOT&PF Engineer/Architect II, provided an update on the Chena Riverwalk Phase III project. He also provided updates on the AK DOT&PF Riverfront projects.

Commissioner Binkley inquired when the Airport Way redesign and construction would be complete. Mr. Netardus stated it was designed for completion in 2022. Commissioner Binkley further inquired what would happen to the temporary pedestrian bridge. Mr. Netardus replied that it was the property of the contractor working on the project.

Andrew Ackerman, City of Fairbanks Engineering Department, informed the Commission of the Northern Region Department of Transportation website and the overview it provides of current projects.

Ashley Carrick, Executive Director of the Tanana Valley Watershed Association, introduced herself. Ms. Carrick gave an overview of the Chena River Directional Sign Project and noted the Adopt-A-Stream program was wrapping up and she provided an update on the Stream Clean-Up day.

3.b. Citizen's Comments on items other than those appearing on the agenda.

NONE

4. Disclosure & Statement of Conflict of Interest

NONE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

BINKLEY,
Seconded by CAMPBELL

moved to approve the agenda and consent
agenda as read.

Motion withdrawn.

Chair Wright removed the minutes from the consent agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

BINKLEY,
Seconded by CAMPBELL

moved to approve the agenda.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Yeses: Henszey, Campbell, Wood, Freiburger,
Jones, Barker, Wright

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 8 Yeses, 0 Noes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Chena Riverfront Commission meeting minutes of July 28, 2021.

Commissioner Jones commented on the new format of the minutes, noted her appreciation for the detailed and brevity of the minutes and expressed concerns to see more of the Commissioners' input and comments reflected in future minutes.

Clerk's Note: Commissioner Henszey pointed out a typo in the minutes which had been corrected prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Campbell requested a correction in the minutes, under Commissioner Comments, adding "Gates of the Arctic National Park" to the minutes in replace of National Wildlife Parks Committee.

HENSZEY, moved to approve the minutes as
Seconded by FREIBURGER corrected.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.

Yeses: Binkley, Jones, Wood, Campbell, Henszey,
Freiburger, Wright

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 8 Yeses, 0 Noes

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Update and possible recommendation on the maintenance of the Chena Riverwalk Phase III Project.

Mr. Spillman provided a brief update and explained the requirements from the Alaska Railroad to proceed with the project. Mr. Spillman expressed future updates would be provided regarding the project and he did not think an action from the Chena Riverfront Commission would be required at this time.

Commissioner Jones spoke with the Fairbanks Public Works Department and provided information about multiple entities collaborating on maintenance.

Chair Wright stated this would be a recurring item on future agendas.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of drafting possible Letter of Support to FAST Planning regarding River Safety Signage.

Commissioner Binkley provided the Commission with an update on the River Safety Signage project.

Commissioner Barker explained Jackson Fox inquired about a letter of support that would be submitted along with the Tanana Valley Watershed’s Capital Improvement Plan application.

Chair Wright clarified the importance of timing and Commissioner Barker confirmed.

JONES,
Seconded by CAMPBELL

moved to submit a letter of support to the Tanana Valley Watershed Association for the Chena River Safety Signage Project.

VOTE ON MOTION TO SUBMIT A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO TANANA VALLEY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION FOR THE CHENA RIVER SAFETY SIGNAGE PROJECT.

Yeses: Freiburger, Henszey, Campbell, Barker, Wood, Binkley, Jones, Wright

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 8 Yeses, 0 Noes

Chair Wright requested the item to be placed under unfinished business on the next meeting agenda.

Clerk’s note: This agenda item was placed under reports per the request of the chair during agenda setting.

2. Review and possible recommendations on the Chena Riverfront projects being considered for the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) during the current nomination period of August 1, 2021 through September 17, 2021.

Brian Charlton, Parks and Recreation Project Coordinator, provided an update on the CIP Process and emphasized the importance of community support. Chair Wright provided historical knowledge of the project.

Clerk's note: No formal action was taken by the Commission.

3. Presentation by the FNSB Parks and Recreation Department on the Draft Pioneer Park Master Plan, review and possible recommendations from the Chena Riverfront Commission.

Donnie Hayes, Pioneer Park Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, provided a presentation on the Draft Pioneer Park Master Plan.

JONES, moved to extend the meeting by 10
Seconded by FREIBURGER minutes.

VOTE ON MOTION TO EXTEND THE MEETING BY 10 MINUTES.

Yeses: Jones, Wood, Barker, Henszey, Freiburger,
Campbell, Binkley, Wright

Noes: None

MOTION CARRIED 8 Yeses, 0 Noes

Mr. Hayes continued his presentation.

Chair Wright asked whether the Draft Pioneer Park Master Plan should remain on the next meeting's agenda.

The public comment period for the project was scheduled to close on September 1, 2021.

Clerk's note: No formal action was taken by the Commission.

EXCUSE FUTURE ABSENCES

Commissioner Binkley may be absent at the next meeting.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Wood echoed Commissioner Jones' comments regarding the meeting minutes and expressed desire for more detail of Commissioners' comments to be provided within the minutes.

Chair Wright expressed that learning any new format can be frustrating, and he regretted running short on time during the Draft Pioneer Park presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Chena Riverfront Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

APPROVED: September 22, 2021