



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

MEMORANDUM

To: Assembly Members Knox, Wein, Miyasato, Bean, and Potrzuski

From: Mayor Hunter and Deputy Mayor Eisenbeisz

Date: June 6, 2018

Subject: Direct the Administrator to prepare a grant application for a municipal cabins project

Background:

The State of Alaska has a surplus of federal Pittman-Robertson funds available to build infrastructure that improves access to hunting and wildlife viewing. (These funds are collected through taxes on the sale of firearms and ammunition.) Grants require a 25% non-federal match. Pittman-Robertson funds are administered by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Third parties such as the City and Borough of Sitka can work with ADF&G staff to submit projects for federal review. Project grant applications are considered on a case-by-case basis at the state and federal levels. Approved grants generally allow up to five years for project planning and implementation.

Our Proposal:

We have a rare opportunity to expand our highly-popular recreation infrastructure in Sitka using predominantly federal funds. New public-use cabins would likely generate operational profit to pay back a local match.

At a 3:1 match, Pittman-Robertson funds would increase a CBS outlay of \$50,000 to a project total of \$200,000, providing a budget large enough to build two cabins on municipal land. Once the cabins are operational, we expect the revenue would easily reimburse the original funding source within five to ten years.

The Tom Young Memorial Cabin provides a model for a successful CBS cabin facility. Thanks to the help of dedicated volunteers, the City is able to allocate only a small amount to cover maintenance costs. In recent years, the cabin has generated roughly \$8,000 in annual revenue. Future cabins can seek to replicate this strong community ownership. (See attached financial statements for Tom Young Cabin.)

At present, demand for cabins far exceeds supply throughout the summer months. Additional cabins would improve quality of life for Sitkans and help attract independent travelers. Cabin use could be further increased if we moved to a digital reservation system, removing the onerous process of visiting city hall in order to reserve a cabin. (IS staff report that this will be very easy to do without new software systems.)

Assembly Action:

We ask for the assembly to give the administrator direction to prepare a grant application for a municipal cabins project.