

REMINDERS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Tuesday, March 24	Regular Meeting	6:00 PM
Thursday, April 9	Worksession: Budget – School Board	6:00 PM
Tuesday, April 14	Worksession: Harrigan Centennial Hall Project	5:00 PM
Tuesday, April 14	Regular Meeting	6:00 PM
Tuesday, April 21	Special Meeting Evaluations: Municipal Attorney and Municipal Administrator (Location – City Hall 3rd floor conference room)	5:30 PM



Assembly Calendar

[2014](#) [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#) [Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#) [2016](#)

March 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Mar	2	3	4	5	6	7
<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p> <p style="margin: 0;">7:00pm Planning</p> <p style="margin: 0;">7:00pm <u>School</u></p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p> <p style="margin: 0;">7:00pm Library Board</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p> <p style="margin: 0;">12:00pm - 1:30pm SEDA Board Meeting</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell</p>
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:00pm <u>Reg Assembly Mtg</u></p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:00pm Historic Preservation</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman 12:00pm LEPC</p> <p style="margin: 0;">12:00pm Parks & Rec</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman 12:00pm Tree/Landscape</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Putz</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Gorman</p>
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:00pm <u>Regular Assembly Mtg</u></p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:00pm Police and Fire Commission - Fire Hall</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">McConnell Gorman</p>	<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">Gorman</p>
29	30	31	1 Apr	2	3	4
		<p style="margin: 0;">1:00pm SCVB Board</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">7:00pm Library Board</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">12:00pm - 1:30pm SEDA Board Meeting</p>		

Assembly Calendar

[2014](#) [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#) [Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#) [2016](#)
April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Mar	30	31	1 Apr	2	3	4
		1:00pm SCVB Board	7:00pm Library Board	12:00pm - 1:30pm SEDA Board Meeting		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		7:00pm Planning	6:00pm Historic Preservation	12:00pm LEPC 12:00pm <u>Parks & Rec</u> 6:00pm Budget Worksession: School District/Assembly		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		5:00pm Worksession: Harrigan Centennial Hall Project 6:00pm <u>Reg Assembly Mtg</u>				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		5:30pm Special Meeting: Evaluations Municipal Attorney and Municipal Administrator (City Hall Conference Room)	6:00pm Police and Fire Commission - Fire Hall	6:00pm 1st <u>Municipal Budget Worksession</u>		
26	27	28	29	30	1 May	2
	6:00pm 2nd <u>Municipal Budget Worksession</u>	1:00pm SCVB Board 6:00pm <u>Regular Assembly Mtg</u>				



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street Sitka, Alaska 99835

Coast Guard City, USA

March 17, 2015

Federal Subsistence Board

ATTENTION: Theo Matuskowitz

Office of Subsistence Management

3601 C Street Suite 1030

Anchorage, AK 99503

Via: The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

RE: Comments on Proposed Changes to the Rural Determination Process

Dear Federal Subsistence Board and Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council:

Please accept this letter and attached City and Borough of Sitka Resolution 2013-16 as an official comment from the City and Borough of Sitka on the proposed changes to the rural determination process during the Southeast Regional Advisory Committee meeting in Sitka, Alaska, on March 17, 2015.

City and Borough of Sitka is grateful to the Federal Subsistence Board for recommending changes to the rural determination process in response to many requests including ours. Thanks also to the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council for meeting in Sitka, accepting public testimony on this extremely important issue, and making recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board on this proposal. The City and Borough of Sitka and the community of Sitka appreciate this attempt to simplify the arduous process to determine which areas or communities are rural or non-rural and to maintain Sitka's rural status.

Since the enactment of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Title VIII, which provides a preference to rural Alaskan residents for taking fish and wildlife resources for subsistence uses on Federal public lands and waters in Alaska, the residents of Sitka have had to repeatedly substantiate that Sitka is a rural subsistence community. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comprehensive reports have shown almost everyone (more than 95 percent) of Sitka residents subsist on the many natural resources located within the City and Borough of Sitka: fish, game, plants, and other resources gathered as part of Sitka's population's way of life. For many years the City and Borough of Sitka has asked that a rural subsistence community such as Sitka which has been designated rural for subsistence use should not be subjected to arbitrary population numbers or dates for review

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and have to repeatedly prove its continuing rural subsistence status without any evidence that substantive change in its rural subsistence uses has occurred.

Sitka was very pleased that the Federal Subsistence Board recommended simplifying the process by determining which areas or communities are nonrural in Alaska, and all other communities or areas would, therefore, be rural. We understand the Board would make nonrural determinations using a comprehensive approach that takes into consideration population size and density, economic indicators, military presence, industrial facilities, use of fish and wildlife, degree of remoteness and isolation, and any other relevant material, and information provided by the public. We further understand the Board would rely heavily on the recommendations of the Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

We understand that on November 24, 2014, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture requested that the Federal Subsistence Board initiate rulemaking to pursue the regulatory changes recommended by the Board. The Secretaries also requested that the Board obtain Council recommendations and public input, and conduct Tribal and Alaska Native Corporation consultation on the proposed changes. If adopted through the rulemaking process, the current regulations would be revised to remove specific guidelines, including requirements regarding population data, the aggregation of communities, and the decennial review, for making rural determinations. This new direction is much appreciated.

