

# **Meeting Minutes: Commerce Committee**

**November 16, 2023 – Assembly Chambers**

**following Assembly Meeting re: Status of FEMA grant (Porcupine Road)**

**Commerce Committee: Debra Schnabel (Chair), Craig Loomis and Ben Aultman-Moore (Zoom)**

**Attending: Schnabel, Aultman-Moore, Tom Morphet, Alekka Fullerton, Sabina Stickler (Zoom), Karen Garcia (Zoom), Cindy Jimenez (Zoom)**

The commerce committee reviews and recommends legislative and policy matters pertaining to ports and harbors, tourism, economic strategies, land and resource, and planning and zoning. This committee maintains a working relationship with empowered and advisory boards, the Haines Chamber of Commerce and the Haines Economic Development Corporation.

## **Discussion/Business Conducted**

**1. Welcome and Set agenda (Chair)**

**2. Minutes of 10/17/2023 accepted without objection**

**3. Discussion/Action topics:**

**1. Fuel Surcharges on freight:** Dave Curtis, VP, Alaska Marine Lines provided an explanation for fuel charges on marine freight (attached). Steve Hartman, VP Sales & Marketing, Lynden Transport provided an explanation for fuel charges on interstate rolling stock. (attached). Marine freight rates seem to be proprietary; highway transportation is regulated. Change could be brought about through lobbying. No action taken.

**2. Severance Taxes on extractive resources (except fish):** Export of extracted resources is integral to imposition of severance tax sought to balance, mitigate or respond to impacts. Question the differences between Excise Tax, Severance Tax, Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Royalties. More research needed. Seems appropriate to identify a purpose of any tax on extracted/exported resources; suggested that revenues from tax be allocated to the preservation, conservation or development of public lands including parks and recreational trails or facilities. Chair to develop a concept paper for consideration.

**3. Trails: As a capital project/economic engine:** Consider advancing the concept of trail development [Pyramid Harbor to Excursion Inlet, Dalton Trail/Grease Trail and connection to Long Trail (Murkowski plan)] in partnership with Chilkat Indian Village and Chilkoot Indian Association.

**4. Public Comment/Input:** (? Speaker not identified) A future topic might be charging petroleum haulers for use of highway or Borough-owned facilities (dock).

**5. Recommendations to Assembly:** Reach out to CIV and CIA to learn of interest in collaborating with a major trail development project.

**Meeting adjourned 46 minutes after it started. Minutes submitted by Debra Schnabel**