

Haines Borough Assembly Initial Survey Results for 2024 Assembly Planning Retreat



Presented by
Workplace Solutions
January 31, 2024

The following information is a consolidation of results provided by the Mayor and Assembly Members in response to a short survey. The purpose of the survey was to generate a foundation for discussion at the upcoming Assembly Planning retreat, scheduled for February 3, 2024. All Assembly Members responded to the survey. At the Mayor's request, his results are included in the overall consolidation, and provided separately at the end of the report.

Responses have been grouped together when there is a clear unifying theme. Numbers in parenthesis indicate how many similar responses there were. Where the responses appeared to be similar, but phrased differently, bullet points are inserted with the actual phrasing. For discussion purposes at the retreat, the responses to question 1 and question 2 will be further consolidated.

Question 1: What are the three most critical issues that the Haines Borough Assembly must address in the next year?

Lutak Dock (4)

Taxes (3)

- Property Tax Assessment Administration
- Tax Assessments
- Resource Extraction Severance tax asap

Community Development & Planning (3)

- Support implementation of the Comp Plan
- Regional Planning and associated ordinance development
- Zoning

Assembly/ Borough Offices Functioning (2)

- Assembly/Manager Relations

- Require/ create work plans for all borough officers and department heads. Approved annually by the assembly.

Personnel Restructuring (2)

- Staff restructure for efficacy and efficiency (addition, reassignment)
- Personnel restructuring within the Haines Borough

Community Relations (2)

- Public trust to ensure informed citizen candidacy
- Community healing – how to have dialogue as a community so representative government is possible.

Financial planning for utility improvements & compliance

Vastly expand our contract grant writing proposals for federal funds before October 2024

Letnikof

Porcupine Road

Downtown Beautification

Question 2: What three other matters you would like the Assembly to work on in the next 12 months?

Recreation (5)

- Funding Communitywide Physical Recreation Program
- Grease Trail
- David Simmons memorial ping pong pavilion
- Recreational economies for rural communications
- Regional recreation planning – and initiate feasibility study for national historic trails district.

Infrastructure (4)

- Harbor
- Fisheries enhancement
- Water and sewer
- Prioritize and expand recreational, subsistence, and outdoor infrastructure

Taxes (3)

- Establishing severance tax
- Extractive industry bonding requirements/severance tax

Intergovernmental Relations (2)

- Co-management agreement with Tribal Governments and Haines Borough and intergovernmental agreement with other governments in the region
- Establish relationship with tribes

Cost of Living Reductions (2)

- Continuously explore ways to make Chilkat Valley more affordable for residents
- Affordable housing initiative pursued in partnership with local tribes

Code revisions; some already pending, other to initiate

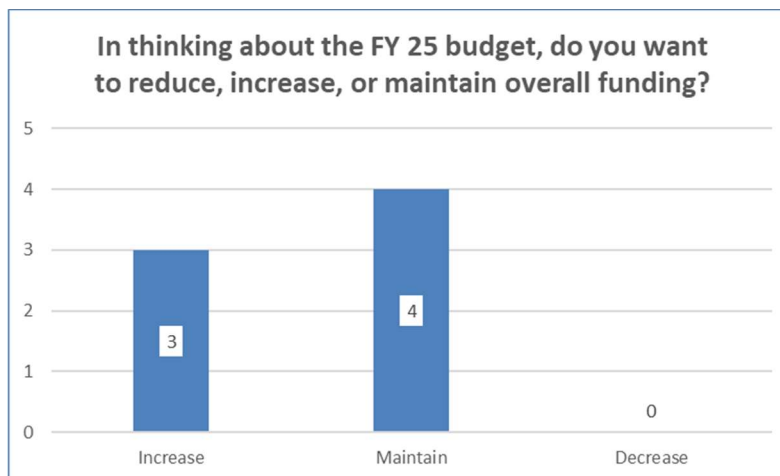
Grant writing

School budget

Codify active transparency in local government

Implementation of the Comp plan if adopted

Question 3:



Question 4: If you selected “increase the budget,” what areas in the budget would you increase?

Additional positions (6 suggestions from 3 people)

- Fund an additional position for administrative support
- Provide more funding to Public Works and consider adding an additional position
- Provide more funding for Planning and consider adding 2 fulltime positions
- Code enforcement funding
- Increase funding for grants administration/project management personnel

- Discuss the possibility of a portion of the carbon credit from the Haines State Forest program being applied to local government budgets for management -which could potentially fund a local lands coordinator housed under the planning department.

School funding

Recreation funding

Prioritize economic growth at the same weight as social well-being and environmental stewardship.

Improve communications: consider OpenGov.com

Question 5: If you selected “increase the budget,” what revenue measures/taxes would you support to fund additional costs?

Severance Tax/Extraction Tax (3)

Cruise Ship Docking/head tax Revenues (4)

Seasonal Sales Tax

Increase mil rate

Commerce fee associated with exports – “excise tax” or port export fee per tonnage.

