

12-15-2015

Haines has a reputation for being a wonderful place to visit, but also a very contentious community. This reputation is known throughout our Region and our State. I have always contended that we are a "passionate" community and that we are all "passionate" about what we believe is best for our community!! In all my life here, through good times and bad, I have NEVER seen this community be so hateful and vindictive....and, it makes me sad.

These past few months have been trying, to say the least. It seems that every time we turn around, we are reprimanded, criticized and chastised if we don't vote a certain way. We have been accused of not listening, ignoring public input, violating citizens' Constitutional Rights, violating our Oaths of Office, trying to prosecute for profit, turning our community into a "police state", power grabs, and the list goes on and on.....NONE of these accusations are true!!

Just because an Assembly vote doesn't go the way you want, does NOT mean we didn't listen and hear what you had to say. Our votes are based on the information we have before us and public input, of course. Not all public input is given or received at assembly meetings.....as you know, elected officials in our small town receive public input just about every time we go to the post office, the bank, the grocery store, the clinic or to a community event. And, we listen.

The threats of recall and bullying that have gone on recently are totally inappropriate and unacceptable.....and, MUST STOP!!

We have many important projects that require our attention, but when we are spending all of our time putting out fires and adding more and more to our staffs' workload, these projects suffer!! For example, we have two very important hires before us....Manager and Police Chief, 2 critical infrastructure projects...our WWTP and the Lutak Dock....our Boat Harbor Expansion project, our Budget process is beginning and upcoming negotiations with the Union.

Public input is critically important as we make decisions on behalf of the citizens of the Haines Borough; but, the consequences of these decisions must also be taken into account....who's going to do what, and when?? We have very dedicated Staff, but if we continue to add duties to their already busy days, I am concerned that some things will get pushed aside, as they try to prioritize new duties, and staff morale will suffer greatly!! Our staff is the backbone of our Borough and without them, the services we enjoy, and appreciate, would not happen!!

With these thoughts in mind, I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! I hope that we can come back together in 2016 with a fresh outlook, a new found respect for differing opinions and new attitudes for working together for our Community!!

*Jan Hiee
Mayor*