

# DOCKS AND HARBORS BOARD RETREAT MINUTES

November 13, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Port Director's Conference Room/Zoom Webinar



<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/81569794359> or (253)215-8782 Webinar ID: 815 6979 4359 Passcode: 612073

**A. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Etheridge called the Board Retreat meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**B. ROLL CALL:** The following members were in attendance - James Becker, Tyler Emerson, Debbie Hart, Matthew Leither, Nick Orr, Annette Smith, Shem Sooter and Don Etheridge.

Absent – Clayton Hamilton

Also in attendance: Carl Uchtyl – Port Director, Matthew Creswell – Harbormaster, Matthew Sill – Port Engineer and Melody Musick – Administrative Officer.

**C. PORT DIRECTOR REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES – Added Special Order of Business**

The Agenda was approved as amended.

**D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None**

**Special Order of Business – Mr. Emerson read that we received the PIDP grant for the drive down float in Aurora Harbor for \$11.1M**

Mr. Leither asking about the match requirement?

Mr. Uchtyl said the Board decided on a 20% match.

**E. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION**

1. Continuation of Board Retreat from November 12th

Mr. Uchtyl said he added the Petro Marine lease to the packet from the commercial sales discussion from yesterday's meeting. It has the rate they pay, how long, and why it was a non-competitive license. On page 31 is the commercial use prohibition but one could work within the code if someone has a good request. On page 35 is the HDR rate setting project. There is a summary of that report on page 52.

Ms. Smith asked how we can allow certain businesses to do business, and some are not allowed.

Mr. Uchtyl said he does not know that happens.

Docks & Harbors project efforts -

Mr. Sill talked about the Docks & Harbors projects, and the history of our projects. He showed a presentation with the Docks & Harbors projects, he described the different projects and how much we spent on the projects from 2010 to 2024. He also talked about how the projects were funded or are going to be funded. He showed our recent projects, ones we are working on, and examples of future projects. Mr. Sill's presentation is attached to these minutes.

There was a question about the Harbor's security gate. Ms. Smith asked if the gate has helped with decreasing the crime in Harris Harbor. Mr. Creswell said the metrics he has is the number of police calls for Harris is zero now. That is also helped from the night security personnel.

There was discussion on the Seawalk railing project. The new Board members were provided the background on this topic.

Mr. Leither asked what the whole University property by Aurora Harbor would cost today?

Mr. Etheridge said the last time it was assessed, it was almost \$9M for the whole facility. UAS decided not to sell and wait for someone to pay like NCL paid for the Juneau downtown property.

Mr. Leither asked if they have a dollar figure they are looking for or want?

Mr. Uchytel said the Vocational Technology building and welding building is currently used and they do not have the money to move the training to a different location. The area we currently lease and wanted to buy was appraised for about \$3M but UAS did not want to split that because they thought it would devalue the entire lot when they did decide to sell.

Mr. Sill pointed out that Docks & Harbors does a lot of master planning, and we generate project lists. As time goes on, we pick at them when we find funding. The drive-down float was and is in our master plan and we finally got funding for that project.

The North Douglas Project concept was shown and there was a question on how much that project will cost, Mr. Uchytel said pre-covid it was \$20M.

Question about the small cruise ship project concept, if the backside of Douglas is developed, will that ease the need for the small cruise ship project?

Mr. Sill commented that we would need to know more about the Douglas plan before determining that.

#### **Docks & Harbors internal/public improvements.**

Mr. Creswell talked about where we were ten years ago and what it has taken to get to where we are today. A lot has changed in the last ten years. One of his first task ten years ago was to better the image of customer service. There has been a lot of good work to get there.

#### **He talked about the Port -**

- Port staffing has increased by 250% - This change came with the new cruise ship berths. We went from securing the area with barricades (Walmart greeter), to checking ID cards (Costco greeter), to checking ID's to Ship cards and occasionally checking baggage due to Coast Guard requirements (Airport TSA agents). We needed to bring on more people due to that requirement and with the more people that was outside the span of control for one supervisor so there needed to be a deputy Port Supervisor to help manage people. We are now around 30 people for Port operations. We used to operate on a five-month cruise ship season but now the season is close to seven months. We have benefitted positions that are six-months and a couple of eight-month positions to help with onboarding and Port shut down. We also have unbenefitted positions that are helpful when we have surge cruise ship days so we can just call them in at those times and we don't have to worry about having them work a whole 7.5 workday. The unbenefitted positions also allow for flexibility. Our passenger count has doubled since the 2008 crash to 1.7M cruise ship passengers expected for 2025. A lot of the ships hook up to our grey water discharge and water and some of them require our personnel to have the expertise to hook the ships up.
- The Port was updated with welcome signs along the waterfront, the Peratrovich mural, and totems have been added. These were not all our projects but they have improved the waterfront.
- In the loading zone areas, we manage with cooperation in mind and be partners with our users. Meeting are held at the beginning of the season to provide information on what is coming for the season and also at the end of the season to have the users tell us what they liked and did not like during the season.
- We raised rates but the Assembly will be working on this item moving forward.

