

Seward State Parks Citizens Advisory Board

Minutes

March 14, 2017 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

AVTEC Culinary Arts Building Banquet Room, 518 Third Ave

I. Call to Order

- A. Call to Order by Chair Griswold at 5:06 pm
- B. Minutes-taker Mark Luttrell
- C. Roll Call: Carol Griswold, Mark Luttrell, Dan Walker
Nathaniel Charbonneau, Stephanie Wright
- D. Board members absent: Paul Paquette
State Park Staff present: District Ranger Jack Ransom, Park Specialist
Andy Bacon
Public members present: Nick Jordan
- E. Minutes Approval: December 13, 2016 approved by email and posted,
no meeting in January or February due to lack of quorum
- F. Agenda Changes and Approval: Dan moved and Stephanie seconded
motion to approve agenda. Dan moved and Carol seconded, unanimous, to change
agenda to discuss board meeting time change before State Park Staff Report.

II. Public Comments/Presentations: Nick Jordan, of Lowell Point, considerably wanted us to know that there will be construction vehicles on the ROW beginning in May. Nick also mentioned an interest in serving on the board. After discussion about the process of accepting a prospective board member's application, Carol moved and Nathaniel seconded, unanimous, that we approve his nomination now rather than wait until the next meeting. Jack R will handle the application and interview.

III. Reports:

A. State Park Staff Report, Jack Ransom: No new budget cuts for our district, after a 60% cut here two years ago, the entire district is only staffed by two people and we're down to bare bones.

Parks has approval to hire a general park worker through Alaska Conservation Corps. Position is three months, June - August, \$14/hour, duties will include serving as deckhand, helper and enhancement of safety in boats. On land, the position will repair flood damage and serve as go-to person. Candidate needs to be 18 years old or older, an Alaska resident, and will be offered housing. Position is available on the Parks website.

Grant application approved to purchase and build Tonsina Point Public Use Cabin in partnership with the AVTEC Construction Technology Class. The latrine, tables, and bunk beds will be prefabricated then installed by students. Prefab cabin will be transported to the beach and assembled by AVTEC students between May 2 - June 1.

State Parks is implementing a new online reservation program called ACTIVE. Jack will attend a two-day teleconference training.

Director position remains unfilled. Chief of Operations Matt Wedeking is also serving as acting Director.

Flood damage to the Derby Cove PUC area will be addressed this summer. Latrine is currently a safety hazard due to 3 feet erosion. The Derby Cove cabin was removed from online reservations until the problem is corrected.

One park employee mooring buoy at North Beach, a need for the last four years, will be engineered in Seward. Funding source not determined.

Twelve people from the Sierra Club here in June to dig new latrine holes, paint, and improve the facilities at North Beach and the Fort Trail.

Staff report Andy Bacon: as a seasonal employee, Andy returned to work March 1 and immediately began work to clear downed trees along Tonsina Trail.

Recreational Trail Program approved grant to repair and enhance Overland Trail in Caines Head State Recreation Area. Employment recruitment notices posted for three general workers at \$14/hour and one lead at \$16/hour.

Andy-posted a trespass notice issued by the State Division of Mining Land and Water at the abandoned mining camp in upper Tonsina Creek. Nathaniel informed us that the permit holder of record, Edmund Goresen, died 8 months ago. That information will be passed to MLW. Nathaniel reported that during a visit last fall, he noticed that usable placer mining equipment such as the suction dredges and other semi-valuable had been removed from the camp. He also found an "Action Packer" tote upstream several hundred feet that contained mining equipment. This led to speculation that someone has begun placer mining recreationally, and concern that the possible miner may file to use the existing abandoned camp. Both Nick and Nathaniel confirmed high use of the creek bed trail to the waterfall by hikers and skiers.

Discussion of Volunteer Service Agreements and the possibility of recruiting students from the outdoor leadership programs at UAA and APU.

Grant to fund video tutorials in several Park units approved. Andy will narrate tutorials for this area.

B. Committee Reports:

1. Lands and Property (Carol, Mark): Carol gave a short summary of some of the goals of the committee for the benefit of new members.

2. Education and Interpretation (Carol, Dan): Carol's information bulletins and better tide information are now included on the Park's website. The committee has many more suggestions, but staff time is limited.

Carol submitted two photos of Lowell Point Beach and encouraged others to submit to Eagle Watch, a valuable link to legislators. Jack mentioned that while many of the Park units on the Kenai Peninsula are seasonally fish based, Seward units are year-round parks and are attractive to visitors.

3. Public Use Cabins (Paul): No report.

4. Legislative (not filled). No report.

IV. Old Business

1. Discussion of different meeting time: New time is 6-8 pm, on the second Tuesday from September through May.

2. Committee assignments: Carol noted that every board member is required to participate on a committee. Dan suggested that we form a fifth committee to manage local concerns like parking, trail maintenance, volunteer recruitment and snow removal. The board approved a new "Local Issues" committee. Nathaniel and Dan agreed to be on the committee. Nick would like to join once his nomination is approved.

3. Lowell Point parking issues, including plowing: Jack suggested that locals with snow removal equipment could be encouraged to help remove snow at upper and lower LP parking lots, especially after a loader removes the massive current load, and the donors could be reimbursed for fuel and/or offered vouchers for cabin stays. Carol will contact the Lowell Point Community Council for possible funding and Dan will contact Metco. Also, since there is no available parking at LP, it was suggested that a black plastic garbage bag be secured over the existing "No Parking" sign at the intersection of the upper parking lot and Pinnacle View Road.

Also: discussion of the flood damage, repairs and mitigation for the first 50 feet of the Tonsina Point trail. It is not legal or considerate to allow the stream to find its natural course across the trail to the neighbor's driveway.

V. New Business

1. Select 2017 goals to focus on: We quickly reviewed the top four items on our goal list and determined that we are actively addressing them:

- Work with Alaska State Parks, Lowell Point Council, and Kenai Peninsula Borough to extend and/or manage parking around the LPSRS
- Work with State Parks staff to improve website re: Seward State Parks
- Promote Seward State Parks through Eagle Watch and publicity in the media
- Work with DMLW to remove abandoned Tonsina mine hazardous waste and trash

VI. Correspondence

1. Zoom video conferencing platform < <https://zoom.us/>>

While the purpose of a video conferencing system is valuable, the board emphasized the value of in-person meetings. Dan mentioned that iPhones can serve to connect the board with an off-site participant member, so we declined pursuing the Zoom video conferencing platform.

2. Owl in the Toilet article: none of the latrine vents have screens to prevent cavity-nesting birds from getting trapped. Jack will pursue obtaining 4 screens from DNR and get them installed.

VII. Public Comment: None

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Board Comments

- B. Date/Location of Next Meeting: April 11, 6 pm (note new time), AVTEC Culinary Arts

- C. Motion to Adjourn by Dan, seconded by Nathaniel unanimous, at 6:49 pm.