
Citizens' Taskforce Minutes

Monday, December 21, 2015 6:00PM

Sealing Cove Business Center

Citizens' Taskforce Members: Rob Allen, Maxwell Rule, Lawrence SpottedBird,
Dyan Bessette, Cynthia Gibson, Mary Magnuson, Hugh Bevan
Tristan Guevin (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Rob Allen, Maxwell Rule, Lawrence SpottedBird, Dyan Bessette, Cynthia Gibson
(arrived at 6:06PM), Mary Magnuson and Hugh Bevan

Absent: None

Assembly Liaison: Tristan Guevin

Staff: Planning and Community Development Coordinator Maegan Bosak, Administrative
Coordinator Renee Wheat, Utility Director Bryan Bertacchi, Public Works Director Michael
Harmon, Chief Finance and Administrative Officer Jay Sweeney, Assessor Wendy Lawrence,
Fire Chief Dave Miller, Human Resources Director Mark Danielson, Library Director Robb
Farmer and Deputy Environmental Superintendent Shilo Williams

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**M - Rule/S - Bevan moved to approve the minutes from December 7, 2015. Motion
carried unanimously.**

IV. REPORTS

Chair - None.

Members - Bevan told that he had received public comments and asked that they be posted
to the Taskforce webpage. Administrative Coordinator Wheat relayed the public comments
had been posted to the Taskforce webpage and showed the members where the comments
were located online. She relayed all comments posted would remain anonymous.

City Staff - CFAO Sweeney spoke to Governor Walker's budget roll out. He gave an overview
of oil price per barrel and relayed Crescent Harbor grant funds were passed over for the
second year in a row. He conveyed the Municipalities would receive \$50,000,000 however,
it is unknown how it would be distributed.

Assembly Liaison - Guevin advised the Assembly would be available on January 12, and
January 26, 16 for a work session with the Taskforce.

Other(s) - None.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Core Services Review and B. Revenues and Exemptions

Chair Allen opened the floor to discussion regarding Core Services, Revenues, and
Exemptions. Rule spoke of modeling/further discussion of uncapping the mill rate but to

offer low income property tax exemption. He thought to keep the senior sales tax exemption. He spoke of looking at sales tax of groceries coupled with reduction in general government expense. SpottedBird agreed with Rule that the focus should be on valuation of property and reduction in government expense. He thought to move forward on monopolizing the export of local water. Bevan spoke of placing controls on government expense rather than generating more revenue and suggested CPI plus 1%. Magnuson spoke of controlling budget spending and citizens felt over taxed. She conveyed grant money is not free as it produces cost for infrastructure upkeep. She suggested local hire for capital projects to grow our economy. Bessette agreed with Magnuson on budget control and suggested only continued services that were absolutely necessary. Gibson spoke of modernizing the property tax structure and reviewing property tax exemptions. She agreed with Rule on concentrating on livability. Assessor Lawrence reviewed the current mill rate and the process of uncapping the mill rate but capping revenue. Discussion occurred on senior, low income, homesteaded, and disabled veterans property tax exemptions. Assessor Lawrence reviewed the list of property tax exemptions. Bevan thought to remove all property and sales tax exemptions and then add back exemptions that were currently relevant. Discussion occurred on sales tax exemptions such as the cap on taxable transactions, sales to government and long-term rentals.

C. Schedule Town Hall Meeting and Assembly Work Session

The Taskforce agreed to meet with the Assembly for a work session on January 26, 2016 at 5:00PM and to look at scheduling a Town Hall Meeting later.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Jonathan Kriess-Tomkins spoke of his concern for the livability of citizens. He asked the Taskforce to consider a homesteaded property tax exemption of up to \$50,000 and spoke of its benefits. Shirley Robards conveyed profound disapproval of cutting the senior sales tax exemption and told of the 1,200 signatures she had collected against the concept. She asked about cost of renting Sealing Cove Business Center (SCBC), cost of holding meetings at SCBC and stated they could be held at City Hall and the Sitka School District for no charge. She asked who covered the electricity and maintenance payments for the Performing Arts Center and spoke in agreement of online sales tax.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A. Set next meeting date

Discussion occurred on agenda items for the next meeting. Agreement was reached to review the process of receiving exemptions, prioritize property and sales tax exemptions, and discuss city expenditures. The next meeting date was set for Monday, January 4, 2016.

M - Allen/S - Magnuson moved to adjourn. Seeing no objection the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:04PM.

Attest:
Renee Wheat, Administrative Coordinator