

**George R. Campbell  
Assembly Member**

February 26, 2014

Dear Mayor and Assembly,

It is a great honor to serve the community with each of you. Collectively our individual experiences in life and differing view points allow for more exploration and questioning into discussions and decisions made. Results often reflect a far better perspective and view of the community through our differences.

Through our differences, we as a body must endeavor to seek real information concerning the long-term affects of decisions we make. Like a little snowball tossed at the top of the hill, decisions will progress in time gaining momentum, size, and effects to our citizens. Long-term effects, good and bad, need to be recognized before final decisions are made.

At each of the last two meetings our assembly has made a seemingly small decision, but the results can become very significant. Upon trying to ferret out the long-term potential cost of attempting and appeal on the proposed AP&T rate increase during the Feb. 11 meeting, I was met with frustration and anger for questioning a small expense (\$1,400 or so) for an attorney. Yet my desire was to discover the foreseeable cumulative expense of such an appeal. Eventually it was quoted that it could be \$40,000 or more; that is significant.

In our meeting on February 25 we discussed the harbor expansion with an anticipated cost over \$20,000,000. Before us were two options, one was preferred by the advisory group for various reasons. Upon asking for a maintenance cost estimate and an income estimate for each option, I was told that it was so early in the process that that information was not available or needed.

I strongly disagree.

It is a fallacy and bad policy to make a critical path decision, (choosing a particular option to proceed with is a critical path decision), on a project without knowing what the cost and benefit of each choice will be. On a project of this type we have the opportunity to review plans at conceptual, then 35%, 65%, 90% and 100% design completion range. When the review of each stage is completed, the design team, a contractor in this case, moves forward with the assumption that major components not commented on are ok. If a project is approved at 35%, the design team then continues to the next stage preparing documents to firm up details.

Our body made the critical path decision without knowing any comparable information on the cost and benefits of either design. We could see the estimated

purchase price, but had no way to know estimated operational costs in the future, nor how those costs would be offset. Now that we have made this decision, the design team will restrict their work to the design approved by the assembly. If in the future the assembly finds out that the cost/benefit is unreasonable and we cannot afford it, and must return to the other design, we will be required to pay additional design costs to return to the 35% design stage. Or worse, we allow ourselves to continue down the committed path and cannot change, even though it is not the best selection.

At our recent Committee of the Whole I explained that the Juneau Access project was continuing down the east side of Lynn Canal because the project has been promoted and permitted at the early stages for that route; now it is unreasonable to change. Our decision at 35% has that very possibility.

Research may show that the selected option is by far the most economically beneficial to our citizens. But to decide such a monumental question without estimated operational cost/benefit data is careless and unprofessional. Compounding the error by deciding in a hurry has shades of lunacy.

In the future I hope that our body will endeavor to think beyond project construction, and consider the long-range burden each additional facility, or expansion puts on our tax payers and users. We are fraught with deferred maintenance, upgrades and building replacement requests and needs inherited from other groups.

In parting I wish to paraphrase a common sentiment, but first let me put it in perspective: the Haines Pool, Public Safety Building, High School, Museum and current harbor were built while I was attending Haines's school. The decisions to, how, where and methods of building were all decisions made by my parents generation... decisions we make today really will be our children's challenges to deal with.

Thank you,

George Campbell