



City and Borough of Juneau
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TO: Deputy Mayor Hale and CBJ Borough Assembly
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager
DATE: February 21, 2024
RE: Changes to Title 3 (Administration) and Title 85 (Docks and Harbors)

The purpose of the draft legislation presented to you today is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Tourism Manager and the Docks and Harbors Board. It is a follow-up to the 12.18.23 Joint Docks and Harbors and Assembly meeting where this topic was discussed.

History

The growth of Tourism in Juneau created the need to manage the impacts of tourism across the community. In 2021 the Assembly approved a Tourism Manager position in the Manager's office to do just that through improvements in infrastructure, negotiation with industry and understanding the landscape of the visitor industry and how Juneau citizens interact with it.

The new role has created confusion in duties and responsibilities where tourism interacts with port infrastructure, recreational land, and housing. This has been experienced most acutely within Docks and Harbors where there is conflict in the mission of the enterprise to maximize revenue and be self-sustaining and the desire of the community to control, and sometimes limit, growth. The work Eaglecrest is doing with the gondola also has a clear tourism nexus. In the future other enterprise boards could have projects that have a disproportionate impact on the visitor industry and need to be managed through that lens.

Changes to Title 3

The attached draft ordinance amending Title 3, Administration, to establish the Tourism Office and their corresponding duties allows the manager to assign the Tourism Manager as the project manager or co-project manager for projects with a substantial relationship to cruise-ship related tourism.

Changes to Title 85

City Manager Watt spent the last year of his tenure working on aligning roles and responsibilities of the Tourism Manager, who is under the City Manager, and the Docks Enterprise, currently under the Port Director.

The changes presented to you in the marked-up draft of "Title 85 Waters and Harbors" were drafted by Manager Watt and were presented to the Docks and Harbors board in August and September of 2023. The proposed changes are explicit about what the Docks and Harbor board is not responsible for (rate setting, scheduling or policy issues, and issues related to the interface between industry and citizens of Juneau, including the impact of tours). It also states that the Port Director will take direction from the City Manager as it relates to cruise ship tourism. This, in conjunction with proposed changes to Title 3, make it very clear that the Manager's office, through the Tourism Manager, has direct control and influence over all things related to cruise tourism. This change will help advance the goals of the Visitor Industry Task Force (VITF) and provide a more direct route for Assembly influence on tourism related projects.

The Docks and Harbor Board discussed a response to the City Manager's proposal at their October 26, and November 15, 2023 board meetings. The most recent version of their draft comments are included in the packet. They are addressed to the City Manager and were not formally adopted by the board. The draft Board comments take issue with the proposed language as unnecessary and drafted in the negative.

While the Board bring up good points, the purpose of this legislation is to clarify roles and responsibilities in which case the more direct and explicit the language is, the easier it will be for current and future bodies to correctly interpret the Assembly's intent.

At the 12.18.2023 Joint Docks and Harbors and Assembly meeting, the Assembly discussed limiting Dock & Harbors to running operations, staffing and facilities; the Assembly wanted to have control of broad range community planning and managing the impacts of tourism as it relates to Docks and Harbors. In summary, the policy of Docks and how they are used is the purview of the Assembly.

Recommendation:

Title 3, Administration

Direct Assembly Liaisons to bring the proposed changes to their respective empowered boards for feedback. Move to introduce ordinance making changes to Title 3 at April 1st Regular Assembly meeting to give Liaisons time to collect relevant feedback.

Title 85, Docks and Harbors

Give staff feedback on Manager Watt's proposed changes. Direct staff to introduce an Ordinance concurrent with changes to Title 3.

Enc:

Draft ordinance amending Title 3

Title 85 Proposed Changes Watt

Title 85 clarification (from Docks and Harbors Board)