Excise Tax on Alcohol

Sales tax on nonprofit activities that compete with private enterprise

Personal Property Tax on boats, airplanes, and recreational vehicles

Reconsider community exemptions on property in excess of a specified limit held by nonprofits, churches, and medical entities.

Decrease exemption limit on Senior property taxes

Increase local user fees

Implement the ordinance requiring fees for commercial use of Porcupine Road (Dalton Trail Road Maintenance Service Area)

Discuss the possibility of a portion of the carbon credit from the Haines State Forest program being applied to local government budget for management – which could potentially fund a local lands coordinator housed under the planning department

Evaluate current staff assignments and adjust

Partner with Cruise Ship companies for grants to beautify downtown

Question 6: If you selected “reduce the budget,” what areas of the budget would you cut?

Explore implementing zero-balance billing (insurance only) for EMS services

Reassignment of personnel can result in reductions – though the money saved should be reallocated to other things.

Unnecessary police vehicles for 6 years = one for now.

Lobbyists

Do not hire a new police officer

Reduce overtime for police department

Reduce the expenditure of almost \$200,000 for the police dept to serve outside the Haines townsite and pursue a grant for a PSO for that area. AML said grants are available for that and Haines Borough would qualify. CIV has voiced agreement to me in this action.

Question 7: Is there anything not in the borough budget that you would like to see the borough fund or assist?

Cell phone capacity

Community Recreation Program

Fort Seward Revitalization

Manufacturing Incentives

New Haines Phone Book

Mosquito Lake school snow plowing

Tidal energy feasibility

OpenGov.com and associated staff/community training

Capital project managers

Assistant to the Manager

Additional Public Works operators and laborers

Increased support for HEDC and coordination with the Planning Department

Additional funding for non-profits

More recreation opportunities for the “adventure capital of Alaska” with grant writing

Afterschool intramurals for kids

The green space downtown

More small children activities in the winter

Question 8: How can the assembly build trust and cooperation between residents and government?

Stop attacking previous assembly and drop the liberal vs conservative narrative. Stop swinging pendulum so much

Get citizens in the door at city hall.

Hold open houses or community picnic.

Secure an office for assembly members and planning commission members at city hall.

Get assembly members out into community.

Likewise, get staff into community.

Establish borough Q and A sessions with manager/clerk on KHNS/CVN

Require a robust template/form bi-weekly manager's report to act as an assembly and press brief

Spend time at the beginning of borough meetings elucidating the big picture of entangled issues on the agenda. Often the assembly goes straight into the weeds, without context

Attend meetings fully informed of agenda and prepared to have meaningful discussion

Listen and publicly consider ideas brought forward by citizens (adjust business meeting agendas to facilitate communication)

Behave respectfully and require respect (address unacceptable behavior and speech when it happens)

Sponsor or participate in community-building activities...be seen around town doing fun stuff

By hiring a manager who provides real information to the government

Hosting additional community meetings outside of assembly meetings that are facilitated by a third part to begin the process of long-term healing and facilitating constructive dialogue

TRANSPARENCY, truthfulness, community partnerships, accountability to Assembly and public from Administration and staff.

Question 9: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Assembly longevity is as important as manager longevity. What can we do to make assembly members want to stay on the assembly for more than one term?

Create an atmosphere (through policy) of open communication of priorities/ concerns/ opportunities between HB, CIA and CIV

Address the Manager's role/responsibilities to make it a more sustainable and effective position

Prioritize low-maintenance and long-lifespan in all major infrastructure development design considerations

Empower mission driven organizations that are in-line with residents needs

Haines borough govt should continue to work on healthy inclusive relations with tribal gov. Also, use by right should be re-examined

Let's commit to not being afraid to have difficult conversations and discuss openly issues that we know to exist or perceive.

I feel like it will be impossible to achieve any goals if somehow we cannot help guide the community into a more constructive space - and unfortunately I don't think that can happen under the current administrative leadership.

Hire Project Managers for large grants according to Assembly desires.

Capitalize on increased tourism year-round.

Give current tourism director a raise instead of 3 new police cars in the next 6 years. She's worth it.

Grant for Used Oil Shed at Harbor (AML says they are available).

Hire experienced competent people with increased wages if necessary

Mayor's responses only

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Lutak Dock

Property Tax Assessment Administration

Porcupine Road

Question 2: What three other matters you would like the Assembly to work on in the next 12 months?

Funding Communitywide Physical Recreation Program

Establishing severance tax

Establish relationship with tribes

Question 3: In thinking about the FY 25 budget, do you want to reduce, increase or maintain overall funding?

Increase

Question 4: If you selected "increase the budget," what areas in the budget would you increase?

Code enforcement funding

School funding

Recreation funding

Question 5: If you selected "increase the budget," what revenue measures/taxes would you support to fund additional costs?

Severance Tax

Question 6: If you selected "reduce the budget," what areas of the budget would you cut?

Skipped

Question 7: Is there anything not in the borough budget that you would like to see the borough fund or assist?

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