

Session 15-09, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 6:00 p.m. on August 26, 2015 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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

STAFF: HARBORMASTER HAWKINS
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER LAWRENCE

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

HARTLEY/CARROLL MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen requested to comment briefly under staff reports.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Gart Curtis, city resident, encouraged the Commission to support the CIP draft for the pavilion project at the top of ramp 2. He thinks it's a great idea to have a place where people can get out of the weather or gather and get a sense of what Homer is all about. It's a commercial and recreational area and from this spot they can see everything that is going on at the harbor. He thinks in the future there will be more business on the spit, particularly if there is overslope development, and this project dovetails nicely with that.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked about raising enough money to put this on overslope. Mr. Curtis suggested that's a better question for Miranda Weiss or the City Manager. He's sure it takes a lot of engineering and ACOE permitting and he isn't sure it fits in with something a handful of volunteers could raise money for.

Commissioner Carroll suggested this should be funded by a \$1 head tax for people who use the tour boats, water taxi type services.

Deb Lowney, city resident and Parks and Recreation Advisory Commissioner, commented in support of the pavilion project. The improvements around the harbor are fantastic and you can see the increased activity. Last week the Parks & Rec Commission voted to add this to the CIP and agree it would be a great asset to the spit.

Miranda Weiss, city resident, commented the schematic the Commission has was drawn up pro-bono by Covus Design in Anchorage and gives an idea of what we could see in the area between ramps 1 and 2 and that we could get a lot of functionality out of the space. She reiterated they are proposing a privately funded project, like what they did with the playground. In 12 months they raised \$260,000 and 600 people built the playground over eight days. The value is twice, maybe three times the value of what they raised. There is also a \$20,000 maintenance fund at the Homer Foundation. There are people willing to take this on and the momentum is there from the work the Commission has done to make these improvements, and would like to see us capitalize from it.

Weston Carroll commented regarding comments at the worksession about the measurement at the harbor. He thinks there are several ways you can run the numbers. What you include and don't include in number can skew the results. He thinks its obvious Bob has an agenda in mind with certain results he wants and has set the numbers up accordingly. In his situation it's hard because the bigger boats don't have a choice. People with smaller boats under 60 feet and less than 70 tons have choices to pull their boats or have them lifted out. He did comparisons when he had a smaller boat and the costs were similar to store at a boat yard or in the harbor. It's hard for the bigger boat owners because raising the rates says we have you over a barrel and your choice is pay through the nose or leave. It gets emotional; he isn't asking for smaller boats to pay more, just why we need to change anything if it's working for all the other communities.

Beaver Nelson commented regarding Bob's comments earlier about the size of the boat, one way to think about it is why the small boats actually take up a bigger space in the harbor per length of boat than bigger boats, there is more wasted space. If you look at the stalls you can see how much area is wasted between the boats. There isn't much room between the bigger boats; they are using the space being leased. When you look at how much is actually being paid, you'll find that small boats are actually paying less for the space they are actually using regardless of how big their boat is.

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 22, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

HOWARD/HARTLEY MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED.

Commissioner Carroll asked if it could be clarified in the minutes which motion the votes relate to when they are doing minutes.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Port and Harbor Director's Report for August 2015

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his staff report. He commented to the Commission about stand up paddle boards, issue with the ground up coal on the front beach catching fire up in the area of the storm berm, and information efforts regarding the load and launch ramp closure.

Commissioner Donich commented about a near miss with a kite surfer who was up in the air and caused him to throttle back to avoid a collision.

Commissioner Hartley spoke about a complement he heard from a user who said she had a broken board down by her boat slip. He recommended she talk to the Harbormaster and she told him later that she contacted the staff and it was fixed the next day.

B. Report from Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen Re: Robert's Rules of Order and the Open Meetings Act

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen addressed the Commission regarding meeting conduct and emailing among Commissioners.