The City and Borough of Sitka's Resolution 2013-16 is still relevant to this new approach to designating and continuing to consider Alaska communities as rural if they are not identified as nonrural. This resolution states:

"NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka recommends several modifications to improve the rural determination process. Modify the population threshold to delete the arbitrary 7,000 beyond which a community will be presumed non-rural and change the threshold to 11,000 as recommended by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture in 2010 as a guideline only, since the current threshold levels fail to accurately define a rural Alaska community.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the rural determination process be modified to better permit rural subsistence communities to identify their rural characteristics, including widespread use of fish, wildlife, and other wild resources, through Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence studies, Coastal Management Subsistence research, and other information sources; geographic isolation, lack of connection to a regional road system; and importance of fish and other wild resources to the economic base; as the basis for retaining their continued rural designation.

Federal Subsistence Board via Southeast Regional Advisory Council

March 17, 2015

Page 3

“FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that once a community has received its rural designation, no timeline for reconsideration should be triggered unless there is substantive change in the rural community’s status sufficient to re-designate the community as urban, in order to meet the intent of Title VIII of ANILCA which is to “protect and provide the opportunity for continued subsistence uses on public lands.” While the various administrative, land and resource use and economic concepts that fit the ‘lower 48’ states may meet federal agency needs in the contiguous states, these components of the determination process do not meet the needs of vast, isolated rural Alaska, which within Southeast Alaska includes more than 17 million acres of the Tongass National Forest.”

Please see Resolution No. 2013-16, attached, for the entirety of the above Resolution. This Resolution is still the official position of the City and Borough of Sitka. City and Borough of Sitka requests that the Southeast Regional Advisory Committee and Federal Subsistence Board consider these comments as the revised rule is formulated, and accommodate them where possible. We also request that the City and Borough of Sitka be added to the official mailing list for further notices about this rulemaking process, so that there is opportunity for City and Borough of Sitka and the public to comment on any of the rulemaking that would have the potential to adversely impact Sitka, Alaska’s rural subsistence status. Contact address for this mailing list is Mark Gorman, Municipal Administrator, City and Borough of Sitka, 100 Lincoln Street, Sitka, AK 99835; phone 907-747-1808; e-mail markgorman@cityofsitka.com.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Colleen Ingman
Acting Municipal Administrator

cc: Sitka Tribe of Alaska c/o Jeff Feldpausch, Resource Protection Director
Mayor and Assembly

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
RESOLUTION NO. 2013-16**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA, ALASKA,
COMMENTING ON THE FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM'S
RURAL DETERMINATION PROCESS**

WHEREAS, the Federal Subsistence Board initiated a review of the rural determination process on December 31, 2012, requesting comments on the following components of the process: population thresholds, rural characteristics, aggregation of communities, timelines and information sources, with a submission deadline of November 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) provides a subsistence priority for rural Alaska residents for harvesting fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands, and only residents of communities or areas determined to be rural are eligible under Federal subsistence regulations for the subsistence priority; and

WHEREAS, Sitka is an isolated Rural Subsistence community unconnected to any road system, and the vast majority of Sitka residents harvest large quantities of traditional, personal, and subsistence use fish and game year-round for both themselves and for others consistent with a rural community, as well documented by studies, surveys, and personal testimony community-wide for a large variety of fish, game, and other subsistence resources; and

WHEREAS, Sitka has had to struggle to keep its Rural Subsistence status which Sitka residents consider part of their basic cultural, economic and social identities, since its population exceeds the arbitrary population ceiling. Federal Regulations state a community with a population of more than 7,000 will be considered non-rural unless the community possesses significant characteristics of a rural nature, but this arbitrary threshold is invalid for Sitka, which has repeatedly substantiated its Rural Subsistence status, with over 90 percent of Sitka residents directly involved in subsistence gathering; and

WHEREAS, the rural determination process should be modified, as the Secretary of the Interior called for in 2009, to "ensure that the [Federal Subsistence Management] program is best serving rural Alaskans and that the letter and spirit of Title VIII [of ANILCA] are being met."

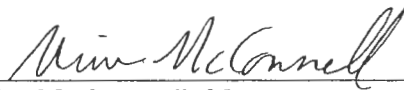
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka recommends several modifications to improve the rural determination process. Modify the population threshold to delete the arbitrary 7,000 beyond which a community will be presumed non-rural and change the threshold to 11,000 as recommended by the

Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture in 2010 as a guideline only, since the current threshold levels fail to accurately define a rural Alaska community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the rural determination process be modified to better permit rural subsistence communities to identify their rural characteristics, including widespread use of fish, wildlife, and other wild resources, through Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence studies, Coastal Management Subsistence research, and other information sources; geographic isolation; lack of connection to a regional road system; and importance of fish and other wild resources to the economic base; as the basis for retaining their continued rural designation.

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that once a community has received its rural designation, no timeline for reconsideration should be triggered unless there is substantive change in the rural community's status sufficient to re-designate the community as urban, in order to meet the intent of Title VIII of ANILCA which is to "protect and provide the opportunity for continued subsistence uses on public lands." While the various administrative, land and resource use and economic concepts that fit the "lower 48" states may meet federal agency needs in the contiguous states, these components of the determination process do not meet the needs of vast, isolated rural Alaska, which within Southeast Alaska includes more than 17 million acres of the Tongass National Forest.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 24th day of September, 2013.



Mim McConnell, Mayor

ATTEST:



Colleen Ingman, MMC
Municipal Clerk