

Session 15-04, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2015 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER CARROLL, DONICH, 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

Bumppo Bremicker, city resident, commented about his attempt to park a boat out on the spit to try to sell it. He saw new signs about seven day parking unless you have a permit. He asked about a permit and was told he couldn't park the boat there. He supports the idea of having a place for people to sell boats on the spit and paying a fee to park, and suggested they address a spot when considering the Land Allocation Plan.

Harbormaster Hawkins noted there are places in town where people can park a boat to sell it and that the ground where Mr. Bremicker parked his boat is marked for the new restroom, so there will be less space available there soon.

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 25, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes

ZIMMERMAN/STOCKBURGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Carey Meyer, Public Works Director – Seafarer’s Memorial Parking Lot Improvements

Public Works Director Meyer reviewed the updated plans, specifically the rip rap along the toe of the slope on the parking lot, open space, and using dry wells for storm drainage.

B. Rachel Lord, Cook Inletkeeper, Alaska ADV Task Force Update

Rachel Lord, the Clean Water Program Director for Cook Inletkeeper, acknowledged the Harbormaster’s ADV Task Force update memo in the packet. She updated the Commission on the current certifications in the Alaska Clean Harbors Program, and also ones that are pending and those interested in the process. She also updated them on the Cook Inletkeeper’s Clean Boating Program showing them posters, flyers, other products, and explained efforts to inform boat owners on what to do with oily bilge water.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Port and Harbor Director’s Report for March 2015

In response to questions on the staff report Harbormaster Hawkins explained that the issue with the tower at the Bob’s Trophy Charter building is still ongoing and will have to be resolved prior to finalizing the new lease; also that the staff will begin moving into the new Harbormaster building at the end of April and anticipate a ribbon cutting the first part of June. Lastly he commented about the successful Winter King Salmon Tournament.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Harbor Rate Increase Proposals
- i. Email from Mike Fisher, Northern Economics Re: Scope of Work & Quote Request dated February 19, 2015

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed the revenue goal calculations provided in the packet.

In response to comments about other revenues, Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed that since the additional revenues talk started they addressed a head tax for passenger vessels and the chamber filled up with charter boat people, so we didn’t do that. We talked about rate increases for moorage by a square foot rate model and filled the chamber with those directly affected and so we didn’t do that either. Then we talked about the City giving back some sales tax they collect, which hasn’t gone anywhere. Now we are talking about fish tax to get money back from the Borough, and we’ll see where that goes.

There was brief discussion that revenue from spit wide paid parking, might generate as much as the fish tax we may, or may not, get from the Borough. It also spreads the cost out among all the users, rather than just boat owners.

There was also discussion reiterating opinions from meetings past about the sales tax generated by the harbor businesses and that it should come back to the enterprise fund.

They reviewed the moorage increase a few years back to raise funds to pay back the bonds over the next 20 years for the most recent harbor improvements.

ZIMMERMAN/CARROLL MOVED TO PROPOSE A 2% RATE INCREASE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER FOR DISCUSSION AT AN OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC HEARING.

There was discussion confirming the intent is a 2% increase in addition to the annual CPI increase and the goal to have the increase for moorage due in October.

There was discussion and consensus to holding an Open House before the April 22nd meeting, with an opportunity to discuss it further at the regular meeting, and then hold a public hearing on May 27th before sending a recommendation to Council.

It was also noted that this would be a start in the effort to get some more money in the reserves while they wait for a determination on the fish tax, and consider parking and sales tax.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

Commissioner Zimmerman was excused from the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He commented that he supports kiosks for parking before he left the table.

- B. Parking on the Spit
 - i. Parking Kiosk Product Information

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed the parking kiosk information included in the packet.

There was discussion that this initial proposal would replace the iron rangers that are currently use to collect parking fees above ramps one through four. The iron rangers serve their purpose but aren't the most efficient option in terms of staff time and cost to process payments and enforce violations. There is a bigger idea brewing about fee parking spit wide which would require more than four and would take more discussion to establish what the parking scenario would look like and how many more kiosks would be needed.

The Commission also touched on the concept of improving the gravel areas with paving or other options like a product called Rhino Snot and the need to have a fee for parking for boat trailers.

STOCKBURGER/DONICH MOVED TO HAVE PORT AND HARBOR STAFF CONTINUE LOOKING INTO THE COST INVOLVED FOR PARKING KIOSKS, HOW TO PAY FOR THEM, WHERE THEY WOULD GO, AND AN ADDITIONAL KIOSK FOR TRAILER PARKING.

There was brief discussion requesting that the information from staff include the cost of operating parking. It was noted that when the Commission looks at a plan for fee parking spit wide, they can consider whether to put out an RFP for a company to come in and facilitate the parking service rather than the harbor staff managing it. It is too late to incorporate spit wide parking for this season, but the commission can begin work on it once they start wrapping up their work on the harbor rates.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

- C. RV's on the Spit
 - i. Memo to Port & Harbor Commission from Planning Department Re: RV's in the Marine Commercial and Marine Industrial Districts dated February 20, 2015

The Commission agreed to bring this back on another agenda. Harbormaster Hawkins noted the points to consider are RV's parked illegally on leased property and the conflict between the codes that says winter parking is allowed at the Seafarer's Memorial, which is in direct conflict with the seven day parking signage.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Land Allocation Plan
 - i. Memo from Deputy City Planner and attachments

There was brief discussion of the public comment regarding a place to park and sell boats. Harbormaster Hawkins commented that the used equipment corner has been a continual challenge for staff. The group talked about it last year and decided that something needed to be done because that is a parking area for a large float system, so there is signage that boats can't be parked there at all. The trail is now there occupying more of the space, there is a little park, and soon a restroom will be built there. The Commissioners did not support making a recommendation to offer a space for parking boats or other equipment for sale. There are places in town to accommodate people who want to park and sell.

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed and discussed the harbor properties with the Commission.

STOCKBURGER/HARTLEY MOVED TO ELIMINATE SHORT TERM LEASES PAGE A-5, PARCEL 181-033-24.

There was brief discussion of the development taking place in the area and it was overlooked to eliminate it in last year's review.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

They discussed the present harbormaster building lots on page D-20 and Harbormaster Hawkins explained that an invitation to bid will be going out to have the building tested for hazardous materials, a step that has to be taken before it can be demolished or removed. The area will be used for parking and restrooms until it is decided to make it available for another use.

STOCKBURGER/HARTLEY MOVED TO CHANGE THE ALLOCATION ON THE OLD HARBORMASTER OFFICE TO DELETE HARBORMASTER OFFICE AND JUST MAKE IT PARKING AND RESTROOMS ON PAGE 91.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

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. Memo from Port Director Re: Alaska ADV Task Force Meeting
- G. 2015 Council Meeting Attendance

Harbormaster Hawkins noted that the water will be turned on in May.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

None

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

None

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

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ulmer commended the group for their work.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Carroll confirmed the schedule for the open house on April 22nd regarding harbor rates.

PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 25, 2015

Commissioner Donich asked if there was anything specific for him to address at the Council meeting. It was suggested he could announce the open house.

Commissioner Hartley and Stockburger had no comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, 2015 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: _____