

Douglas Advisory Board

To: City and Borough of Juneau Assembly
Date: May 15, 2024
Re: 2023 Douglas Advisory Board Annual Report
Members: Teri Tibbett (chair), Ed Schoenfeld (vice-chair), Mary Kay Pusich, Joyce Vick, Jo Wulffenstein, Shannon Crossley, Ann Simard

The Douglas Advisory Board (DAB) was formed upon unification of the cities of Juneau and Douglas into the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) and continues to be a voice for Douglas Island residents, concerns, and input. In 2023, DAB met on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:00 or 5:30 pm at the Douglas Library. The DAB voted to change to the earlier time at its Feb. 15, 2023, meeting.

Following are the 2023 activities of the DAB:

DOUGLAS HISTORICAL CEMETERIES

DAB continued to advocate for municipal takeover and increased maintenance of Douglas Island cemeteries. In correspondence, reports and appearances before the Assembly, it requested the municipality take over ownership and maintenance of the Douglas Island Historical Cemeteries in the Lawson Creek area.

DAB's request included: 1) acquire the titles for each of the Eagles and Catholic cemeteries; 2) attain quiet title for the other Douglas Historic Cemeteries; 3) provide for regular maintenance of the cemeteries. Supporting documents included: Letter to the Juneau Assembly, Jan. 30, 2023; *Report of the Survey and Inventory of the Historic Cemeteries in Douglas, Alaska*; CBJ Community Development Department, September 2015; documents from the CBJ Lands & Resources Committee (June 11, 2018) (January 30, 2019); documents from CBJ Parks & Recreation (August 7, 2018).

At the Assembly's January 30, 2023 meeting, Mayor Beth Weldon assigned the issue to Assembly's Lands, Housing, and Economic Development Committee. However, no action was taken. Douglas Advisory Board members later contacted Assembly members requesting the cemetery issue be brought up at the Assembly's annual retreat, held December 2. The issue was raised and Assembly members agreed to bring it up at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

'WELCOME TO DOUGLAS ISLAND' SIGN

DAB continues to support establishing a 'Welcome to Douglas Island' sign in the center of the roundabout that will serve to greet residents and tourists coming to the Island. Goldbelt Inc. was contacted and they expressed interest in funding the sign. The DAB also discussed the need for state Department of Transportation Right-of-Way approval, since the roundabout is the agency's responsibility. It also discussed partnering with a non-profit group to choose a sign design and artist.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- **Savikko Park.** DAB continues asking for more frequent openings of the restrooms near Treadwell Arena during summer daytime hours, especially during events. Juneau Parks and Recreation staff have confirmed there are no plans to repair or replace the rest rooms. The board met with CBJ Parks & Rec Landscape Supervisor Colby Shibler to discuss improvements to the Sandy Beach shelter and parking lot area in a meeting with public participation. The board monitored work throughout the summer.
- **Douglas Harbor Improvements.** DAB met with Harbormaster Matt Creswell to discuss landscaping, parking delineations, restrooms and paved sidewalks around the Douglas Boat Harbor to match the facilities and maintenance of other city harbors. Creswell explained no funds were available for such work.
- **CBJ Comprehensive Planning.** DAB continues to monitor CBJ's long-term planning efforts, including the *Juneau Comprehensive Plan*, *Douglas/West Juneau Area Plan*, and *Downtown Blueprint* efforts for their impacts to Douglas residents, businesses, and infrastructure.
- **Assembly Liaison:** DAB has asked the mayor or Assembly assign a member as liaison to the board to improve communications and municipal response to issues on Douglas Island. A liaison has not been named.
- **Douglas Highway Construction.** DAB continued to monitor construction on Douglas Highway.
- **Eaglecrest Expansion.** DAB continued to monitor the planned expansion of summertime activities at Eaglecrest Ski Area, as well as the new gondola project and associated improvements.
- **Juneau Douglas North Crossing.** DAB representatives attended and reported on stakeholder meetings as part of a PEL Study about a potential second bridge connecting the mainland to Douglas Island at North Douglas.
- **Douglas 4th of July Committee.** DAB continued to monitor planning and events of the Douglas 4th of July Committee.
- **Treadwell Historical Preservation Society.** DAB representatives on the Treadwell Historical Society report regularly about the Society's activities and efforts.
- **Treadwell Ditch Trail Renovation Project.** DAB monitored continued improvements to the Treadwell Ditch Trail by volunteer and staff crews. Work includes the ditch trail itself and new access routes in the area of the Bonnie Brae subdivision and the Mount Jumbo trail.
- **Communications and Outreach.** DAB members maintained its process for monitoring CBJ activities that impact Douglas Island, including planning, development, and recreation. DAB also monitors and reports to Douglas Island neighborhood associations and social media groups.