

Session 14-08, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 6:00 p.m. on August 27, 2014 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER DONICH, CARROLL, HARTLEY, STOCKBURGER, ULMER, ZIMMERMAN

ABSENT: HOWARD (excused)

STAFF: HARBORMASTER HAWKINS  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

STOCKBURGER/HARTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. July 23, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

ZIMMERMAN/HARTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

### **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

A. Vessel Haul Out Task Force Presentation – Councilmember Lewis and Harbormaster Hawkins

Councilmember Lewis and Harbormaster Hawkins, members of the Vessel Haul Out Task Force, presented to the Commission. They opened with an overview of the mission of the group and their scope of work. They went on to explain that the facility will be a benefit to large vessel owners who have to travel for services, local marine trades, community businesses, and the City of Homer. The

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areas considered for use include the barge haul out area between the Fishing Hole and the harbor, and the concrete pad and adjoining areas. This is a service that is needed now. Seven large vessels were hauled out in the spring and there are requests for this fall.

The Task Force addressed different methods for hauling out, including marine ways, lifts, trailers, pneumatic bags, and combinations of those methods. They also considered different management options; open yard, closed yard, a city managed facility, and privately managed facility under a long term lease with the city.

Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Lewis explained the recommendations of the task force are:

- Continue September to May large vessel haul out at the barge haul out area
- Resolve land use issues to provide for year round use
- Support the barge mooring and marine ways CIP's
- Fund the design, engineering, and permitting for repair yard and uplands improvements
- Develop and advertise an RFP for developing the facility

They also reviewed the goals of the RFP:

- Haul out facilities for local and new large vessel customers
- Safe environment for workers to complete maintenance tasks
- Develop environmentally approved full service facilities
- Encourage year round job growth in the marine trades and support industry
- Promote marine trades related skills/job training in Lower Peninsula schools and colleges

Lastly they emphasized that the city doesn't want to compete with established, privately owned and operated haul-out facilities, but instead wants to bring new business in to the community. The RFP should reflect these goals.

There was discussion that another goal that the area doesn't become a storage yard. Contractors will make their money with turnover. There is also a list of vessels who want to haul out so turnover will need to happen to keep other vessels from having to wait. Mr. Hawkins added that in looking at other yards, their rate structure for land use is set up to increase the longer the vessel sits there.

Mr. Lewis added that there will be a resolution or ordinance to take \$100,000 for design, engineering, and permitting, from the general fund, because the harbor reserves have been hit pretty heavily with all this current activity. This facility will benefit both the harbor and the city's general fund.

There was discussion about offering storage for barges to stay over in the winter until spring. There would have to be infrastructure improvements done to accommodate the weight and width of the barges, along with equipment to get them up to up out of the water and staged. It doesn't hurt to look into it, but there have to be specific time lines and penalties in place, and what to do if they don't leave.

Regarding land use, it is okay to have it as a winter time activity for a while yet, but if we are going to put out an RFP and seek a business out there, they may want more than just winter activity and Council will have to make a decision about the land. Until then, if a vessel had an issue in the summer and had to do an emergency haul out, Harbormaster Hawkins thinks something could be worked out.

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his concept of how to get vessels out and to the chip pad. The CIP project is for marine ways, but another idea is a travel lift. It would require excavating into the bank between system 5 and JJ float. The vessel would pull into the bank and get picked out there, then taken across the road to the chip pad. The task force talked about a lift that would accommodate up to 300 to 350 tons. It may end up that there are combinations of haul out methods used.

In relation to yard management, this won't generate enough revenue, initially, to hire a yard manager. Harbormaster Hawkins is already looking at vessels being hauled after September 15<sup>th</sup>. He is working to get yard rules set up and he reviewed some of the main points he is focusing on.

Commissioner Zimmerman expressed opposition to any type of a closed, private yard. Any vendor a boat owner wants to hire should be allowed, provided the vendor has appropriate insurance.

Commissioner Donich supported the idea of vendors being approved or qualified before they can work on vessels.

Commissioner Stockburger commented that if someone comes in to fund this, they have to make money from it. They will make their money by working on the boats. That's a point on the spectrum between funded by grants or funded by private industry. Private industry will want to get as much as they can in a closed shop because they have to pay their bills.

Point was raised that a reason for doing this is to bring in work locally. We have to find a compromise. There may be proposals from companies wanting to do a closed shop, so there will certainly be a lot to consider. It will be important to craft an RFP in a way that outlines the city's goals for the facility.

#### **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ BOROUGH REPORTS**

##### **A. Port and Harbor Director's Report for August 2014**

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his staff report.

The group talked about funding options for the fishing hole and question was raised whether cruise ship fund could be allocated for it. Harbormaster Hawkins explained criteria for being able to allocate cruise ship funds to a project, and it may be possible to use some for the fishing hole once they can establish that it benefits cruise ship passengers.

In response to questions about the Auction Block case, Harbormaster Hawkins explained that the city prevailed in the case, gave a brief overview of the process that has taken place so far, and said that this decision could be appealed.

Further discussion ensued about the electrical improvements and whether there is the possibility of getting a waiver on the new requirements that are impacting the project. Harbormaster Hawkins explained that attempts have been made for a waiver, but it was denied. It could be appealed and get political, but his feeling is that it is a safety issue and the requirement will likely stand.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. Harbor Rate Increase Proposals
  - a. Email from Mike Fisher Re: Northern Economic Cost Estimate dated January 29, 20124

The group discussed the disparity of the 32 foot stall moorage rate again as well as touching on other thoughts about fairness in the proposed rate structure. Harbormaster Hawkins referred to the email from Mike Fisher at Northern Economics that outlines the cost two get their help in fine tuning the structure, finding the problem areas and the holes in what they have so far.

The Commission agreed that the Harbormaster work with Mr. Fisher on reviewing the rate structure.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Vessel Haul Out Task Force report discussion and recommendation

The Commission appreciated the presentation and work done by the task force. They had no further comments or recommendations aside from what was discussed during the presentation.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Monthly Statistical & Performance Report
- B. Weekly Crane and Ice Report
- C. Deep Water Dock Report
- D. Pioneer Dock Report & Ferry Landings Report
- E. Water Usage Report
- F. 2014 Commission Attendance Schedule
- G. 2014 Strategic Plan

There was brief discussion about stall leases.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

None

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen reminded the Commission that in September the meeting will begin at 5 p.m. She also announced that the Volunteer Appreciation Event is scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 p.m.

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed the upcoming work at the harbor starting on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER *(If one is assigned)***

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Ulmer said she will be absent at next month's meeting and that everyone did a great job tonight.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Carroll said he wants to discuss the Icicle lease at the next meeting. Deputy City Clerk recommended he meet with the Harbormaster to come up with talking points so they can have a focused discussion.

Commissioner Donich said it was another good meeting, he learns a lot every time.

Commissioner Zimmerman thanked the Vessel Haul Out Task Force for their work. It seems like just yesterday they started talking about this, and it is starting to come together.

Commissioner Hartley said he is excited about the large vessel haul out and appreciated the report. It's a good start. He said he will be out of travelling in October and may need someone to cover the Council meeting for him that month.

Commissioner Stockburger thanked the Harbormaster for the presentation. With a venture like this it's important to remember there is a learning process to it and part of the task force job is to teach the council and the people of Homer about it.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 24, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_