Question about the US Coast Guard required security, are we getting funding from head tax?

Mr. Creswell said we received approximately \$300,000 to help with Port staffing. He showed our org chart and described the different FTE's.

**He talked about the Harbors -**

- Docks & Harbors added two security personnel with constant shift changes to not let people know their schedule. This has been very successful with security as well as quicker response time for sinking vessels or other emergency type things in the Harbors.
- Added a year around admin assistant at Statter Harbor. Statter has been growing throughout the years and there was a need for additional year around admin.
- Placed a greater emphasis on training and certification for professional development.
- We have increased our social media presence with a Facebook page.
- We moved from a punitive enforcement model to a compliance enforcement model. We do use tickets as an enforcement tool but it is not our primary tool.
- Staff has taken an aggressive stance on seaworthy trials for seaworthy vessels. This is in regulation but it is not easy. There are several hundred boats in our downtown harbors that are hard to get in touch with. He has been picking a harbor a year at a time to work on for compliance. There is only three in Harris from last year and about 7 in Aurora from this year left.
- Customer service has been a top priority since he started nine years ago and still remains. We look at what's right for the customer. The Administrative Supervisor in the Harbors makes this her top priority.
- He designated safety supervisors throughout the Harbors and have a more robust safety program. We work well with our CBJ Safety officer.
- Built good relationships with Statter Harbor users. Segregation of the users has added more peace and harmony throughout the Harbor.
- We moved to a computerized asset management system, Lucity. We are moving to a new system called Brightly which is easier to use and is a cloud based system. It is a facilities maintenance project.
- We have also built good relationships with other CBJ departments. Parks & Rec helped us get our new parking system.
- We improved our relations with our Union, MEBA.
- Improved our admin billing process.
- Ms. Thrower has been working to improve and implement services and standardize the processes throughout Docks & Harbors admins.

Ms. Smith commented if the breakwater is redone, and more stalls are added, we will also need more parking and staff. Adding more stalls is going to affect a lot more than just Statter Harbor. Has there been any thought into five to ten year at Statter Harbor.

Mr. Creswell said yes he has a lot of ideas depending on what the Corps decides for the floating breakwater. He said there will be plenty of time to come up with a master plan after the Corps makes a final decision on what they will do.

Mr. Leither asked if there is a way to increase hot berthing throughout the summer. He suggested to implement a policy that if someone is out of there space for more than 48 hours, they are required to tell the office.

Mr. Creswell said that is in place currently and that is how we keep rates lower. We are working to make that better.

Mr. Uchytel asked Mr. Creswell to provide details on the Aurora Harbor Office.

Mr. Creswell said the Aurora Office was originally designed and used as a garage and slowly was updated to an office. We have two older garages, one used as a shop and one used as an annex shop. They are all falling

apart and it is not sufficient to run a business. There are sewer issues, leakage issues, and there is just not enough space for personnel. It is a rundown facility and staff does not like it. He said his request is to have a nice new office space for his staff at Aurora.

Mr. Becker asked if there is available room in the UAS building to move there.

Mr. Creswell said he does not know.

Mr. Leither commented that with the schools owned by the City, is there an opportunity for the UAS classes to move to the schools?

Mr. Etheridge said there could be an opportunity, but it would be up to UAS.

### **Prioritization**

**CIP** – Mr. Uchtyl said the Board owes a prioritized CIP list to the City Manager. On page 57 in the packet is last year's six year CIP list.

**Marine Passenger Fee Request** - On page 59 in the packet is the marine passenger fee request that is due the first of January. This list does not change much from year to year. The Tourism Manager makes a recommendation to the City Manager on what fees get approved. These fees are \$5 per head that comes to the City with Docks collecting those fees on behalf of the City. Mr. Uchtyl went on to explain all the other passenger fees and Port Development fees and what they pay. He read through the list that has been asked in the past starting on page 59 and did a short description.

Mr. Becker asked what has been determined on the Dock Electrification power need?

Mr. Uchtyl said based off the study in 2022, a ship would be able to hook up every two days.

Ms. Hart asked if it matters to have this list in order of priority?

Mr. Uchtyl said he expects the projects that are always funded to be funded, but not anything else.

Mr. Uchtyl went over the projects starting on page 70 in the packet with a brief description. Board will need to prioritize the list to move forward.

**Statter Breakwater Study** – Ongoing currently. Our expense \$2M and Federal \$2M. Once the study is completed then starts the construction. Our portion will be 20% which could be \$20M. He talked about funding options for that \$20M. The City Manager wants two Legislative priorities, and this is one for that list.

