

Mayor's Report

Haines Borough
Office of the Mayor
103 Third Avenue S.
Haines, Alaska 99827
sscott@haines.ak.us
Voice (907) 766-2231 ext. 30

February 11, 2014

There has been some displeasure expressed over the letter sent by our Planning Department to the Mental Health Trust. I did encourage the Haines Borough Planning Department to weigh in on the Mental Health Trust decision to allocate 99,000 acres to a competitive lease for placer mining. It was determined that the MHT mis-read the Haines Borough Comprehensive Plan and that correction was offered. That is all; the comment was not a value judgment on what it is that they plan to do with the land; or on placer mining activity in particular. The planning department did find that the parcels do intersect with anadromous fish streams. As the Comp Plan indicates, we do have a responsibility to the 62 permit holders with boats in our harbor. Presently fishing is our principle industry, though this can change. It is the responsibility of the staff to interact with other agencies with respect to the plans on the books. The staff are stewards of our laws and policies. They cannot turn a blind eye to another agency's misinterpretation of the plans.

We had a great meeting regarding the annual budget yesterday. I appreciate the Manager's willingness to enter into a conversation with us regarding the annual budget.

Another manager who some will remember, Bob Ward, former long time manager for the Municipality of Skagway, while working here as Interim Manager, was asked why Skagway seemed to be so successful in its development. He said simply, they follow their comprehensive plan. I think this is good advice.

Our number 1 policy document is the comprehensive plan; our number 2 document is the annual budget. We raise and spend funds to implement the plan. However, our number 3 document is a set of legal rules we have established for ourselves. These 3 documents need to be aligned for maximum efficiency and efficacy.

I would like to take two actions as a result of our meeting yesterday.

1) If there is no objection, I will visit with the TAB on Thursday when they convene to work on their draft budget. I would like to ask that they advise us on strategies to implement and finance the 6 specific activities suggested for guidance by the Haines Convention and Visitor's Bureau, under the Economic Development Goal.

2) Add these topics to our COW on March 26, with additional topics added by you:

- aligning the program of our tourism department with elements outlined in the comprehensive plan
- adjusting the code to capture the revenue from the net proceeds of the permanent fund, perhaps for purposes to be specified
- adjusting the code to broaden the expenditures allowed from the capital improvement fund
- committing to design and pre-engineering of our top infrastructure needs. including extension of water and sewer mains
- participation in lobbying, including funding the DC lobbying firm, participation in AML, and Southeast Conference
- participation in infrastructure programs or third party contracts to increase access to Assembly deliberations via cable TV or the internet, or audio
- funding for non-profit entities in the Haines Borough

If this seems too cumbersome we can designate a different meeting date and time. the March 26 meeting is intended to address local legislative priorities, the pursuit of which will require little or no money. For example, charter revisions.