

December 12, 2023
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To: **Planning Commission Members:**

- Patty Brown, chairperson, patty.brown.haines@gmail.com
- Derek Poinsette, vice chair, poinsette.ak@gmail.com
- Erika Merklin, erikainhaines@gmail.com
- Brian O'Riley, brianoriley66@gmail.com
- Rachel Saitzyk, rachel.saitzyk.hainesak@gmail.com
- Eben Sargent, eben.sargent.haines@gmail.com
- Dan Schultz, dan.haines.alaska@gmail.com

Assembly Members:

- Ben Aultman-Moore, baultmanmoore@haines.ak.us
- Craig Loomis, cloomis@haines.ak.us (liaison to Planning Commission)
- Gabe Thomas, gthomas@haines.ak.us
- Kevin Forster, kforster@haines.ak.us
- Natalie Dawson, ndawson@haines.ak.us
- Debra Schnabel, dschnabel@haines.ak.us

Manager: Annette Kreitzer, akreitzer@haines.ak.us

Borough Clerk: Alekka Fullton, afullerton@haines.ak.us

Mayor: Tom Morphet, tmorphet@haines.ak.us

Dear Haines Borough Planning Commission and Assembly Members,

I'm writing to support the Haines Friends of Recycling (HFR) request that the Haines Borough donate commercially zoned property near the Public Safety Building to accommodate its new Recycling Center and proposed new operations. The parcels are C-MIS-OL-0100, C-MIS-OL-0200, C-MIS-OL-0700, C-MIS-OL-0800, and C-MIS-OL-0900. You have already been provided with a copy of our Business Plan that summarizes a) our need for the new facility in a new location, and b) our proposed operation of a thoroughly researched Mobile Plastic Up-Cycling unit.

HFR is approaching our 25th anniversary as a 501(3)c non-profit in 2024. We have provided waste management support to the Haines Borough throughout those years and have appreciated the Borough's faith in our work in the form of periodically awarded small grants. Community recycling interest grew steadily for at least 10 years before we achieved non-profit status in 1999; ballot results reported in the Chilkat Valley News on October 3, 1991, showed that 72% of the voters wanted a recycling program (see photo). I believe that community support for HFR's work in waste reduction and recycling is now at a historical peak.

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VOTE from page 1

ported longtime assemblyman Ray Menaker, who ran unopposed on the ballot for another three-year stint in borough government. Lutak resident George Hales launched a write-in campaign last week to unseat Menaker, drawing 37 votes to Menaker's 163.

In city races, mayoral write-in Combs lost his bid for a one-year council seat by a 158-207 vote in favor of challenger Kathy Clayton Berzanske.

Berzanske and Combs both stumped on platforms advocating change at city hall and more openness in government, but Combs said Wednesday he sacrificed his council race by focusing instead on the mayoral challenge.

The local phone company manager announced his candidacy for mayor only eight days before the election, and said Wednesday he was surprised to have garnered 151 votes to Wallace's 203. "In the back of my mind, I had a feeling that people do want change. If I had gotten off the stick and got my name on the ballot, I could have followed Combs in the write-in standings was Geddes Resources president Gerald Harper, who re-

with 296 votes. The closest city race pitted former Haines administrator Darrel Maple

ADVISORY BALLOT QUESTIONS	Should the school board & borough assembly be separately elected bodies?		Should borough form a coastal zone planning service area?		Raise taxes	if funding declines, should the borough:			
	Y	N	Y	N		Lower services	Use a combination	Should the borough develop a recycling program?	
Peninsula	53	59	58	51	20	44	46	78	31
Haines Hwy	16	38	12	42	4	36	12	26	17
Chilkat	22	46	27	41	14	21	3	45	18
City	159	211	125	237	49	185	132	248	91
Total	250	354	222	371	87	286	221	397	157

HFR's mission to "develop educational and recycling programs and facilities that increase the capacity for Haines and Chilkat Valley residents and visitors to reduce waste, to recycle, and to reuse resources" is stronger than ever. We have continued to recycle successfully throughout the recent challenges of the global recycling market. Our working Board is highly engaged, dedicated, and productive. The Board implemented new projects like the ROW document, Zero Waste community events, a Management Handbook to preserve our institutional operations, recycling internship opportunities at the Center, we spearheaded an annual Marine Debris Cleanup that continues to expand in the Upper Lynn Canal, and we shipped over 10,000 pounds of clean, recycling-compliant fish nets in addition to our regular average of 250,000 lbs of recyclables. We have achieved our 5-year goals outlined in 2018. Those goals were:

Goal One: Continue with our current recycling, waste reduction, and zero waste events, and evaluate our efforts on an on-going basis;

Goal Two: Build partnerships with other Chilkat Valley organizations, statewide organizations, and national organizations to improve and expand our services;

Goal Three: Increase public education on recycling and waste reduction;

Goal Four: Reduce or eliminate the use of plastic bags in Haines;

Goal Five: Develop a Scrap Box for the sale of construction materials and other materials not currently sold through our second-hand stores;

Goal Six: Consider options for purchase of property to expand our Recycling Center services;

Goal Seven: Review staff and volunteer needs and Board effectiveness.

I mention these details because our track record explains why our community is highly supportive of our plans and why the Borough can rely on HFR to follow through with our proposal to use the property we have asked for. There are currently 330 individuals, families, businesses, and organizations in Haines and the Chilkat Valley that are contributing members. Our volunteers have grown from about 70 in 2019 to about 127 current volunteers who are increasingly engaged in HFR activities. And as pertains to HFR's property request to the Borough, this community has already contributed over \$40,00 to our Capital Fund launched two months ago to help match the grant funding we are applying for and to cover additional costs of the new Recycling Center. As outlined in our Business Plan, we have support for the entire project not only from the local community of HFR members, individuals, businesses, and organizations, but also from the Solid Waste Training Institute and from Patrick Simpson, CEO of PKS Consulting and Alaska Plastic Recovery LLC. Collectively, our history of success and growth ensures that our goal can be met, with the help of Haines Borough.

Our new Recycling Center on the Borough's centrally located property on the Haines Highway in town will enhance our services to the Borough and our operations by its convenient location, high visibility, accessibility, and efficient design. It will enhance our partnerships with Community Waste Solutions and other entities like Takshanuk Watershed Council, to the benefit of the Borough. We intend to create an attractive site and facility, with indoor operations and storage that will protect recyclables and all material collections, out of the weather and reach of bears until shipment. The property developed will not be an eyesore, and in fact the tours we plan to offer will enhance local eco-tourism and the educational curriculum available for students at Haines School and TWC. The facilities and operations will enhance the character of business in this part of town, will provide new jobs, and will save the Borough money.

In short, the Borough action to deed Borough property to HFR for the proposed new Recycling Center and operations will be a win-win for this community. This quote from Amelia Earhart sums up my outlook nicely:

***The most difficult thing is the decision to act,
the rest is merely tenacity.***

~~Amelia Earhart~~

Thank you for your service to Haines and for your consideration of HFR's request.

Sincerely,

Molly Sturdevant