

Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board
***** Meeting Minutes*****

Thursday December 11, 2014

5:30 p.m.

Gilman River Center
Soldotna, AK

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. **Roll Call:** Ricky Gease, Brenda Trefon, Keith Baxter, Dwight Kramer, Ted Wellman, Teri Carter, Andrew Carmichael, Rick Koch, Brent Johnson, Andy Loranger, Matt Conor, Jack Blackwell, and Tim Stevens.

Bobbie Jo Skibo was telephonically

2. **Minutes Approval:** Approved as written.

3. **Agenda Changes:** Ricky Gease requested that old business be moved to after the public comment/ presentation. Rick Koch also added under old business to add the consideration of Policy #1, to provide supplemental guidance and consistency to Bylaws Article IV. Nominations and Appointments.

Approval: Agenda was approved as amended.

- II. **Public Comments/Presentations:** Mike Selzetti of Homer Electric provided a general overview of the completed studies and the timeline of the Grant Lake hydro project.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Proposed Bylaw Changes for Advisory Board Recruitment/Committee Process: Rick Koch reported that changes were made to the bylaws on Page 3 of 6, number IV Nominations and Appointments. The changes included under A, All terms shall expire on June 30 of the appropriate year. Under C, The process would start no later than January 15th of each year, the board through its nominating committee, The final change was the voting Board members, except Board members being considered for re-appointment, and the Director of Parks and Outdoors Recreation or designee shall discuss the application and no later than one month prior to expiration of the term of office, nominate to the Commissioner individuals for each vacancy.

- Ricky Gease motion to adopt the bylaw changes
- Andrew Carmichael seconds the motion.

Discussion: Term limits were suggested but not recommended. Ricky Gease recommended on Page 5 or 6 under VI meetings, letter H that the board will have an annual meeting in October instead of January elections of President and Vice-President be conducted.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

2. Proposed Policy #1 supplemental guidance and consistency to Bylaws Article IV: Nominations and Appointments.

Rick reported that policy 001 support the bylaw changes that have been established, but will also provide guidance and consistency.

- Brent Johnson motion to adopt the policy.
- Ricky Gease seconds the motion.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

IV. REPORTS

1. Agency and Government Reports:

- A. **State Parks** –Jack Blackwell provided the board members with the following report:

Kenai Area Office, PO Box 1247, Soldotna, AK 99669, 907-262-5581
Gilman River Center 514 Funny River Road, Soldotna, AK 99669, 907-714-2471
Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Kenai Peninsula Borough



- Jack welcomed the new members to the board; Dwight Kramer, Keith Baxter, and Andrew Szczesny.
- The Kenai Area is currently in the process of hiring a park ranger position to replace Ranger Jason Okuly who has accepted a new position in Kachemak Bay.
- Parks and the Department of Fish and Game co-manage the River Ranch property along the Kenai River. This includes 130 acres off the Funny River Road near Kenai River Mile 31. Last session, the Funny River community secured \$35,000 to conduct a planning process for the property. Parks and ADFG have formed a planning team for this project and will be coordinating public scoping meetings in January. The first public scoping meeting will be held on January 20th at the Gilman River Center in Soldotna and the second public scoping meeting will be held on January 21st at the Atwood Building in Anchorage. The planning team is hoping to have a site plan developed by May 2015.
- The Department of Natural Resources has a new acting commissioner; Marty Rutherford. Marty has previously worked for the department for 19 years. She will be in the position until January 15, 2015 when Mark Myer will be taking the commissioner's position and Marty will be Deputy Commissioner.
- Governor Walker has forwarded the Parnell budget to the legislature. Walker will be making revision to the budget by mid February 2015. Parks is not sure what impacts this may have to our operating budget at this time.
- The Alaska Sustainable Salmon fund has approved grant funding for riverbank restoration work at the Bing's Landing boat launch area and the Kasilof Recreation Site boat launch.

B. DEC –Tim Stevens provided board members with the following report:

- The current DEC commissioner is Larry Hartig.

C. ADF&G –No Report

D. USFS/Chugach-Bobbie Jo Skibo provided the board members with the following report:

- An article in the local paper announced Alice West, who is currently an engineer student at University of Alaska Anchorage, is the first student to receive a patent for a fish waste disposal system using a hydro water system. This system was designed for the Russian River/Kenai River confluence area. Alice is the daughter of Robin West, past Refuge manager and KRSMA board member.
- Chugach National Forest is currently working on a revision of the management plan.
- Grooming will be occurring in the Russian River Campground as soon as we receive adequate snow fall for skiers in the area.

E. US F&WS- Andy Loranger provided board members with the following report:

- The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge comprehensive, conservation management plan was finalized in 2010. There were some changes to regulations such as the dispersed camping on the upper Kenai River. The draft language is being proposed and Andy will present this to the board at the January meeting.

Matt Conor provided board members with the following report:

- The date has changed for the soft opening of the new Kenai National Wildlife Refuge visitor center to February 13, 2015 from 3pm to 6pm. This is to give all the partners a chance to see the center before it opens to the public in May 2015.

F. City of Kenai-Rick Koch provided board members with the following report:

- Rick welcomed all new members to the board.
- The dip net report will be available in January 2015. This will include information about the new access road location on the south side of the river. A Corps of Engineers 404 application has been submitted.
- The city is waiting for Governor Walker's budget that may have impacts on grant programs.

G. City of Soldotna –Andrew Carmichael provided board members with the following report:

- The city is waiting for snow to start the hydrological study for Swiftwater campground for future improvements, such as access and bank improvements.
- The city is also currently working with Parks and Department of Fish and Game in establishing a connecting trail on the state property that is located between the Soldotna visitor center and Centennial Campground.

H. **Kenai Peninsula Borough**-Brent Johnson had no report.

C. **Committee Reports**

- President's Report**-Ted Wellman welcomed all new members to the board and also thanked Monte Roberts for his past service. Ted talked about the committee process and the need to use our committees as they were established. The committees were established to work on issues which will when be brought to the main board for consideration. Committees are welcome to meet on any day that is convenient for members.
- Guide Advisory**-No Report
- Habitat** – No Report
- River Use** – No Report
- Legislative/Government Activities** – No Report
- Board Development/ Nomination** – No Report
- Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping** – No Report

V. **NEW BUSINESS:**

VI. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Steve Vanek from Ninilchik stated that he is very disappointed with the board and the fish habitat along the Kenai River. Steve feels now is the time to put a limit on the number of guides using the river. This would include Fish and Game considering a catch and release regulations and bank fishing to have a no net loss of habitat.
- Dave Martin of Clam Gulch referenced the publication called Loving the Kenai River to death. With the increased population the Kenai River can only handle so much of this pressure. Habitat is being destroyed and access needs to be address. Limitations will need to be addressed in the future.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

a. **Board Comments:**

- Keith Baxter would like to keep up with the Spring River cleanup event. He also requested a list of committees and the members that are currently on each.
- Brent welcomed all new members and also Todd Smith for his efforts to attend the meetings.
- Jack thanked the public members and invited them to participate in the committee meetings.
- Dwight Kramer said he will be glad to participate in the River Use committee and also to be on the board.
- Tim Stevens welcome the new members.
- Rick thanked Jack for his help with the bylaws. He also thanked Todd Smith for his participation with the board.

