

Sitka Port and Harbors Commission Minutes

Wednesday, October 12, 2016 6:00PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Port and Harbors Commission Members:

Josh Arnold, Mary Ann Peterson, Melissa Greenhalgh,
Eric Skousen, Michael Nurco, Brendan Jones
Matt Hunter (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mary Ann Peterson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:17PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Mary Ann Peterson, Melissa Greenhalgh, Brendan Jones, Michael Nurco

Absent: Josh Arnold (excused), Eric Skousen (unexcused)

Assembly Liaison: Matthew Hunter (present)

Staff: Harbormaster Stan Eliason, Deputy Harbormaster Chuck Hackett, Office Manager Kristi Jones, Administrative Coordinator, Renee Wheat, and Planning and Community Director, Maegan Bosak

III. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

IV. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Kevin Knox – Wanted to say thank you to staff and the commission for the work they do. He looks forward to working with the staff and the commission in the future with his new role on the assembly. He encouraged anyone interested in serving on commissions to come forward, as they are an important role.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M – Nurco/S – Greenhalgh moved to approve the September 19, 2016 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. REPORTS

- 1) Harbormaster – Harbormaster Eliason stated that the Bridge Lightering Facility generated \$19,000 in reserved moorage over the 2016 summer season. He spoke to a yacht captain, who would be interested in using the facility more in 2017. This could generate up to \$30,000 for this facility alone. Total reserved revenue for 2016, was \$137,000, up from \$114,000 the year before.

STF Dock (Sitka Transient Float) was heavily used throughout the summer, and expect it to be as much this winter.

Baranof Warm Springs project had started and substantial completion would be mid-November.

Crescent Harbor Tier 1 project scored in 2nd place with the State's 50/50 matching grant program, and Eliason Harbor Tier 2 electrical project scored 3rd place. We will have to keep moving forward and applying for these grants.

Deputy Harbormaster Hackett, stated that the mariner wall was getting cleaned up for Alaska Day. He also stated that currently there were some vessels impounded below the office that would be auctioned off later this week. Deputy Harbormaster Hackett, said that Office Manager, Kristi Jones was currently assigning winter hot berths.

2) City Staff – None.

3) Chair – Chair Peterson, stated that it was her last meeting, as she would be stepping down and spending more time down south. She was very honored and proud that individuals came together to work with the City staff and the Commission to accomplish great things. She recommended to the Commission that they address moorage rates earlier in the fall, so that fisherman could be part of the discussion.

4) Other(s) –

a) Bruce Hess – National Electrical Code Report:

Bruce Hess, part owner of Puffin Electric had wired over 20 state harbors and wanted to speak to the commission about his concerns about the National Electric Codes in regards to Harbors. He stated that every four years the electric code goes through an automatic approval process. The next electrical code update is due in 2017 and he saw some alarming problems in terms of GFI breakers. The current code (2014) had electric GFI breakers at each pedestal, but the proposed (2017) code would put the only breaker at the electrical box at the top of the harbor. He urged the commission to draft a resolution against this, as it would create major issues, for harbors and boat owners.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1) **Moorage Rates** – Harbormaster Eliason provided the Commission with a packet of Southeast and other Alaskan cities moorage rates comparative to Sitka. Chair Peterson commented that we were about in the middle of the pack. Deputy Harbormaster Hackett, explained that some of the cities that were on the lower end of the rates, do not provide the same community services as Sitka. Harbormaster Eliason also reminded the Commission that Sitka still gives a 25% discount to transient vessels, who provide a fish ticket with their time in port.
- 2) **Seaplane Float Dock Repairs Update** – Harbormaster Eliason let the Commission know that the seaplane float repairs were completed and the facility was open for use. At this time, there was only one plane using the facility, however it is also fall season.
- 3) **Election of Chair and Vice Chair** – Elected to Chair – Mike Nurco. Motion carried unanimously. Elected to Vice Chair – Melissa Greenhalgh. Motion carried unanimously.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- 1) **Sitka Veterans Association Presentation**- Presenters Jamie Ackely, Sam Pointer gave an overview of the Veterans Memorial Park, which would be behind the Harrigan Centennial Hall. Jamie Ackley introduced other members that were present in the audience, George Bennett, Jack Greenhalgh and Jeremy Neal. Jamie Ackley, Sam Pointer and George Bennett all explained how the memorial park would be not only educational for children and others in the community, but it would honor the families and individuals that served throughout the conflict in Alaska communities, but especially here in Sitka. Jamie Ackley asked for the Port and Harbors commission to give their blessing to move forward with their concept.

Chair Peterson asked Harbormaster Eliason if he saw any issues with the concept of the memorial park plan. Harbormaster Eliason did not see any issues with the plan.

- 2) **M – Jones/S - Greenhalgh moved to approve the concept of the Sitka Veterans Memorial Park concept. Motion passed unanimously.**

- 3) **Presentation and discussion of approval process for short-term rentals on boats in CBS Harbors.** –Maegan Bosak –Planning and Community Development (PCD) Director spoke to the Commission about the approval process of the short term rental on boats. Short term rental is defined as 14 days or less. PCD Director Bosak explained that the Assembly had approved short term rentals on boats in the spring. PCD Director Bosak asked the Commission how they would like to see the requests and what sort of conditions would the Commission like to see be met. PCD Director Bosak suggested that the Planning Commission and the Port & Harbors commission have a joint work session to better solidify the process. Chair Peterson, said she would like to see a long range plan discussed at this work session. PCD Director Bosak stated that Harbormaster Eliason would like to see a future cap on not only live-a-boards, but also future short term rentals per harbor. Brendan Jones stated that the wave was coming, due to increase affordability in Sitka. Jones liked the idea of being part of the vetting process early on, instead of being bulled over once it happens. Deputy Harbormaster Hackett, stated that the tabletop discussion at the joint work session would be the best idea to for the City to be able to understand the manageability of the short term rentals. PCD Director Bosak stated that the work session would be most likely late November, or early December.

- 4) **Discussion of additional summer meeting(s)** Mike Nurco asked what brought the additional meeting up. Assembly Liaison – Matt Hunter stated that he could speak to the issue. Liaison Hunter explained that there was a request for a building project to replace the Petro Marine Lincoln Street float. This went through all the permitting processes, but was waiting for Assembly approval. Since the Port and Harbors Commission does not meet until the fall, it was not possible to complete this request, as the Assembly would like to hear from each Commission, before making their final decision. Liaison Hunter, asked if it was possible to have a summer meeting to allow due process in a timely matter. Chair Peterson, asked if it was possible to have a special meeting, if these issues came up. Commission members spoke about how busy summer could be with fishing and individuals not able to attend a regular scheduled summer meeting. Liaison Hunter, stated that a special meeting is possible, it would only need a couple of days to promote. Commission members were in favor of this type of meeting, if issues arose.

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting would be held Wednesday, November 9, 2016.

Agenda Items: Large Vessel Accommodation: Harbormaster Eliason requested discussion of a large vessel accommodation for the winter with a 125ft commercial vessel looking to homeport in Sitka.

Resolution NO. 2016-xx – A Resolution of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska in support of the State of Alaska adopting the following fine print note to the 2017 National Electrical Code Article 555.3:

Short Term Rentals on Boats

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objection the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:08pm

Attest:

Chuck Hackett, Deputy Harbormaster