C. Vessel Haul Out Task Force Report

Harbormaster Hawkins commented that the task force met and finalized their recommendations for fees and staffing. The task force will report to the Commission at their September meeting and to Council after that.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Harbor Rate Increase Proposal

- i. Letter from Northern Economics Re: Rate Structure Work Proposal August 19, 2015

There was no discussion or action regarding harbor rates at this time.

B. Spit Parking

HOWARD/STOCKBURGER MOVED THAT STAFF PUT TOGETHER A PROPOSAL FOR THE COMMISSION'S CONSIDERATION TO CHARGE FOR BOAT TRAILER PARKING AT THE OLD LOG STORAGE PAD WHERE THE BOAT TRAILERS PARK NOW FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2016 SEASON.

Chair Ulmer thinks this should be done by private enterprise and should go out for RFP.

Commissioner Zimmerman noted one issue is the cost of leasing property won't allow it to pay for itself.

There was further discussion about the challenges of the cost and of storing boats and trailers on the spit in the winter months.

Commissioner Howard clarified his intent is for staff to prepare a parking proposal for trailers and vehicles that launch their vessels. With the discussion they have had about parking spit wide, they can start here in seeing how it could work on a small scale with implementing the kiosk system. He thinks it would be a minimal burden on staff to set up paid trailer parking.

ZIMMERMAN/STOCKBURGER MOVED TO AMEND TO INCLUDE ALL OF THE PARKING NEEDS AT THE SAME TIME.

Commissioner Donich said he would like to see a map for the parking area they can charge for.

There was discussion about parking areas, some supporting looking at all the parking versus just a small piece of just the trailer parking. There were comments that there is a lot of effort to try to identify how to control the other parking areas because of the mix of land ownership. It will take a considerable amount of time to put it together effectively. Other comments were that the overall parking keeps getting pushed back and they need to get it addressed.

VOTE (Amendment): YES: ZIMMERMAN, STOCKBURGER, HARTLEY, ULMER, CARROLL
NO: HOWARD, DONICH

Motion carried.

There was no further discussion on the main motion as amended.

VOTE: (Main motion as amended) YES: STOCKBURGER, ZIMMERMAN, HARTLEY, CARROLL, ULMER,
DONICH, HOWARD

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. City of Homer Capital Improvement Plan
 - i. Memo from Assistant City Manager to Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Re: Top Five Selections for 2016-2021 Capital Improvement Plan, dated August 12, 2015
 - ii. FY2016 CIP Draft
 - iii. FY2016 Proposed New Projects
 - iv. Informational Sheet on the CIP Process

Assistant City Manager Lawrence reviewed the draft Capital Improvement Plan, new projects, projects recommended for removal, and the process for making recommendations for two projects.

There was discussion relating to several of the projects and Commissioners made the following individual recommendations:

PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 26, 2015

Hartley- Deepwater/Cruise Ship Dock expansion and Barge Moorage Facility
Howard- East Harbor Expansion and Barge Mooring Facility
Ulmer – East Harbor Expansion and Barge Mooring Facility
Carroll – East Harbor Expansion and Barge Mooring Facility
Stockburger - East Harbor Expansion and Barge Mooring Facility
Zimmerman – Barge Mooring Facility and East Harbor Expansion
Donich – System Four Vessel Mooring Float System and Seafarer Memorial Parking Expansion

At the request of Harbormaster Hawkins, Assistant City Manager Lawrence discussed the Multi Use Facility project with the Commission.

Commissioner Howard commented there is a strong possibility if the Public Safety Building project moves forward the City will lose the space it uses for Community Recreation program. It seems appropriate to add the Multi Use Community Center to the CIP as a place holder to address in the future.

STOCKBURGER/DONICH MOVED THEY SUPPORT THE BOAT HOUSE PAVILION PLAZA.

Commissioner Stockburger noted they have had a number of people come to the Commission complaining they are taking recreational area away, particularly with the barge basin spot which will likely grow. This would be a good way to give a space back that everyone can use. Overslope would be good, but it's costly and this would be a good place to start.

Commissioner Carroll supports it but can see where it is something the Port and Harbor will maintain in the future. He will support it, but thinks the people in the harbor who will really benefit from it should step up to the plate and contribute a head tax of \$1.

