

Session 14-08 a Regular Meeting of the Vessel Haul-Out Task Force was called to order by Chair Howard at 3:36 p.m. on June 16, 2014 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 401 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: CARROLL, HAWKINS, HOWARD, LEWIS, PATE,
PITZMAN, STOCKBURGER

STAFF: CITY CLERK JOHNSON

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Howard called for a motion to approve the agenda.

LEWIS/PITZMAN – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Don Lane reminded the task force the competition for large vessel haul-out is in Seattle, not Kodiak and Seward. Money from the State will create funds for Alaska jobs and economics as opposed to going to Seattle.

Rachel Lord, Cook Inlet Keeper and Clean Harbors Program, made recommendations for the task force's final report: develop a stormwater/pollution plan; develop a best management practices list (e.g. Kodiak, Wrangell, Port Townsend); vessel work plan; unapproved contractor sign-up sheets; determine how best practices will be enforced; fee schedule to give harbor teeth to follow up; vessel wash down pad; way to treat wastewater; and build containment and runoff area.

RECONSIDERATION

SYNOPSIS APPROVAL

A. June 2, 2014 Meeting Synopsis

Chair Howard called for a motion for the approval of the minutes of June 2, 2014.

LEWIS/HAWKINS - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS

STAFF REPORTS

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Wrangell Report

In review of the Wrangell Report the committee discussed the following areas of the haul-out facility that need consideration.

A mission and setting true goals for a vessel haul-out facility is needed. The facility should not negatively impact the enterprise. There is concern these operations will be funded through the rest of the harbor users. If the City successfully secures grant monies for a facility there will be costs to maintain it.

If the City manages the facility we have to be able to explain clearly why we are doing what. We cannot justify an operation that continually costs the enterprise; a short-term expenditure could be justified. The travel lift will need to be self-sustaining and not at the expense of the small harbor users.

There will be an economic benefit to businesses in Homer that will be felt immediately. Hotels and restaurants will derive income from the haul-out facility.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) could update the project and we can focus efforts towards funding sources from the State. The CIP project can include the potential of the haul-out facility and the revenue and jobs that are leaving the State without such a facility. Waiting for funding from the State may take a while. Another funding option is for the City's general fund to loan money for the project to be paid back over a couple of years.

The City Council needs to receive a plan with stages of the project, estimated costs, and the estimated revenue stream from each of the facilities and services provided. Other needs include a wash down area and access to power in the uplands.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Vessel Haul-Out and Repair Facility Maintenance and Budget

A document was not prepared for maintenance and budget issues.

B. Development of Final Task Force Report

Chair Howard asked that Bryan Hawkins bring out why we are here and how we got here. She referenced the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission minutes of December 4, 2013 that was provided as a laydown.

The objective is to provide work for the marine trades of Homer. Currently Northern Enterprises is limited by the number of days they can do haul-outs and the weight of the vessel. We don't want to be in competition with Northern Enterprises or anyone else; we are trying to find the niches that need to be met. Some of those needs include haul-outs for barges, 70 ton and heavier vessels, flat bottom vessels, and vessels that are deep draft exceeding 70 ton. There is a significant local group that needs care.

Options for the haul-out facility are open vs. closed and private management vs. public management. There must be a business plan outlining the costs for each different stage.

Chair Howard started a draft memorandum to City Council and asked committee members to add information in the categories. Council is well aware of the enterprise and economic engine of the port and harbor. Some members are very protective of the monies. Council will be interested in stages, costs, and suggested funding sources. They are very happy with the improvements at the harbor and proud of the harbor. The task force was created to find out the needs of the fishing community.

Council won't want to hear the City has to come up with all the funding for the haul-out facility. Perhaps marine trades' apprenticeships could be started and the Department of Labor could offer training. If a cradle or dolly system were added the project revenue stream from that should include all phases and a list of the benefits.

Task Force Member Mike Stockburger arrived at 4:10 p.m.

Bryan Hawkins will rewrite the CIP projects of the barge moorage facility and large vessel haul-out. They could be rewritten to better fit our needs now. Costs will be included and available for the July 25 meeting. The marine ways large vessel haul-out had a grandiose idea tied into the East Boat Harbor Expansion. We could redirect and rewrite the CIP project to get the deep draft vessels out of the water. That could be accomplished with a machine other than a travel lift that would require a pier and to face the harbor.

Other ideas included:

- All stages of the facility can be profitable
- Access fee for vendors to work in the yard
- Business model must make sense
- Refrain from getting into the boat storage business
- Structure rates for use of the lifts, encourage boats in and out
- Business opportunity for the community/Additional revenue for the City

- Seasonal dates/fees reduced in off season: October 1 – April 15
- Offer heated space for off season painting

Chair Howard and Task Force Member Pate will put the plan together for Member Hawkins to review. The intent is to have a plan for the committee to review at their July 25th meeting.

Items for the next agenda:

1. Two CIP projects rewritten
2. Report to City Council will be refined, including ideas and concepts from today
3. Description of customer base, who we are serving, who we are not serving, and why we are not serving them

The plan will go to the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission first and then the Task Force will make the final adjustments for the report to the City Council.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Resolution 14-015, Appointing the Vessel Haul-out Task Force to Review and Make Recommendations on a Large Vessel Haul-Out and Repair Facility at the Port
- B. Barge Mooring Facility Info from 2014-2019 CIP
- C. Aerial Picture of Tr. 1-A and the Fishing Lagoon
- D. Draft Business Plan Outline
- E. Research on Haul-Out Yard Management Options
- F. Task Force Meeting Schedule

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Don Lane, city resident, commented staff is everything as to how successful the haul-out is. The Homer staff is excellent, caring, and take the time to talk to people to solve problems. Some harbor staff do not. Costs for power need to balance with the cost of using a generator; otherwise power would not be a viable option.

Rachel Lord, city resident, encouraged the committee to capture various options for the various components. She is supportive of an open yard run by the City. She recommended the report to Council include all costs and intended returns as well as the extended economic benefits to the community and the marine trades.

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

There were no comments of City staff.

COMMENTS OF THE TASK FORCE

Mike Pate appreciates the group as we can speak freely and no one is easily intimidated. We need to defend those that own 28 ft. boats. An important part of the economics is that the community will have to sell the haul-out service too.

Glen Carroll is anxious to get down to the different costs, phases of the project, and revenue return and benefit to the community. Our job will then be done.

Ian Pitzman commented this is a report we have worked really hard on and it is also a sales pitch for all the benefits it can bring the community. It feels like we are closer to having a good product.

Bryan Hawkins tries to back away from the harbor far enough to see both sides and the big picture. We spend money and develop facilities for as many of the user groups as we can. The goal is to affect the largest set of users. We must ask what we are going to do for the big boats.

Mike Stockburger pointed out a lift on its own will not make money. All those things associated with it will bring in money, maybe not directly, but it will be indirectly to the City. It will take time to make money since it is a large infrastructure. He likes the way we are going at it.

David Lewis has a much smaller boat that needs less of the amenities. We have to convince all of the smaller boat owners that it is good for all. Once we present the plan to the Council the task force will disband. We may want to keep the task force going as different phases of the haul-out facility are pursued. We don't want to dump that on the harbor staff.

Chair Howard commented Council doesn't disband committees as fast as they develop them. She is amazed at the mixed uses at the harbor and how the incompatible vessels make it all work safely. She appreciates the folks coming to speak with us. She and Mike will be working on the report and working with the Clerk who will pass it on.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Vessel Haul-Out Task Force, Chair Howard adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 25, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Ave, Homer, Alaska.

JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Approved: _____