

February 7, 2024

To: Haines Borough Assembly

From: Cynthia Jones (CJ)

Dear Assembly members,

I ask that you revisit your decision to not hire a lobbyist for the State legislature. I am not an expert, but I have worked with lobbyists and made a good number of advocacy trips to Juneau and DC over the years for various organizations. Even though it is important for you all to lobby in person, THE LOBBYIST is your eyes, ears and mouthpiece in and to the legislators on a daily basis.

The lobbyist:

- knows the players;
- hears the tidbits of important information as they present, not after it is too late to respond;
- knows our community's needs;
- can drop a word in both directions (to legislators and to the Borough) in a timely manner;
- can call Borough reps to action exactly when it is needed.

The lobbyist the person:

- who can arrange meetings with the proper people when Borough representatives visit Juneau/DC. and,
- he can tell the Borough reps what and how to say what is needed.

The lobbyist is the KEY to finding funding for projects and influencing the proper people to help meet the community goals and needs.

Ted Popley has worked with the Borough for a number of years. He recently found us 3.2 million in matching funds. He knows the pulse of our community and has a plan to meet our needs. He is familiar with other big Borough projects like the Public Safety Building replacement. Continuity and relationship is ever so important. I saw both Museums Alaska and the American Alliance of Museums flounder for awhile after their lobbyists for many years retired. Popley represents continuity and relationship with the Borough and has years worth of connections within the state legislature. Frankly, we will fare FAR better spending some money to hire him than "going it on our own."

Thank you for listening.

Cynthia (CJ) Jones