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Commerce Committee Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2024

5:30 pm, Haines Borough Assembly Chambers

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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.

Attendance:

Commerce Committee: Debra Schnabel (Chair), Craig Loomis and Ben Aultman-Moore
Public: Sean Gaffney (TAB), William (Bill) Thomas, Zack Wentzell (CIA), Rebecca Hylton (Tourism Dept.), Jila Stuart, CFO

1. 02/20/2024 meeting minutes accepted w/o objection

2. Discussion/Action topics:

a. Severance Taxes on extractive resources (Continued):

Bill Thomas presented opjections to taxing fish due to the "worst conditions of the industry" in year (re: price). Questioned how a severance tax on fish would be enforced. Questioned how we would manage sport fishing industry

Sean Gaffney presented objection to taxinf fish because fish are manageable, sustainable and renewable (i.e., not extractive)

Jila Stuart presented objection to basing a tax rate on the mil rate; the mil rate is stratified. Questioned how we would monitor crabbers and shrimpers from out of jurisdiction

Ben Aultman-Moore presented that both fish and timber are renewable if managed properly

b. Port Development & Impact Fees Fees

Zack Wentzel presented CIA's long term plan of building a cultural program. Sees an impact fee as an opportunity to partner and align interests with the Borough by tying interests/goals together. Cultural Tourism is on the rise. ATIA and CLIA are marketing an "indigenous experience, " what tourists want from Alaska. Timelines are different, but encouraged to move forward together. "We have a high level of leverage."

Rebecca Hylton recommends a port development/impact fee of $8. Believes we would raise $500-$750K annually. We are proactive.

3. Recommendations to Assembly: None

Minutes submitted by Debra Schnabel