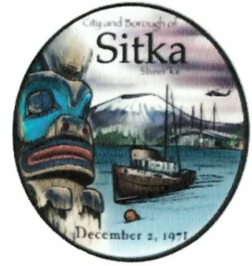


**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS**

**Board/Commission/Committee:** Tourism Task Force



**Seat Applying For (select only ONE):**

- Sitka Tribe of Alaska Representative
- Ports and Harbors Commission Representative
- Sustainability Commission Representative
- Downtown Business Corridor
- Business in General
- Tours and Attractions
- Sitka Sound Cruise Terminal
- Community At-Large

**Name:** Rich McClear **Phone Number:** [REDACTED]

**Address:** [REDACTED]

**Email Address:** [REDACTED]

**Length of Residence in Sitka:** 40 years **Registered to vote in Sitka?**  Yes  No

**Employer:** retired

**Organizations you belong to or participate in:**

Raven Radio, Rotary, Sitka Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Sitka Music Festival Foundation Board of Directors, Developing Radio Partners Board of Directors.

**Explain your main reason for applying:**

I am interested in Sitka's economic development while preserving the nature of the community. As a cruiser myself I want visitors to have a good experience while allowing local citizens also to have a good experience. I want to see a year around CBD, not a seasonal one.

**What experience or credentials will you bring to the board, commission, or committee membership?**

I served for 10 years on the Sitka Economic Development Commission, several years as chair. At Raven Radio I was involved in covering city government and economy. As host of Problem Corner I became familiar with community concerns. A am an engaged citizen.

**Please disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may arise from your appointment. These may include but are not limited to:**

- A substantial financial interest of \$1000 annually that could be influenced by your appointment.
- An immediate family member employed within the scope of this appointment.

**To be considered, your application must be complete AND include a letter of interest, or a resume.**

**Date:** 4/11/23 **Signature:** [Handwritten Signature]

Return your completed application and letter of interest or resume to the Municipal Clerk's Office by noon on the Wednesday prior to an advertised Assembly meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: All information submitted is public and will be published online. Appointments are typically made during Assembly meeting open sessions. However, Assembly members may vote to discuss applicant(s) in closed executive session. In this case, do you wish to be present when your application is discussed?  Yes  No

**RETURN TO: Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk/Records Specialist**  
**Municipal Clerk's Office, 100 Lincoln Street, Floor 3 ~ Fax: 907-747-7403 ~ clerk@cityofsitka.org**

April 11, 2023

To: Sitka City and Borough Assembly  
Fm: Rich McClear  
Re: Application to serve on the Tourism Taskforce

Since I moved to Sitka in 1980, I have been concerned about Sitka's Economic Development. I served on the city's Economic Development Commission for a decade in the 80s and 90s, for several years as chair. My concern was then, and now, improving the economic health of Sitka while preserving the unique nature of Sitka as a remote town with a high quality of life and with a great deal of civic engagement. Tourism, when done right, can provide economic opportunity without destroying the nature of Sitka.

I have always been happy to see the first cruise ship of the season (and feel a certain relief when the last one leaves.) In retirement I have become a frequent cruiser. I was born to it. My grandfather ran away to sea to become a steward at age 13 and as a kid I traveled on ships with him. I understand that for cruise visitors to have an enjoyable time in Sitka, and to come back as independent travelers who will stay several days, bringing business to hotels, B&Bs, restaurants, shops and attractions, the town must make a good first impression.

Sitka makes that impression because, until now, we have avoided the overcrowding that plagues Juneau and Ketchikan. Our downtown is "real" with stores that sell things for Sitkans and not just the same jewelry shops that they see in St. Thomas or Curaçao. Sitka's job is to be welcoming while preserving the essential nature of our city.

At some point that will mean finding the "number," the sweet spot where we have enough visitors to move the economy, with the right mix of cruise and independent travelers, without having too many to make the experience seem harried to visitors and without destroying Sitka for the residents. There are a lot of issues to consider, including what is the tipping point where real estate in downtown Sitka becomes affordable mainly to chain tourist shops shutting out local merchants and artists.

Done right, Sitka can have a bright tourism future. This is in our interest and in the interest of cruise lines and the tourist industry. We can add infrastructure that benefits citizens and tourists and develop policies that foster the community we want. Last year was a test, and the temporary plan worked fairly well. Now we need to build on that for the future. My experience as a long time Sitka resident, my experience and interest in economic development, and my experience as a cruiser who understands what visitors in a cruise port make me a suitable candidate for this task force.

Sincerely,

Rich McClear

