

## Coffee With Council 1/27/24

We had a great Turn out January 27<sup>th</sup> for our first Coffee with Council event! We had about a total of 17-25 community members stop by to listen and engage in the conversation. The bulk of the discussion was about TNC Lands and the Proposed Hoonah Borough formation. Kyle Bishop and I tried to let the community self-lead that conversation and boy, do we have some very well informed and sharp neighbors! We answered some questions with basic clarifying facts and avoided personal opinion projection. Some of the more specific questions asked were:

1. What does it mean to Annex a city into a borough?
2. How will this affect our PILT Grant funds? And who could answer that?
3. What are the Pros and Cons for the three main scenarios (We join the Hoonah Borough, we join the Haines Borough, we start our own Borough) There seemed to be consensus on pursuing options vs. declining to join the Hoonah Borough. Borough could be better than inevitable annexation.
4. Where are we currently regarding the TNC Land issue? Mostly strong opposition. There was generally strong opposition regarding a transfer. Many people agree that we should communicate and work directly with Hoonah. Consider land acknowledgement and working together.
5. Is there any cruise ship stake in TNC Land Transfer?
6. Do we have an Attorney for these land issues?
7. Where are we at with the TSA/Alaska Airlines issue? We provided basic surface level facts.
8. Community wants the City to have a strong stance in the current land issues and become more communicative with Hoonah itself on some of these matters.
9. Can we reach out to our state representative officials for support?

Kyle and I then asked a few prompt questions about what people like about our city run department and what they would like to see more of. And the response to that question was.

1. We need more volunteers, and younger volunteers.
2. The current volunteers we have are overwhelmed, especially the library volunteers.
3. Too many scheduled events with little turn out, heavily relying on volunteerism.
4. There seems to be general support for simplifying library events and focusing more on providing services such as: supporting people who don't own computers with assistance filing for PFD, resume work, heating assistance, etc. GCC has picked up the slack for events for kids.

At the end a community member suggested the GVA adjust the wording about the homelands on the website for Gustavus.

Overall, we were very pleased with this event, and we have received very positive feedback.

-Rachel Patrick & Kyle Bishop.