Commissioner Zimmerman also supports the project but suggested it be located over by ramp 4 and start building another center for another cluster to start. The location currently suggested is already congested. He also expressed that this is the kind of stuff that costs us a lot of money that the harbor doesn't see much revenue out of.

In response to question about moving water taxi's to another location, Harbormaster Hawkins commented there will definitely be a cause and effect. The boardwalk businesses are there and the attraction of the walk-ins for those businesses. It would require a lot of thought and there would probably be a lot of pushback from the operators who are established there. Relating to parking, he noted that adding the parking spaces across the street will be helpful. He understands Mr. Zimmerman's view but added part of his job is facilitating all activities. Part of the justification for having a harbor with the highway coming in to it is all of the activity it brings. He understands it won't bring dollars directly to the enterprise, but it does help justify the harbor being there. In other communities you see direct effort to market toward that user group, and we really aren't here.

VOTE: YES: DONICH, ZIMMERMAN, ULMER, HOWARD, CARROLL, HARTLEY, STOCKBURGER

Motion carried.

There was brief discussion that the drawing presented to the Commission is a conceptual drawing and is not to scale in any way.

HOWARD/STOCKBURGER MOVED TO SEND FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE BARGE MOORING FACILITY BE OUR NUMBER ONE CHOICE AND EAST HARBOR EXPANSION BE OUR NUMBER 2 CHOICE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES: ULMER, HOWARD, ZIMMERMAN, CARROLL, HARTLEY, STOCKBURGER, DONICH

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. Water/Sewer Bills Report July 2015
- G. Resolution 15-073 Contracting Northern Enterprises to Conduct Graduated Linear Method with Linear Method Comparison to Incorporate a 32% Rate Increase over 10 Years to Fund Port and Harbor Reserves
- H. Note from Harbor User Re: Fees, Received August 12, 2015
- I. 2015 City Council Meeting Attendance

Commissioner Hartley noted the number of boats on the stall wait list has increased a lot this year. Harbormaster Hawkins explained the length of time on the wait list is increasing, about two years for 32 foot and a year for 24 foot, and up from there on other size classes. When JJ and HH floats were rebuilt it created a bit of a flurry to get on the list for one of those stalls. He thinks most spend a portion of the year in the harbor as a transient vessel and many will be hauled out into the yard for the winter.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Gart Curtis thanked the Commission for their support of the pavilion. He commented about the notion of moving water taxi's toward the ramp 4 area. As an operator he charges more to pick up at the load and launch ramp because traveling through the harbor at an appropriate speed adds 20 to 30 minutes each time they go there. That adds up when making 10 trips per day. He doesn't support the idea.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen reminded the group their meetings start at 5:00 p.m. in September. She also noted on September 23rd there will be an open house about the budget in the Council Chambers

and they will need to move their meeting. Harbormaster Hawkins suggested the Harbormaster's Office conference room and they agreed with that location.

Harbormaster Hawkins thought it was a good meeting. He recapped their request on the parking plan. It can be looked at in phases, staff talks about it a lot. He was looking at trailer parking because up to now parking has been used as a tool to change behavior with overuse. The fees collected are nominal for the effort that's put in. It did have an effect at the tops of the ramps. With trailer parking he thinks they can see a about a 40% improvement in the amount of space being used by implementing time limits and fees. He thinks they won't have unaccompanied trailers, a vehicle will have to be attached. That's a rule he picked up from Seward. It helps identify who owns the trailer. They can look at long term storage by permit as well. He thinks a separate kiosk will be needed from the load launch ramp as it will slow down action at the launch ramp and the agreement with the state is that the money is separated out for the launch ramp fees.

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

None

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ulmer thanked everyone for their work tonight.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Stockburger, Hartley, and Howard had no comment.

Commissioner Zimmerman commented at the kiosks in Seward, there is a menu to select the services and options you want to select, swipe your card, get a ticket for your window and you're done.

Commissioner Donich agrees with keeping it simple.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28, 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: _____