

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-27

DECLARING AN ECONOMIC DISASTER IN THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA DUE TO COVID-19 AND POOR REGIONAL RETURNS OF ALL SALMON SPECIES

WHEREAS, Sitka has five seafood processing plants which operate seasonally each year; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Administrator of the City and Borough of Sitka on March 15, 2020 issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to COVID-19 in Sitka; and

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2020 the President of the United States issued Disaster Declaration No. 16386, Disaster No. AK-00046, freeing up economic assistance through the Small Business Administrator for businesses impacted by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, numerous federal and state economic programs have been established for business assistance due to impacts from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the City and Borough of Sitka has nine different grant programs for businesses and agencies to help mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the June 2020 Sitka Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey revealed Sitka business revenue was down 60% in 2020 through June, compared to the same period in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the June 2020 Sitka Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey also revealed that 22% of respondents said that they are at risk of closing permanently; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Southeast Jobs COVID Impacts Report, issued August 21, 2020 confirms Sitka has an 8.9% unemployment rate as compared to 3.4% in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Southeast Jobs COVID Impacts Report also outlines the regional change in Southeast jobs from April to July 2020 compared to 2019 including a 50% drop in Transportation jobs; a 38% decline in Leisure and Hospitality jobs; and loss of 27% in Seafood Processing jobs; and an 11% reduction in Retail jobs; and

WHEREAS, Southeast Alaska, including Sitka is enduring the complete cancellation of the summer cruise season, the impact of which Sitka is a loss of an estimated 210,400 cruise ship passengers with an estimated loss of \$74 million dollars to the local economy.

WHEREAS, Southeast Alaska, including Sitka is enduring the loss of independent tourists due to COVID 19, the impact of which Sitka is a loss of an estimated 46,185 independent visitors with an estimated additional loss of \$10 million dollars to the local economy.

WHEREAS, though the fishing season has not yet concluded, reports from the Commercial Fishing Fleet indicate an abysmal year for salmon returns in the region, along with a significant drop in the prices paid to fishermen by processors; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic and related economic impacts are expected to continue for the foreseeable future; and

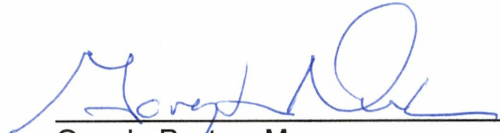
WHEREAS, poor regional salmon returns suggest the fishing season could be worse than 2016 when a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the Pink Salmon fishery was issued.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, that:

1. An Economic Disaster is hereby declared in the City and Borough of Sitka, due to COVID-19 and Poor Regional Returns of All Salmon Species.
2. The State of Alaska and United States Secretary of Commerce are hereby urged to issue two Economic Disaster Declarations:
 - a. 2020 Statewide Tourism Disaster resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic; and
 - b. 2020 Southeast Alaska Salmon Fisheries Disaster resulting from poor returns and harvests of all salmon species.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND DURATION. This resolution shall be effective immediately after its adoption.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 22nd day of September 2020.



Gary L. Paxton, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st and final reading 9/22/2020

Sponsor: Administrator