

Session 11-07, a Special Meeting of the Port and Harbor Improvement Committee was called to order by Acting Chair Howard at 5:18 on December 8, 2011 at the City Hall West Conference Room located at 450 Sterling Highway, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: Hartley, Hawkins, Howard, Howard, Lewis, Wythe

STAFF: City Manager Wrede
Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen

AGENDA APPROVAL

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

APPROVAL OF SYNOPSIS

A. October 6, 2011 meeting synopsis

The synopsis was approved by consensus of the Committee.

VISITOR/PRESENTATIONS

No visitors were scheduled.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS

There were no staff or council reports.

PUBLIC HEARING

No public hearings were scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

No pending business items were scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Cost of Projects and Steps to Get Current Prices

The Committee discussed process for getting estimates, recognizing some projects can be updated but getting estimates from local contractors and others will require engineering. City Manager Wrede advised that at the first meeting in January there should be an ordinance introduced to accept the design money from Fish and Game for the load launch ramp. He also

explained that there will be an RFP going out for a 3 year contract for an engineer and the firm could assist in establishing costs. Mr. Hawkins noted a delay in receiving the grant funds from the Denali Commission, but will continue to follow up with them. The Committee acknowledged the need to bring forward a budget amendment to authorize funds to proceed with engineering. The City Manager will need to know the amounts to move forward on the bond application and the Committee needs it to establish a recommendation on harbor rates.

The Committee also discussed the concerns expressed from the Port and Harbor Commission, timelines, budget process, and ways to proceed.

B. Planning For Harbor Office

The Committee addressed options for a harbor office noting that the current proposed cost incorporates development on overslope and should it be decided not to do overslope for the project it would reduce the cost. It was pointed out that the recently adopted Spit Comprehensive Plan addresses a three to five year plan to do an overslope development for a harbormasters office and should take a first shot at following that plan. Mr. Hawkins indicated it could be about a 30% savings without the overslope development. Other comments suggested that the City would be remiss in not taking the cost savings into account if it meant having to drop another important project.

C. Bond Application, Assignments, and Responsibilities

City Manager Wrede said he will let the Committee know if he needs any assistance with the application and offered to let them review it prior to submittal. He expressed that he will want their help with establishing harbor fees and getting support for the projects.

D. Develop a Three Month Meeting Schedule

City Manager Wrede said he will compile some of the dead lines that will need to be considered in the process and then the Committee can establish meeting times. It was suggested that the Commissions be invited to attend.

E. Attendance at the December 14th Port and Harbor Advisory Commission Meeting

Chair Howard and Mrs. Wythe said they would try to attend the Commission meeting.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

No informational items were presented.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

No audience was present to comment.

COMMENTS OF STAFF

Staff had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Howard had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Hawkins commented that there will be an ordinance introduced at the next Council meeting to accept and appropriate the head tax money for the deep water dock cruise ship improvements. It is a five year legislative grant. He also commented that the North Pacific Fishery Association took time to weigh in on the harbor improvement projects. They were interested in and supportive of the projects, even the harbormasters office although it didn't rank as high as the others. They made some recommendations regarding revenue enhancing projects and did not oppose rate increases to support the bond.

Mrs. Wythe advised that she will be out from February 10 to March 3, 2012.

Chair Howard commented she heard through the grapevine that Mr. Heimbuch has been telling people that the Committee's work is illegal and no one but the Committee is in favor of it. She sent him a note asking him to let her know what step in their process is illegal. That kind of stuff in the community doesn't help, but she doesn't know how to avoid it. Mrs. Wythe added that after the Port and Harbor Meeting it came to light that there is potentially a Councilmember helping spread that news. City Manager Wrede noted that Mr. Heimbuch's theory is that even though this is a revenue bond, it should still go to the voters for support because if the fee's can't be increased enough or if for some reason the enterprise fund defaults, the general fund will end up backing this. However, the enterprise fund has a history of maintaining good standing in payment of bonds.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled at a time to be determined in 2012.