



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Paxton and Assembly Members
Keith Brady, Municipal Administrator

From: Don Kluting, Harrigan Centennial Hall Manager

Date: December 26, 2018

Subject: Staff Request / Visitor Enhancement Fund

HCH was renovated and enlarged to serve as a central hub for the visitor industry in Sitka and has set records for the amount of use since it's opening in September 2016. Additional staff are required to provide visitor services and sustain the operations accordingly from April 1st – November 30th each year. Operational duties and maintenance has increased due to the overall size of the building increasing from 18,000 to 32,000 square feet. Due to the increased demand, additional staff are also required to sustain the operations and maintenance at HCH. The summer cruise ship traffic has increased and is predicted to be over 200,000 passengers this upcoming 2019 season and more in the year after that.

The factors listed below contribute to the additional staffing requirement

- Lack of adequate staff for all events – record number of events the first full year of operation (2017) in the expanded building. Increased number of events results in more staff labor for room arrangements and maintenance, especially larger conferences and conventions.
- Increased summer visitor traffic – resulting in increased supplies, staff time and maintenance for HCH (from 80,000 a few years ago to over 200,000 predicted for 2019).
- Assuming additional visitor information services previously provided by the Chamber, per the negotiated and newly approved visitor service contract.
- Increased commercial vendors during summer season, more customer contact time – resulting in more complaints and staff time dealing with and resolving conflict situations.
- Increased technology from previous operation – resulting in more staff time for equipment set up and arrangements (record year in 2017 of 1698 events)
- HCH is the central hub for visitors (different from previous building when tendering operations were split between the bridge facility and HCH) - More staff labor dedicated to flow of traffic and maintenance.

I am respectfully requesting use of the visitor enhancement fund to fund two additional seasonal staff that are required to perform visitor information and facility operation and maintenance

duties for other events at HCH. This is easily justified by the huge impacts visitors have on our operation. Visitors should pay their fair share rather than locals incurring the expense for the impact on our operations at HCH.