

Session 11-07, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 5:00 p.m. on July 27, 2011 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS CARROLL, HARTLEY, ULMER, ZIMMERMAN

ABSENT: HOTTMAN, WEDIN, HOWARD

STAFF: PORT AND HARBOR DIRECTOR HAWKINS
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as written by consensus of the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no reconsiderations scheduled.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 22, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved by consensus of the Commission.

VISITORS

STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Port and Harbor Director's Reports for July 2011

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his staff report.

He added that they have been looking at the pilings with the holes, the same ones he showed the Commission photos of a few months back. One thing they found is that there doesn't appear to be any electrical stray current issues. Further research has turned up a substance that appears to be a growth. It reminds him of manganese, like appears in wells in Homer. It is like an iron growth and it resembles something that is being studied on the East Coast. Some of the science community has looked at it from an invasive species standpoint, but don't think that's the case, but Harbormaster Hawkins isn't sure. He feels like it is spreading and appears to grow in a band of it that shows up about 6 feet off the sea floor and stops at about 10 feet off and is attaching itself to the metal structures. It doesn't appear to be taking the galvanized coating off. The piling with the holes with the holes, R & S float were put in around 1986, those piles were non standard pipe. The piles were not centered in the pile hoop so at extreme tides there is an area that has flattened out the steel over the years. He doesn't know if it has anything to do with the growth, but will keep the Commission informed.

He also updated the Commission about the Council action to opt out of the automated tsunami warning system and take back control locally through Homer Police Department dispatch, Petro Marine Services improvements, transfer of port maintenance responsibility from Public Works back to the Port and Harbor Department, and the jack up rigs coming into the bay.

B. Lease Committee

Commissioner Zimmerman reported that the Lease Committee has been discussing issues with lease renewal rates and new lease rates for non profits. Harbormaster Hawkins commented that he doesn't feel the Lease Policy gives enough direction in determining the City's best interest when negotiating reduced fees for non profits. The Committee will continue to discuss the evaluation process.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearing scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Review of Record Regarding Commission Action on Long Term Parking Fees

The Commission briefly discussed their previous actions. Point was raised about the coupon book not being followed through on and after discussion with Harbormaster Hawkins the Commission agreed to not pursue the coupon book until a stronger need presents itself.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2011-2017 Capital Improvement Plan Recommendations

The Commission discussed the system 5 upgrade. Harbormaster Hawkins explained that there aren't safety issues, just lack of service and we are losing business because of it. Vessel owners have to use their generators as there are only 10 pedestals on a 3000 foot (1500 feet per side). There are over 30 large vessels there in the winter, so it is a good business decision to make this improvement. He noted that they linked the harbor float replacement and ramp 3 gangway and approach replacement with the system 5 upgrade when they applied for and got the Denali fund grant for engineering. The grant has been awarded but Denali fund hasn't gotten their federal government funding yet. Harbormaster Hawkins suggested ranking the two projects one after another to stay consistent with that. The effort to get the engineering completed is so it will be a shovel ready project if stimulus funds become available.

There was discussion of a new Port & Harbor building. Harbormaster Hawkins noted his personal feeling is that it is not an infrastructure improvement and the building works. On the other hand he said it is a patchwork quilt of a building, there isn't enough space and he knows it's a project that people think would be a good idea. If it comes together with City money we should probably build the building. From a marketing stand point, putting your best foot forward is sometimes a good idea too.

The erosion issue hasn't become an emergency, but it does get worse each year, especially during bad winter storms.

Question was raised if the deep water dock expansion would increase revenue. Harbormaster Hawkins commented that he thinks the main motivation there is because the City is most interested in being able to receive containerized freight into Homer. Dock usage has increased to levels he feels can justify an expansion for extra space for more dockage. It's filling up out there. The Pioneer dock is essentially a ferry dock. They can schedule around ferry landings but the dock isn't really used to its fullest potential. The deep water dock expansion is starting to make sense on more than one level now. He reviewed some of the upcoming activity.

The Commissioner's individually ranked their top 5 projects which resulted in overall ranking as follows:

1. Upgrade System 5-Vessel Shore Power & Water
2. Deep Water Dock Expansion
3. Harbor Float Replacement/Ramp 3 Gangway and Approach Replacement
4. Harbor Entrance Erosion Control
5. Port and Harbor Building

They discussed reprioritizing and agreed to include this on the next agenda to allow for other Commissioners to provide input.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Weekly Crane and Ice Report
- B. Deep Water Dock Report
- C. Pioneer Dock Report
- D. Pioneer Dock Ferry Landings Report
- E. Water Usage 2011
- F. Monthly Statistical & Performance Report
- G. Memo from Harbormaster to City Council re: Long Term Parking Fines on the Spit
- H. Resolution 11-074 Amending Fee Schedule for Port & Harbor Long term Parking Fines
- I. Resolution 11-075 Amending the Port of Homer Terminal Tariff to Provide for Port & Harbor Long Term Parking Fines
- J. Strategic Plan
- K. Lease Expirations as of 2/17/11
- L. Commissioner Attendance Schedule for City Council Meetings

There was brief discussion about the cruise ship activity and fees.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

There were no audience comments.

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

Harbormaster Hawkins commented about his recent trip to Whittier and Valdez. Whittier's launch ramp was the last one completed by Fish and Game funding. He looked it over and it is pretty impressive, nice system. It is something the City should keep pushing for. They drove onto the fast ferry and rode to Valdez and got a tour of their facilities. He said he was

impressed with their operations overall. He commented about a project for an industrial dock that resulted in the City signing an exclusive use agreement with a long shoring company. No competition means the rates go up. His thought is that it is a public owned facility, so why would we ever sign an exclusive use for anyone to control our facility. It's bad business and it's important to defend the competitive atmosphere on the spit.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

There was no Councilmember in attendance.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ulmer had no comment.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

There were no further Commission comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 24, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____