

Mayor's Monthly Report

October 2025

Xunaa Borough: We are still waiting for the LBC to complete the record in Court; we will not have a new due date for filing the brief until the record is complete.

Staff Meeting: The September staff meeting was an opportunity to regroup after the summer. We shared highlights from the summer, talked about Fall/Winter scheduling, staff were updated on the new website launch, and we asked staff to begin identifying ordinances that affect their departments that may need to be updated. In October, staff will be given an overview and demo of the new HR benefit program, WorkShield.

Volunteer opportunities: We are still seeking people to serve on the Ordinance Review Committee as well as volunteers to help with community emergency response planning.

Southeast Conference Annual Meeting: I attended, along with Kathy, the 3-day Southeast Conference Economic Summit and Annual Meeting in Sitka. This was a great experience, and I really enjoyed connecting with many people, some of whom are old friends, from all over Southeast. Southeast Conference is an impressive organization with extensive outreach and influence in our region.

- Panels on the visitor industry, transportation, fisheries, mariculture, housing and energy security; conversations with Alaska's commissioners and our State legislators; addresses from all three congressional leaders; presentations on strategies for strengthening partnerships, resiliency and overcoming housing hurdles and lots more kept me busy and attentive.
- On Thursday afternoon there were three breakout sessions, and I attended *Collaborating on the Child Care Crisis*. The focus of this session was to create a Child Care Subcommittee and to build momentum to increase childcare capacity in SE Alaska. There was not a lot to glean from this session except that it is a serious issue throughout the region, and Southeast Conference has made it their Priority Objective #3.
- At the business meeting on Thursday morning, a resolution to control sea otter populations was presented to the membership. Comments made were mostly in support; I spoke regarding our experience with considering a similar resolution and I shared some of the comments that were made by the public. The resolution passed, although I voted against it.

Additionally, on Monday I attended a community conversation hosted by Representatives Himschoot and Bynum, and SEAGO reviewing the history of sportfishing regulations, current sportfishing practices and introducing House Concurrent Resolution 1 (HCR1). Below is an excerpt from Rep. Himschoot's sponsor statement:

House Concurrent Resolution 1 establishes a Joint Legislative Task Force to evaluate the sport fishing service industry in Southeast Alaska. The task force will be responsible for

evaluating the industry, and if it is warranted, providing recommendations on managing the sector in the future to ensure economic viability for businesses and continued access to our fisheries resources for all user groups. Resident and non-resident sport and commercial fishermen throughout Southeast Alaska recognize the increased pressure on our finite fisheries resources. As fishermen from all sectors become more efficient and sport fishing effort increases, user groups have asked for the legislature to evaluate the sport fishing service sector in Southeast Alaska.

A big shout out to the Glacier Bay Construction crew, Ponch, Justin and Jesse, for doing the best that they possibly can, in challenging weather conditions, to keep our roads in decent shape. This is a never-ending battle, and they are out there in all conditions attempting to alleviate the potholes, only to do it again in a few days! We appreciate you!

The Year in Review: I have been reflecting on the past year and realize that I have enjoyed this role more than I had expected. It has been challenging at times, but it has been rewarding in many ways. I am proud of the accomplishments the Council has made over the last twelve months through council discussions, committee work, community input and support from our amazing staff in City Hall. Some of the highlights are:

- Ordinance amendments – we updated over twenty different ordinances, most notably our ordinance on committees
- Policy & Procedure for Endowment Fund Grants; a complete overhaul by a special committee and approved by Council
- Policy & Procedure for Plat signing (new)
- Policy & Procedure updates to Employee Performance Evaluations
- Twenty-five Resolutions were approved
- Submitted applications to DNR for the acquisition of Tract B2 and submerged lands at the Salmon River Boat Harbor (application is still in the review process)
- Xunaa Borough - we filed for reconsideration of the LBC's decision to approve the Xunaa Borough, however the decision was upheld. We then appealed to Superior Court; that process is ongoing and is expected to take several months.
- Completed two Employee Performance Evaluations in executive session
- Amended tax ordinances to add sales tax to room tax on room sales; preliminary results show this to have been passed by the voters in Tuesday's election.

Sally McLaughlin