ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2023-76

AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 25.70 REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS, CROSSBOWS, OR SHOOTING OF A BOW AND ARROW ON MUNICIPAL PARK LANDS.

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department maintains over 10,000 acres of municipal parkland open for the use and enjoyment of all members of the public; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage is dedicated to providing safe and healthy access to nature and outdoor recreation for all; and

WHEREAS, currently, Anchorage Municipal Code section 25.70.040A. prohibits “Sport or commercial hunting or trapping of game animals” except in “areas specifically designated for such use in accordance with law”; and

WHEREAS, another section specific to municipal parks, AMC section 25.70.060Q., prohibits any person from “discharge[ing] a firearm or shoot[ing] a bow and arrow in a park except in areas designated by the director, where there is no reasonable likelihood of jeopardy to people, domestic animals, or property.”; and

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting on June 6, 2023, the Assembly passed AO 2023-64, which amended AMC section 25.70.060Q. to require the director of Parks and Recreation submit a written safety plan to the Assembly as a requirement for the approval of any use of a firearm, crossbow or bow and arrow on a public park for purposes of hunting; and

WHEREAS, prior to the passage of AO 2023-64, portions of Edmonds and Mirror Lake Parks as included in the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game drawing permit hunt map for hunt DM444 had been designated by the director of Parks and Recreation as an approved area where the limited hunting of moose has been conducted in the past without subjecting people, domestic animals or property to unreasonable risk of danger; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly wishes the Parks and Recreation department to continue using public lands for such sports as archery and biathlon and does not wish to add new requirements to the department’s already established safe and responsible practices; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage has legal authority over lands it owns to restrict or prohibit access, and to prohibit the discharge of firearms and other weapons like a bow and arrow or crossbow on its lands; now, therefore,
THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:

Section 1. Anchorage Municipal Code chapter 25.70 is hereby amended to read as follows (the remainder of the chapter is not affected and therefore not set out):

25.70.040 Prohibited activities generally.

A. Except in areas specifically designated for such use in accordance with law, no person may engage in any of the following activities on municipal land:

10. [SPORT OR COMMERCIAL] Hunting or trapping of game animals.

(AO No. 79-170; AO 2006-39, § 7, 4-11-06; AO No. 2019-50(S), § 3, 6-6-19)

25.70.060 Activities prohibited in parks.

Q. No person shall discharge a firearm or crossbow, or shoot a bow and arrow in a park except in areas designated by the director prior to June 6, 2023, where there is no reasonable likelihood of jeopardy to people, domestic animals, or property. The director may not designate a new area where discharge of a firearm or crossbow, or shooting a bow and arrow, [for purposes of engaging in [SPORT HUNTING OR COMMERCIAL HUNTING] is authorized on or after June 6, 2023, unless a written plan to mitigate the safety risks as required by this subsection is approved by the assembly. The assembly shall hold a public hearing before taking action on the director’s proposed plan.

(AMCR 25.10.016; AO No. 92-165(S-1); AO 2006-39, § 8, 4-11-06; AO 2019-34, § 4, 4-18-19, AO 2023-64)

Section 2. Section 2 of AO 2023-64 is hereby repealed and/or rescinded. The intended effect is that any activities involving the discharge of firearms or shooting of a bow and arrow that was previously allowed designated areas of municipal parks prior to June 6, 2023 shall continue to be allowed without needing the director to submit a written plan for safety to the Assembly for approval.

Section 3. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this ______ day of ______________, 2023.

Chair
ATTEST:

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Municipal Clerk