

## Tourism Advisory Board Meeting Agenda / Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 28 – 2:00 pm

**Meeting Call to Order:** Michael Ahmuty – 2:03 pm

**Roll Call: Present** - Ross Silkman, Karen Hess, Jason Gaffney, Michael Ahmuty, Judy Heinmiller, John Hunt, Jeff Butcher

**Absent** -

**Also Present** - Jerry Lapp, Tanya Carlson

**Approval of excused / unexcused absences:** N/A

**\*Approval of Agenda:** Butcher motioned to approve agenda and consent agenda, Heinmiller seconded; all in favor of motion.

**\*Approval of Minutes:** None

**Public Comments:** N/A

**Chair Report: Growth of Special Events in Town**

Touched upon this in last meeting. Ahmuty has drafted a letter for the manager and mayor. The whole point of the letter is to open up a dialog about items to consider during events. Butcher said now that people are used to using the Parade Grounds for the bike race it's starting to expand to other events. He's not sure how best to monitor that. Butcher also asked the Chief about the drinking in the parade grounds as it is private property. The Chief said that since it's publically accessible it is illegal. The other issue is trash. Butcher thinks creating a dialog with the borough is a good first step.

Heinmiller said she doesn't see how the parade grounds would be considered an idea spot for camping due to the hill. It makes sense for the Bike Race but not for the other events.

Ahmuty said there are certainly different views on what needs to happen with each of the events. Hopefully this will encourage a discussion in the borough on how best to handle different issues and still grow our current and future events.

Heinmiller said the bike race participants police themselves pretty well and leave paths in the ground for people and vehicles to maneuver. The beerfest is an entirely different crowd.

The issues that need to be addressed are trash, shuttles and human waste.

**Vacant Seat on TAB**

There are no applicants as of yet.

**New Business: Emissions Control Area "ECA" – AlaskaACT Letter**

The Mayor forwarded an email to Carlson regarding the ECA. Ahmuty sent a link to the TAB giving some background on the issue. The Mayor would like TAB to weigh in on what is going on and suggest a stance for the borough.

Hess said that Haines is in danger of losing all ships in the next couple of years if everything goes through with the ECA. The fuel required in two years has not yet been developed or tested. These standards will not only affect the cruise ships but also all of our freight and fuel. This means the entire community will be affected.

Gaffney requests that TAB write a resolution in opposition to the EPA's ECA rule. Skagway has worked on a resolution in opposition.

Silkman would a little bit more background in what the ECA will do in potential effects on Alaska. The rule will be in effect within 200 miles from shore which means the entire inside passage gets hit. Silkman thought it would force the cruise lines to alter their itineraries. Hess said they won't alter but leave Alaska. The cruise lines make their money from shore excursions. Their biggest ports are all on the inside passage.

Carlson said the first stage of the ECA, which goes into effect on August 1 of this year, will affect the cruise lines. Lynden Transport already utilizes the low sulphur fuel that will become the requirement on August 1. This means it will not yet affect local freight rates. However, in 2015 the next standard will take effect. This will affect the cruise lines and local freight. Hess said the low sulphur fuel they will require in 2015 has not yet been developed.

Alaska has become a very difficult place to do business and Hess and Gaffney believe that sooner or later the cruise lines will leave Alaska as it becomes too costly to do business. Gaffney said that without question Haines will lose its cruise ships because we do not offer enough revenue to help off-set this higher fuel rates.

Gaffney mentioned that the Great Lakes were given an exclusion to the rule and Hawaii is seeking exclusion. Hess said the cruise lines are in the middle of finalizing their 2014 itineraries which means that 2015 is right around the corner.

Hunt asked if the EPA excludes Alaska and Hawaii he wonders what we are looking for in our resolution; what kind of steps are we interested in taking. Hess answered the quick fix is to ask for an exclusion from the rule, but overall oppose the 2015 standards. Hunt asked because, although we are meeting for tourism, independently it will hit us in our pocket books when we buy groceries and fuel our cars.

