Tourism Advisory Board

Tourism Director:
Leslie Ross

Assembly Liaison:
Diana Lapham

MINUTES

Members:
Sean Gaffney
Karen Hess
Allison Jacobson
Scott Sundberg
Barbara Mulford
Rhonda Hinson
Michael Marks

Meeting Date: September 9, 2016
Date of Approval: October 13, 2016

Call to Order: A meeting of the Haines Borough Tourism Advisory Board was held at Assembly Chambers on September 9, 2016. The meeting convened at 12:05 p.m. with Sean Gaffney presiding.

Members in Attendance: Sean Gaffney, Michael Marks, Scott Sundberg, Alison Jacobson - Tourism Director and Assembly Liaison.

Members Not in Attendance: Rhonda Hinson, Barbara Mulford and Karen Hess, Motion by Scott Sunberg and second by Michael Marks to excuse absences. Approved-Unanimous

Others in Attendance:
Anna Jacobson, Joe Ordonez, Lori Lapeyri-Smith, Andy Hedden, Tresham Gregg, and Kelleen Adams.

Approval of Agenda: Motion was made by Michael Marks to approve the Agenda. Second-Allison Jacobson. Approved: Unanimous.

Motion was made by Michael Marks to move Chilkat River/Haines Highway/river access to the top of the agenda. Second-Scott Sundberg. Approved: Unanimous.

Public Comments:
Joe Ordonez stated he was contacted by DOT to obtain information on his tour company and the impact the new road and bridge improvements would have. He felt they eventually disregarded the information. Mr. Ordonez shared that DOT did not discuss the lower river access with the public and that closing off lower river access would be detrimental.

Diana Lapham added that she thought the 14 mile access was not on the DOT's radar.

Sean Gaffney suggested that there is congestion in the lower river and when the road work is being done a new access location could be created.

Joe Ordonez shared that Alaska State Parks had some plans that have yet to be implemented to upgrade 14.5 mile access.

Andy Hedden suggested that if 13 mile and 16 mile access is lost maybe 14.5 mile access could be improved or at least retains emergency access by not installing guard rails that would block historic access locations.

New Business:

Chilkat River / Haines Highway / river access

- DOT is considering closing 13 mile and 16 mile river access due to Federal regulations on access from highway corners. LCC and Fish and Game have requested that 14 mile access be closed since it is a salmon spawning location.

Motion was made by Scott Sundberg to recommend to the Haines Borough Assembly to direct the Manager to work with appropriate State agencies to secure continued levels of access at mile 13, 14, 14.5, 16 and 26. Second-Michael Marks. Approved: Unanimous.

Chair Report: Sean Gaffney

No Report

Tourism Director Update:

End of season

- Preparing to close bathrooms and visitor center at the PC Dock.

Video Production

- Richard Cooper is working on a new promotional video and opportunities to participate have been extended. He will be available during the ABEF Eagle Festival and in May 2017.

ATTA/ATWS

- Leslie Ross will be leaving shortly to attend the Alaska Travel and Trade Association convention and will be working on bringing some of the high end participants to Juneau for ATWS.

New Business:

Discussion of PC Dock Parking issue and recommendations

- There is a need for expanding parking to accommodate increased usage by the public and Fast Ferry passengers.
- The Wednesday cruise ship shuttle bus could be used to pick up patrons at alternative parking locations.
- It was suggested to begin a dialogue with property owner Mr. Beasley about the possible usage of his private property as a nearby alternative parking lot.
- SAIL and the Borough once again will be applying for a grant for a joint venture handicapped shuttle bus.

Picture Point - State Road signs and speed limit

- A 40 mph speed limit sign is located prior to the first turnout at Picture Point and then prior to the second turn out there is a 50 mph speed limit sign which could pose a safety concern for motorists who access/depart the second turnout.
- It was recommended that the 50 mph speed limit sign should be located after the Picture Point Park's second turnoff.
- Leslie Ross will work towards installing a "Scenic Byway" sign aligned with Picture Point Park.

Motion was made by Scott Sundberg to recommend to the Haines Borough Assembly to direct the Manager to work with appropriate State agencies to move the 50 mph speed limit sign to a location northward to an area after Haven Court Street. Second-Michael Marks. Approved: Unanimous.

1% Citizens Initiative

- Local Resident is seeking to move forward developing materials required for a Citizen's Initiative to vote on the 1% Economic Development and Tourism Tax.

Old Business:

Request of SEABA ? AK Heli to open map this season

- Borough staff have developed a workable time line for an open discussion on the topic which will allow for a recommendation to the Borough Assembly by December 10, 2016.
- TAB members can show support for SEABA's request to open the Heli map this season by attending the Tuesday, September 13, 2016 Borough Assembly meeting.

Board Comments:

Leslie Ross shared that several absences by TAB members have occurred this year and that Barbara Mulford, Scott Sundberg and Karen Hess' terms expire November 20, 2016 making for the possibility of three seats to open up. Anna Jacobson was acknowledged as a new hire assisting the Tourism office with social media projects.

Lori Lapeyri-Smith commented that she has an interest in tourism and economic development and has returned to Haines after time abroad and is seeking to become a TAB member.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Michael Marks to adjourn.
Second-Allison Jacobson. Approval: Unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 1:17 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 12, 2016 at noon in the Council Chambers.