

Sitka Port and Harbors Commission Minutes

Wednesday September 8, 2021, 6:00PM
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Port and Harbors Commission Members:

Dave Gordon, Chris Ystad, Shauna Thornton,
Tyler Green, Michael Nurco, Tamy Stevenson
Kevin Knox (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gordon called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Dave Gordon, Chris Ystad, Shauna Thornton, Tyler Green, Michael Nurco, Tamy Stevenson.

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Knox.

Staff: Harbormaster Stan Eliason, Deputy Harbormaster Jeremiah Johnson.
Harbor Office Manager Alicia Soto participated via videoconference.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

None

IV. AGENDA CHANGES

None

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

None

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the May 12, 2021, meeting minutes.

Due to technical difficulties, the May 12, 2021, meeting minutes were not prepared for approval. The May 12, 2021, meeting minutes would be provided for approval at a future meeting.

VII. REPORTS

Harbormaster – Harbormaster Eliason reported that a condition assessment of the seawall at the Marine Services Center was completed in June of 2021, the report suggested that the seawall be replaced within five years. The City of Sitka submitted an application for a 9.1 million dollar grant to replace the seawall, with the City's match being 1.8 million dollars. Eliason stated that the results of the grant application should be released in November of 2021. The Thomson Harbor anode project was completed this summer. Crescent Harbor high load zone RFP would be sent out next month, the scope of work was reduced due to budget constraints. Eliason noted that the summer was the busiest he had seen. Deputy Harbormaster Johnson reported that approximately \$180,000 in revenue was generated from yacht reservations this summer. In addition to the reserved yachts, the harbor system was busier than ever before with private and commercial fishing vessels. Johnson commented on the strain the busy season put on the department due to minimal staffing levels and felt that additional full time staff may be needed in the future. Eliason noted that with the expected boom in cruise ships and passengers expected next year, he planned to hire security officers so that harbor staff would not be taken away from their normal duties.

City Staff – None.

Chair – None.

Assembly Liaison – Kevin Knox noted that the Seaplane Base project was moving forward, the last round of grant applications had been submitted and the environmental studies had been completed.

Other (s) – None.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. None.

C.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

D. Discussion Vessel Insurance.

Harbormaster Eliason presented a Power Point presentation to the commission which outlined how vessels that sink within the harbor can affect the harbor system financially. To prevent the harbor fund from having to pay to raise and dispose of sunken vessels, Eliason would like to implement a vessel insurance requirement in order to moor a vessel within the Sitka harbor system. Eliason proposed adding a monthly surcharge to vessels that were unable to obtain insurance, the port of Juneau currently does. The funds generated from the surcharge, would be used to salvage sunken vessels, easing the burden from the harbor fund. Eliason stated he would continue to research insurance requirements and would report back to the commission as he obtained more information.

E. Discussion Parking meters (Eliason Harbor).

The commission discussed implementing parking fees, as a possible revenue generator for the harbor fund. Harbormaster Eliason provided a quote from a company that provides an entry/exit style paid parking system, the start-up cost would be roughly \$54,400 with additional install and annual support costs. The commission discussed other possible paid parking options, as well as pros and cons of implementing paid parking. Deputy Harbormaster Johnson felt that it would be unfair to implement parking fees in one harbor, and that all harbors would need to be subject to parking fees. Commission members Stevenson and Thornton would provide a report to the commission during the next scheduled meeting and provide better data as to how much revenue may be generated from parking fees.

F. Sealing Cove trailer parking lot regulations.

Deputy Harbormaster Johnson went over the proposed parking ordinance changes which would affect both Sealing Cove and Crescent Harbor launch ramp facilities. After discussion, there were concerns about how the proposed ordinance changes may affect the use of the Crescent Harbor facility. Johnson suggested that Port and Harbor commission members attend the upcoming Police and Fire commission meeting, to get their opinion on the proposed ordinance changes. Johnson felt that it was important for both the Port and Harbor commission, and Police and Fire commission, to thoroughly review all of the proposed ordinance changes before any recommendations be presented to the Assembly.

G. Vehicle Speed Eliason Harbor parking lot.

Harbormasters Eliason and Johnson explained the issue of vehicles entering Eliason Harbor at excessive speeds, causing safety concerns. To prevent vehicles from transiting through

the parking lot at excessive speeds, speed bumps were installed on the entrance side of the parking lot. The speed bumps were removable, to allow for snow removal when necessary.

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

1. The next regular scheduled meeting would take place on October 13, 2021.
2. Discussion on Commission effectiveness and analyze potential for consolidating or changing Commission structure and duties.
3. Discussion on traffic flow and staging around Harrigan Centennial Hall for the 2022 visitor season.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objection, Chairman Gordon adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:55pm.

Attest: Jeremiah Johnson, Deputy Harbormaster