Hess motioned that TAB recommend to the Assembly a resolution opposing the EPA standards that are coming into effect and ask for exclusion like the Great Lakes. In this motion she asks for some time for the board to get informed and get an email response from everyone; not have to wait for the next meeting to take action. Hunt feels that we should encourage the Assembly to be in opposition and draft a resolution seeking exclusion. **Hess amended her motion "to ask the borough assembly for a resolution to oppose the EPA standards that are coming into effect in 2015 and ask for exclusion for Alaska." All were in favor, no opposed.**

Hess asked Gaffney to get the resolution from Skagway as an example.

### **AMHS Day Boat**

Skagway and Haines mayors are working toward getting back our regular day boat service in the Northern Lynn Canal. A draft letter from Skagway to AMHS was included for TAB to view. Butcher said one thing he's noticed over the years is that they seem to respond to suggestions and try different things.

Silkman said the Fair works with AMHS to get special boats to get more people up to Haines for events. Butcher said he thought the overnight in Skagway boat worked well but is surprised to find that this new schedule works better. He's happy to see that Skagway's letter is not proposing to go back to the Skagway overnight. Hunt said the schedule this year is not at any one time. Carlson added that last year, when we had the day boat, we had one boat that ran at regular times and then some days we would get a second boat being the Prince Rupert or Bellingham ferries. This year they changed the schedule to not have double boats in the upper Lynn Canal. Carlson told the Mayor she has mixed emotions about the no Sunday southbound. Not having hurts the weekend traffic we could have from Juneau residents. However, with no Sunday southbound boat Mondays seem a bit busier in town than previously or even compared to other days of the week. She is not sure what the right answer is. She mentioned the letter is fighting for the day boat service but not changing where it overnights. Butcher said his occupancy is also up that night when there is not ferry.

**Old Business:**

**Election of New Chair for TAB**

Ahmuty is stepping down after this meeting. Hess asked if the position has been opened. Ahmuty said it has been advertised but no one has applied yet. Heinmiller said since we hold elections in November she wonders if Jason should take the seat until then. Ahmuty said that the bylaws are not quite clear cut. They just say in the absence of the chair the vice chair takes over. Gaffney is fine doing that.

Hunt is concerned about having a chair that is away during the winter. He asked if TAB did not want to vote for a chair because we don't have a new member yet. He doubts the new person would want to be nominated for the chair or vice chair. Hess would like the TAB to adhere to the bylaws. The bylaws are ambiguous; in the chair's absence the vice chair takes it but it doesn't state if it's a permanent absence if it works the same way. Gaffney does not want the chair and agrees with Hunt that the Chair should be someone who is here all winter.

There is also a question as to who would then chair if Gaffney could not attend. Can the chair appoint someone to take the meeting in his absence?

Heinmiller sees no reason why we need to do something immediately and would like to wait until we have a full board. Carlson agrees that the bylaws are fuzzy. She offered that if TAB would like to put it off until the next meeting she can meet with Julie to find out how we should work this. Ahmuty said he can stick around for another meeting. Heinmiller also mentioned that nobody has come forward saying they want to be chair. Butcher is okay with moving forward and letting Gaffney chair. Butcher is not interested in the seat. He also asks if there is anybody we should be asking to join the board. Hess feels that everybody should talk to individuals they feel would be good board members. Hess feels comfortable putting this off until the next meeting.

Ahmuty agrees that we wait until next meeting and agrees with Hess that we should all encourage people to join.

**Directors Update:**

The Visitor Center is getting a new back wall and will be painted this summer.

**Board Comments:**

Heinmiller wanted to know if anything was being done with dock cameras. Carlson said she spoke with the Harbor Master recently and he assured me that cameras would be going on all of the docks.

Butcher said they have 6 bands for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Music Festival scheduled for 3-11 on the July 4. KHNS will be handling things this year. The fencing will be expanded this year to capture

some of the upper area. Carlson already sent all of the July 4<sup>th</sup> information to the ship and there will be a crew discount at the door.

**Set Next Meeting Date: Thursday, July 19, 2012 – 9:30 am**

Assembly Chambers, Safety Building

Hunt motioned to adjourn, Hess seconded; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:06 pm.