Baranof Park Improvements Endangered

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The Kodiak Island Borough Assembly and the Kodiak City Council updated each other on their projects - joint and otherwise - at a combined work session last night.

Sludge disposal, Baranof Park improvements, joint fishery committees and the fish and game headquarters project were all on the table.

City Manager Linda Freed said the proposed composting of sewer solids, otherwise known as sludge, could require massive amounts of green wood to be successful, and if it is, the city might wind up with more compost than can be utilized. Freed speculated that even if every home in Kodiak had a lawn and a garden, there might still be compost left over. KMXT reported on the project Monday. If you missed it, check our archives, below.

With costs skyrocketing, large-scale improvements to Baranof Park might be endangered. The project had grown to include artificial turn on the football and baseball fields, new bleachers and an eight-lane rubberized track, with the cost swelling to nearly 7-million-dollars. Freed said the city's parks and recreation director, Ian Fulp, is suggesting a return to the genesis of the project: a new running track around the football field. Both the city and borough have put Baranof Park improvements on their state project wish list.

Freed also reported that both the Kodiak Fisheries Development Association and the Kodiak Fisheries Advisory Committee have vacancies and it's difficult getting folks wanting to serve on them. She encouraged the council and assembly members to urge interested parties to contact her.

Borough Manager Rick Gifford gave an update on the project to build a new Alaska Department of Fish and Game headquarters on Near Island. The borough has been pursuing funding and has secured several million from the State of Alaska. Gifford said preliminary work has already been contracted out. Borough Mayor Jerome Selby said the ideal building site is not far from the current fisheries buildings, where utilities already exist, but not on the hillside overlooking Trident Basin. The 14-million-dollar cost of the building requires the city to donate the land. Councilmembers Gabriel Saravia and Jack Maker expressed approval of the idea, saying it was important for Kodiak's future to keep fish and game jobs here.

Lisa Hupp also gave an update on the city and borough's environmental footprint, which she was hired to measure. Tune in to KMXT tomorrow for that story.