



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Eisenbeisz & Assembly Members

Thru: John Leach, Municipal Administrator 

From: Kevin Knox, Parks and Recreation Coordinator 

Date: 4/2/2025

Subject: Ordinance No. 2025-06: Revision to Title 14, Chapter 14.05, "Public Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities, Land, and Trails"

Background:

The current code governing the public use of our parks and recreation facilities has become outdated. Several factors have necessitated this comprehensive update:

- **Outdated Regulations:** The existing code referred to practices and departments that are no longer utilized in administering parks and recreation facility management and operations.
- **Expansion of Parks and Recreation Division Responsibilities:** With the expansion of the Parks and Recreation Division and its increasing scope of responsibilities, the existing code lacked the necessary framework to empower staff to effectively serve the public.
- **Need for Modernized Administration:** The previous code relied heavily on in-person permit applications, which is inefficient and inconvenient for residents. Allowing for the use of online reservation systems enables the division to serve the public in a modern, efficient and accessible manner.
- **Increased Public Usage:** Sitka's parks and recreation areas are experiencing increased usage, requiring updated regulations to ensure responsible use and preservation.
- **Administrative Clarifications:** The old code lacked clarity in certain areas, making management of fee schedules and other duties unclear. Changes proposed will codify the responsibility of adopting all fee schedules with the Assembly.

This memorandum accompanies Ordinance No. 2025-06, which amends Title 14, Chapter 14.05 of the Sitka General Code, concerning the public use of parks and recreation facilities, land, and trails. An updated ordinance is critical in modernizing our existing regulations to reflect the evolving needs of our community and the increased responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Division.

Proposal:

Ordinance No. 2025-06 introduces several amendments and changes to the existing code:

- Adds a policy section to establish a reasoning for operating and supporting a parks and recreation division.
- Clarification of Park and Facility Activities (14.05.010):
 - Expands outlined definitions of activities to include indoor facilities.
 - Formalizes the coordination of facility use with the Sitka School District through a memorandum of understanding, ensuring community-wide benefit.
- Revised Park Scheduling and Permit Procedures (14.05.020):
 - Streamlines the permit process for special uses, requiring a written application submitted to the parks and recreation office.
 - removes a redundant item regarding reserving facilities.
 - Adds that a fee schedule will be adopted by the assembly based on parks and recreation committee recommendations.
- Community Use Cabin Management (14.05.060):
 - Establishes clear guidelines for the management and use of community use cabins, including the Tom Young Memorial Cabin.
 - Specifies residency requirements, allows for online reservations and permit acquisition procedures.
 - Adds specific rules for the use of the cabins.
 - Will also allow for the expansion of cabin assets without additional code changes immediately necessary.
- Definitions (14.05.180):
 - Adds clear definitions of terms used throughout the ordinance.

Recommendation:

Staff and the Parks and Recreation Committee's unanimous recommendation is to adopt the proposed change to Sitka General Code 14.05.