**The Aurora Harbor Drive-down float** – We have the PIDP of \$11.1M and our commitment of \$2.3M. He has written two letters to ADOT asking for a waiver and he has been denied. His ask is that half of the \$2.3M to come from the State. The issue is with the current Aurora Harbor project not being closed out yet. This will be the other project on the Legislative priority list.

**Wayside Park dredging** - Happening this year. We received \$750K from 1% sales tax.

**Taku Harbor** - \$1.6M estimate, our part will be \$400K.

**Little Rock Dump** – Staff would like to create a secure area for commercial users' storage/Conex boxes. The project would consist of clearing, fill, lighting and fencing. We are working on a contract with Dowl Eng to do a study.

**Statter Harbor building roof** – It is leaking and needs to be replaced. This will come out of our fund balance.

**Zinc Anode for Statter** - \$1M – we have \$500K in the ADOT Harbor Facility grant application.

Mr. Uchtyl commented that when we are putting together a CIP list, this is a moving target.

**Statter Harbor phased III(D)** – This is a Harbor project using Docks funds. There will be a better estimate in the next few weeks.

**Aurora phase IV** – This is a \$10M to \$12M project. We have \$5M from the State, \$5M from the 1% sales tax initiative and the rest would be from Harbor funds.

**The Aurora Harbor office** – Estimate is \$3M to \$5M project. He is hopeful in FY26 to have an architect start a design. He talked about different potential funding options.

**Douglas Landscaping/paving** – No funding but we keep it on the list.

**Heated showers and restrooms at Douglas and Aurora** – This could be funded by a Fish & Game boating/fishing grant. It would be a 75/25 match. For \$250K we could have the potential for a \$1M facility.

**Echo Cove Launch Ramp** – There is not a float currently. There are a lot of hunters that use that launch ramp. Possible to build for \$500K. The Goldbelt ferry also uses it in the winter.

**Amalga Launch ramp float extension** – He would like to see this because it is a good project.

**North Douglas Launch ramp expansion** - \$20M to \$30M. We could start with study's and environmental. The complication with this area is the state Rights-of-Way. North Douglas people could push back with the expansion. There are a lot of hurdles but there is benefit. An idea would be to move the whale watching fleet to North Douglas and we could maybe use head tax money. Then, the wake issues would not be a problem.

Mr. Leither asked about making it possible to put the boats in and out on both sides of the ramp in North Douglas.

Mr. Orr said parking is the issue. It is a zoo now with just using one side. It needs more development.

**UAS property** - Lease expires in 2026. Mr. Uchtyl said he would like to purchase this area in the future.

**Marine Services expansion** – range from \$10M to \$75M. It depends on location.

Ms. Smith wanted to propose moving the Aurora drive-down float and the Statter Harbor Breakwater to the Legislative Priority list and to the Operations meeting.

There was discussion on the process

Mr. Etheridge suggested to move forward with the two projects Mr. Uchtyl recommended for the Legislative priority list and have the Board rank the rest of the projects in a survey monkey.

Mr. Orr wanted a couple projects added to this list –

- On the South Douglas boat launch he would like four or five extra pieces of cement so you would not fall off at low tide.
- Lighting at the bottom of the South Douglas ramp.
- Debris cleaning on the north side of the South Douglas launch ramp.
- Amalga project, he would like to start on blasting the obstruction rock in the middle and at least that would be complete for when there is funding available in the future. With the Echo Cove launch ramp float being built it would alleviate some of the traffic coming into Amalga.

Discussion continued regarding what projects to rank, maintaining our projects, projects we are currently working on, and possible funding options. The list is due to be submitted to the Engineer departments by December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Uchtyl said he will send out a survey monkey with the list of projects for the Board members and staff to rank.

Mr. Sooter asked if there was any prior conditional study of the Aurora Harbor office.

Mr. Sill said this last summer we had PND look at the Aurora and Statter Harbor offices. The report for Statter Office is a new roof and we are waiting on the report for Aurora Office. Mr. Sill said he believes CBJ Building Maintenance has a relatively fresh assessment of the building as well. There was a question regarding the drains in the floors in the Aurora Harbor office. Mr. Sill said there are drains in the floors that go directly to the sewers, and they do not have p-traps. Staff put activated charcoal in the drains to keep the smells from coming into the office space.

Mr. Creswell commented the CBJ Building Maintenance will not maintain the Aurora Harbor building anymore because of the condition.

Mr. Leither commented he would feel good about using the money in our fund balance toward this project which is factored into our long-term financial goals rather than a new project.

Ms. Smith commented that we could also add projects in the survey monkey.

There was a question about using marine passenger fees for the North Douglas project. Mr. Uchytel said the funds would need to be approved by the City Manager. If we could show some benefit for cruise ships, we could get some money.

**F. ASSEMBLY LIAISON REPORT - None**

**G. BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

- a. November Operations-Planning Committee Meeting immediately follows adjournment.

**H. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm**

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