

Mayor's Monthly Report

March 2025

Xunaa Borough Update: The Local Boundary Commission met on November 12, 2024 and voted in favor of adopting the City of Hoonah's petition to dissolve the City of Hoonah and to form a non-unified Home Rule Xunaa Borough as presented to the Local Boundary Commission, seeming to overlook the LBC staff report that recommended the LBC not adopt the petition as presented, as well as an abundance of public comment in opposition.

The final written decision as well as a dissent brief presented by Commissioner Wood and Commissioner Walker were presented at a December meeting. These documents are available on the LBC website, under the "Decision" tab.

At that point we had an opportunity to file a request for reconsideration. We engaged attorney Megan Costello, on recommendation from our city attorney, to work with us on filing for reconsideration. Elfin Cove also engaged Megan, and we combined our efforts into one request. Megan did an outstanding job in presenting our case! In addition to ours, the City of Tenakee Springs, the City of Pelican and the Gustavus Visitors Association all filed requests. These documents are also available on the LBC website, under the "Public Meetings" tab.

A final decisional meeting was held on February 18 in which the LBC reconsidered two of the standards-Boundaries and Best interests of the State- and ultimately voted to uphold the original decision to grant the petition for the Xunaa Borough. A written decision is due within 30 days (by March 18) and will be the final decision. We have no further avenues for appealing to the LBC. However, there is an avenue available to appeal to the Alaska Superior Court.

At the March 3rd Special City Council Meeting we met with Megan Costello in an executive session to discuss strategies and options for appeal. No formal action was taken at that time; however, another special meeting will be scheduled soon to make a formal decision.

Staff Meeting: At the February staff meeting, staff reported on additions or changes they made to the website pages for their department. We also reviewed the short- and long-form project scoping document forms to identify suggestions for streamlining them. Staff were asked to come up with ideas on policies they would like to review at future meetings. I am very pleased with the level of dedication and pride with which our staff members serve our community!

Thanks to Liesl and Artemis BonaDea for sprucing up the city bulletin boards around town. Brightly colored labels now highlight the different documents posted, making it easier to see at a glance what's there. I appreciate the participation of community members in efforts such as this.

Thanks to the many community members who are currently serving on our two active committees; we appreciate your contributions to address issues that affect all of us here in Gustavus! For those interested in learning more about what these committees are doing, please visit the [Boards and Committees](#) tab on our website.

Projects of interest: Some projects and ideas that I would like to address in the next several months are listed here. A few are already in progress, some may take a while to get to, but I just wanted you to be aware of them. Please let me know if you are interested in assisting with any of these topics.

- Policy for Receipt of Petitions
- City Roads Survey
- Falls Creek Recreational Area Access
- Policy & Procedure for Signing off on Subdivision Plats
- Strategic Plan Review Committee (after we have a new committee ordinance in place)
- Ordinance Review Committee (after we have a new committee ordinance in place)
- Trapping and Public Safety Awareness
- Ferry Waiting Area Improvements (in conjunction with DOT?)

I also spent time in the last month on:

- Phone calls with FERC
- Listened to the February 18th LBC reconsideration of the Xunaa Borough decision
- Communicating with attorneys re: OMA and Xunaa Borough issues
- Attended first meeting of the Policy Committee
- Budget development meetings with the City Treasurer and Administrator
- Meeting with folks at Fireweed Coffee Shop on Friday afternoons and informally throughout the week and about town. I very much enjoy the opportunity to connect with you all and am thankful for your support!