



Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes

Tuesday, June 18, 2024, 12:00 PM
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Members: Chair – James Poulson, Ben Hughey, Brandon Marx
Rich Krupa, Steve Black, Katherine Prussian, Candace Rutledge
Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Poulson called the Special Meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Ben Hughey, Brandon Marx, Candace Rutledge and Steve Black

Absent: James Poulson (excused), Rich Krupa (excused), and Katherine Prussian (excused)

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

Staff Present: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk, Kevin Knox, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, and Connor Dunlap Buildings, Grounds & Parks Supervisor

Others: None.

III. AGENDA CHANGES -None.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -None.

V. REPORTS – None.

VI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (For items OFF the agenda - Not to Exceed 3 Minutes) None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

D. Commercial Use Permit Applications

Alaska Sea Adventures

Black moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Alaska Sea Adventures at Baranof Warm Springs as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

The Committee discussed potential concerns from residents about increased use and its impact on the area, including inadequate facilities and littering.

Yes- Hughey, Rutledge, Marx, Black
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, and Prussian

Celerius Management Partnership

Black moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Celerius Management Partnership Warm Springs as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion passed 5-1 by a roll call vote.

The Committee expressed concerns about insufficient information and the need to reform of the permit process.

Yes- Rutledge, Marx, Black, Hughey
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, and Prussian

Custom Alaska Cruises

Rutledge moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Custom Alaska Cruises at Baranof Warm Springs as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion failed 0-4 by a roll call vote.

Concerns were raised by the Committee about the impact on local resources and the need for further discussions with the applicants to understand their plans and protocols.

No-Marx, Rutledge, Black, Hughey
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, and Prussian

Louie The Lab Walking Tours

Black moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Louie The Lab Walking Tours at Downtown Sitka as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

Adam Horton explained his business proposal for a commercial use permit for walking tours in downtown Sitka, aiming to promote tourism and raise awareness for a friend's battle with breast

cancer.

Yes- Black, Marx, Rutledge, Hughey
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, Prussian

Maple Leaf Adventures

Rutledge moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Maple Leaf Adventures at Baranof Warm Springs as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

Robyn Hutchings a Maple Leaf representative explained the business activity of the Canadian company that operates a small vessel, Swell, to visit Warm Springs Bay in Southeast Alaska, and addressed concerns about the company's environmental and crowd management practices. She mentioned the ship could accommodate up to 12 passengers and five crew members, and the company follows a policy of "leave no trace", ensuring all waste is packed out. The company also splits its groups into two phases to minimize the impact on the environment and the local community. The Committee requested that the company maintain informal limits on group sizes to minimize the impact on the area, as the locals have requested group sizes to be limited to five with a guide.

Yes- Rutledge, Marx, Black, Hughey
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, and Prussian

Mogambo Holdings Ltd.

Marx moved to recommend approval to the administrator for a permit for commercial recreational activity on city and borough lands for Mogambo Holdings Ltd at Baranof Warm Springs as it has been determined that the use as proposed: 1. Will not pollute or degrade the environment, resources, facilities, or atmosphere of the area; and 2. Will not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and 3. Will not significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of the area by other members of the public. Motion passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

Hughey had concerns from residents about group sizes and previous community agreements limiting them to under 10 guests.

Yes- Black, Marx, Rutledge, Hughey
Absent- Poulson, Krupa, Prussian

XI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (For items on or off the agenda - Not to Exceed 3 Minutes)
None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting would be on July 9, 2024, at noon in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Poulson called the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Attest:
Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk