



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS
330 Harbor Drive
Sitka, AK
(907)747-1811

Minutes - Final

City and Borough Assembly

Mayor Steven Eisenbeisz
Deputy Mayor Thor Christianson,
Vice Deputy Mayor Valorie Nelson,
Kevin Knox, Kevin Mosher, Crystal Duncan, Rebecca
Himschoot

Municipal Administrator: John Leach
Municipal Attorney: Brian Hanson
Municipal Clerk: Sara Peterson

Thursday, September 16, 2021

6:00 PM

Assembly Chambers

Continuation of September 14, 2021 Meeting

SPECIAL MEETING

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. FLAG SALUTE
- III. ROLL CALL

Nelson participated by videoconference. Eisenbeisz arrived at 6:40pm.

Present: 7 - Christianson, Knox, Mosher, Nelson, Eisenbeisz, Himschoot, and Duncan

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

L [RES 21-21](#)

Urging the United States Government to advocate for a permanent ban on tailings dams and for a temporary halt to the permitting, exploration, development, and expansion of Canadian mines along Alaska-British Columbia transboundary salmon rivers until the United States-Canada Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are upheld and an international agreement on watershed protections is implemented

Richard Wein, Fredrick Olsen Jr., Mim McConnell, Marsh Skeelee, Heather Hardcastle, Breanna Walker, Linda Behken, and Eric Jordan spoke in support.

Knox told of his work with the resolution brought forward in 2017 and spoke to the importance of the proposed resolution.

A motion was made by Knox that this Resolution be APPROVED on FIRST AND FINAL READING. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 6 - Christianson, Knox, Mosher, Nelson, Himschoot, and Duncan

Absent: 1 - Eisenbeisz

M [21-139](#)

Discussion / Direction / Decision on directing the Municipal Administrator to enter a funding and maintenance agreement with the Birds and Benches Work Group of the Sitka Decolonizing Dialogue for the installation and upkeep of three benches in the courtyard area of Harrigan Centennial Hall

Finance Director Melissa Haley noted the concept had been reviewed by a number of commissions. She told of staff concerns regarding the location of the benches and said the long term maintenance of the benches hadn't been addressed. Municipal Administrator Leach stated he was looking for direction from the Assembly. Nelson reminded of the community divide that had transpired with the removal of the Baranov statue. Assembly Members directed the Administrator to work with the Birds and Benches Group, City staff, and to develop a maintenance agreement.

N [21-140](#)

Decision on whether to allow sales tax free day(s) following the Thanksgiving holiday and set date(s)

Eisenbeisz, a business owner on Lincoln Street, asked to be recused. Deputy Mayor Christianson concurred.

Richard Wein noted sales tax free days had been a tradition for years and wondered how remote sellers would be included.

Christianson wondered if it would be possible to make effective for local stores only. Finance Director Melissa Haley answered no and said it would be considered discrimination against the remote sellers. She relayed the City was required to inform the Alaska Remote Seller Sales Tax Commission (ARSSTC) of sales tax free days. Citizens who shopped online during the sales tax free days would work through the vendor or ARSSTC to get reimbursed for tax paid.

A motion was made by Himschoot to authorize November 26 and November 27 as Sales Tax Free day(s) for 2021 noting the sales tax free day(s) will not be applicable to any sale of fuel, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, and marijuana, nor affect any sale which is part of a continuing obligation of the buyer to pay the seller over time. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 6 - Christianson, Knox, Mosher, Nelson, Himschoot, and Duncan

Recused: 1 - Eisenbeisz

O [21-141](#)

Consider waiving \$100 late fee penalty assessed for Siemens Industry, Inc. for the Q4 2020 sales tax filing period

Municipal Attorney reviewed procedures and noted the Sitka General Code did not allow staff to eliminate the penalty thus it was taken before the Assembly. Finance Director Melissa Haley relayed there was a requirement that all registered businesses file a sales tax return, even if the amount was zero. She added the filing was an important tool to understand who was operating within Sitka. Haley said the business owner had a good history with filing on time. Nelson reminded Siemens was unaware the return didn't arrive on time.

Richard Wein spoke in opposition.

A motion was made by Mosher to grant the waiver of a \$100 late fee penalty assessed for Siemens Industry Inc. for Q4 2020 sales tax filing period. The motion FAILED by the following vote.

Yes: 2 - Mosher, and Nelson

No: 5 - Christianson, Knox, Eisenbeisz, Himschoot, and Duncan

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD:

Gavin Holder spoke in opposition to a mask mandate. Richard Wein told of a public records request he filed and reported there was no contract for the appraiser who performed the appraisal on the former Sitka Community Hospital site. Thor Christianson relayed he had been thanked by community members for supporting a mask mandate. Valorie Nelson said she did not call people to attend Tuesday night's meeting and suggested in the future, if there was going to be a time limit on public testimony, that it be advertised.

VI. REPORTS

a. Mayor, b. Administrator, c. Attorney, d. Liaison Representatives, e. Clerk, f. Other

Mayor - Eisenbeisz reported a budget had been set for the Alaska Marine Highway.

Administrator - Leach told of attendance at Southeast Conference.

Attorney - Hanson reported on the virtual Alaska Bar Association Conference.

Liaison Representatives - Nelson told of the Library Commission, Planning Commission, and Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings. Knox reported on the Port and Harbors Commission. Himschoot reported on the Tree and Landscape Committee.

Clerk - Peterson told of upcoming dates pertinent to the October 5 Municipal Election and reviewed voting options.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Knox to ADJOURN. Hearing no objections, the meeting ADJOURNED at 7:42pm.

ATTEST: _____
Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk