



DOCKS & HARBORS OPERATIONS & PLANNING COMMITTEE MINTUES

April 22, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Port Office Conference Room/Zoom Webinar

- A. CALL TO ORDER** - Mr. Orr called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
- B. ROLL CALL:** The following members attended the meeting in person - James Becker, Clayton Hamilton, Matthew Leither, Annette Smith, Mark Ridgway, Shem Sooter and Nick Orr.

Absent: Tyler Emerson and Robert Horchover.

Also in Attendance: Carl Uchytel-Port Director, Mathew Sill-Port Engineer, Matthew Creswell-Harbormaster, Jeremy Norbryn-Deputy Harbormaster, Leah Narum – Administrative Officer and Johnathan Wood-MXAK & Eldred Rock.

- C. PORT DIRECTOR REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES** - No Changes
- D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** - No Members of the Public present
- E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. February 18th Minutes-

Mr. Ridgway made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and asked for unanimous consent. Motion passed.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2. Launch Ramp Permit Donation Application

Mr. Uchytel said on page 18 there is a draft application for donating launch ramp permits to non-profits. The application was a simple process of asking who the organization was and why they would qualify for a Docks and Harbor launch permit. The period for submitting applications is June 30th, which is the end of the fiscal year.

Committee Questions:

Ms. Smith said on the permit it says that the permit will not be used for commercial purposes. Most of the non-profits include entities such as the Sportsman Association, and they will have a fundraising auction. If a commercial user wins that, they wouldn't like to be able to use it, correct?

Mr. Uchytel replied that Docks and Harbors would not follow up with any type of rigor to ensure it was used for non-commercial users only.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the sales tax status was.

Mr. Uchytel said that all their commercial permits have a CBJ Sales tax compliance requirement. If a commercial vendor was behind on their sales tax, we would not issue them a permit.

Mr. Ridgway asked to make one recommendation that the working from legal business name change to name of business.

Mr. Orr said that he liked Mr. Ridgway's recommendation and wanted to add that he would like to know how the organization benefits Juneau or southeast communities and how their money would be spent.

Mr. Leither asked Mr. Orr to explain the wording in the application.

Mr. Orr said he would make the wording that the organization spends money in Juneau or southeast communities. He said that he'd like to avoid national fundraising where the money would go someplace else.

Public Comment-None

Committee Discussion/Action:

Mr. Hamilton asked if the application was subject to the Board's approval.

Mr. Uchytel said that he thought the process initially would be that they would collect the names and give out the permits. Then the Board said they wanted staff to form a committee and they would assign the permits. He thought that it would be advertised in June that the permits were available for 5 launch permits (July 2026-June 2027) to be given out and then in July 2026 staff would submit to the Board who they thought was most deserving.

Mr. Leither said that he thought that application terminology was befitting for staff to decide on awarding permits.

Ms. Smith commented that if they are giving responsibility to staff to make the decision then they should stand behind the staff on the decision.

Mr. Leither asked if Mr. Uchytel felt comfortable making the decision.

Mr. Uchytel responded that they would feel fine making the decision.

Mr. Ridgway said that he would like to see organizations show how they bring value to Juneau and Southeast Alaska, that they have a physical address in Juneau.

MR RIDGWAY RECOMMENDED THE BOARD ADOPT DISCUSSED PROCESS TO OFFER FIVE DONATED LAUNCH RAMP PERMITS ON AN ANUAL BASIS AND ASKED FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion passed unanimously.

G. NEW BUSINESS

3. National Guard Dock Gangway

Mr. Uchytel presented that the last 3 pages of the packet showed the 70-foot-long aluminum gangway at the National Guard Dock. It was fabricated in 2002, and they paid \$32,000 for it. He said a 70-foot gangway is an oddity. It was an ADA requirement for all of harbor facilities with the range of tides that they have, and 80-foot was the minimum, smallest gangway that was ADA compliant in harbors. The 70-foot gangway is more than what Docks and Harbors needs right now. They are planning to surplus the gangway through a site called Public Surplus that goes into an online bidding process. When they set about to advertise the 70-foot gangway they were approached by Mr. Ed Page, who founded the Marine Exchange of Alaska and is the chair of Eldred Rock Lighthouse Association. They were looking for a gangway that would meet their needs. They are a maritime organization that Docks and Harbors has a long-term relationship with and are a local business. They would like the Board to consider donating the gangway to them. Mr. Jonathan Wood from the Marine Exchange of Alaska who was available to speak on Mr. Ed Page's behalf on their needs of the Eldred Rock Lighthouse. There was a memo in the packet that explained their needs. The question before the Board was whether they would like to donate the 70-foot gangway or put it out for bid on Public Surplus. He said they have in the past donated gangways to Trail mix and the rotary club, so they have done this type of donation in the past.

Mr. Jonathan Wood introduced himself from Marine Exchange of Alaska and has been with them for over 12 years. He has been a member of the Eldred Rock Lighthouse Preservation Association for 12 years. The gangway would help facilitate people getting on and off Eldred Rock. Over the past decade their mission has been to restore, preserve and share the lighthouse. The way people arrive is through the Marine Exchange's landing craft that they donate up to 10 trips a year. For intrepid travelers that's an okay way to get on and off the island. For the general public, it's probably not appropriate because it's slick and rocky. The gangway would facilitate a more permanent platform to allow people to get off the boat and onto shore. The gangway would span up to a floating dock to a more permanent platform to allow people to get off the vessel and safely access Eldred Rock. The goal for the lighthouse has 3 rooms that will be available for volunteers and people to work, like a Forest Service cabin. The grand opening will be May 30, and they would like to move forward with this plan.

Committee Questions:

Ms. Smith asked how they found out that the gangway was available? She also asked if the gangway won't meet the ADA requirements for Docks and Harbors, why will it work for them?

Mr. Wood said that he was not sure how Mr. Page heard of the gangway availability. Regarding ADA, it will not be an appropriate place for people to get on and off wheelchairs and they could not accommodate that right now but hoped to in the future. The lighthouse is one of the most historic lighthouses in Alaska and they operate under strict procedures.

Mr. Leither said that he was open to the donation, however asked how other gangways may get on the public market surplus.

Mr. Uchytel said that they had asked for a quote and one of the manufactures said that a brand new one would be \$70K. He said he didn't know what it would fetch on Public Surplus or whether there was a need. If they did, he thought they would get \$10K-\$15K minimum. He didn't know how long it would be posted and then how long it would take to transport it to its given area so it would be a difficult question to say what its fair market value would be. Mr. Uchytel asked Mr. Sill about the 80-foot ADA compliant gangway law.

Mr. Sill said that the way that the marina portion of the American Disabilities Act was written, there would have be a certain slope or an 80 foot gangway. He thought the regulations were probably written without an understanding of the tides they have in Alaska as they don't come anywhere close to meeting the required slopes with an 80-foot gangway, but that's the way the legislation was written. They would either have to meet the slopes or have an 80-foot gangway. Under 80 feet isn't permissible under the federal law.

Mr. Ridgway asked for clarification as to whether Eldred Rock was a non-profit.

Mr. Wood said they are not a 501(c)(3).

Mr. Ridgway asked if Docks & Harbors had a sub-80-foot gangway installed before for our use?

Mr. Sill answered no, every gangway they have installed has been 80 feet or longer. All the gangways that were built between the 1960's to 1980's were built shorter.

Mr. Leither asked if there was any way they could add 10 feet to the existing gangway.

Mr. Sill said nothing is impossible, but aluminum is hard to modify. Because it was originally built for a particular length it would be difficult to increase and still maintain its integrity.

Mr. Hamilton asked if it would be a donation to Marine Exchange or to the lighthouse.

Mr. Wood said that it would be both organizations. The Lighthouse Preservation Association was very interested, and the Marine Exchange maintains a weather sensor and AIS transceiver on the Island. Every lighthouse throughout Southeast has equipment there and there is an app called Blue-Weather forecast app that once it's downloaded goes to Eldred Rock and presents real-time weather conditions. Their field ops team goes there 3-4 times a year to update and maintain equipment.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the vision was for opening it up to the public this summer.

Mr. Wood responded that their mission was to restore, preserve, share and to open it to the public like a Forest Service cabin. There are five bedrooms and 3 would be available to visitors. They would have bunk beds in the like Forest Service cabins and be available to rent. There will be a volunteer keeper there. The lighthouse is also available to people from Haines.

Ms. Smith asked Mr. Sill if the gangway could be re-purposed for a walkway?

Mr. Sill said no.

Mr. Uchytel said when we were looking to do Taku Harbor, we considered it. The consultant we had at Taku Harbor thought maybe we could repurpose it for a catwalk, but it didn't make sense at the time because you would have to have two pilings to span that distance. Currently, staff does not have any ideas on how to repurpose it to meet our needs. It is in excess to Docks and Harbors needs as we know it today.

Ms. Smith asked for specific details on how the gangway will be located at Eldred Rock.

Mr. Wood said on the north side of the Island, looking at the picture on the last page of Mr. Page's letter, there would be a boathouse. In the lower right-hand corner of the photo there's a little boat there. There will be a 30 by 10-foot floating dock, that would connect that floating dock up to the permanent platform that would get people up above the slimy, rocky concrete tramway that's deteriorated and not used. They would like to restore the tramway, but they don't have the funds to do that right now. The problem they are facing now is getting them off the boat, on to the floating dock and then above all the rock and concrete rubble.

Mr. Leither asked if he was on the way to Haines and decided to stop and have lunch and look around, would that be something that he could do. He asked if it was a reservation only setting or if it would be available to other boaters.

Mr. Wood said he didn't know how exactly that would work with the floating dock. They are currently working with an operator in Haines that will be bringing people down from Haines during the day a couple of times a week. They're funding the floating dock. In the meantime, they are trying to figure out how to get there.

Mr. Ridgway said it was interesting that Mr. Page asked for the donation on behalf of both organizations, the Marine Exchange and the Eldred Lighthouse Preservation Association. He said it sounds like there is a third party that'll be running commercial tours out of there also. He asked who owns the lighthouse?

Mr. Wood answered that the Coast Guard owns the lighthouse and the Eldred Rock Lighthouse Preservation Association has a lease.

Mr. Ridgway commented that this would be infrastructure donated to two non-profits and used by a commercial outfit from Haines on leased property.

Public Comment - None

Committee Discussion/Action:

MS. SMITH MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE DONATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD GANGWAY TO MARINE EXCHANGE OF ALASKA FOR USE AT ELDRED ROCK LIGHTHOUSE AND ASKED FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Mr. Ridgway objected for purposes of discussion. He said that there was no discussion about donating something that may have value in thousands of dollars especially when there have been cutbacks. His position of the Board was one of fiscal responsibilities and therefore he thought there needs to be more discussion before there would be such a donation.

Mr. Leither said he did not disagree with Mr. Ridgway but thought they should consider a data point for how much it's worth before putting it on the public surplus market.

Mr. Ridgway said that he thought they should consider putting it on the public market with a minimum bid. If there is an offer made, they may want to give it to the Eldred Rock Lighthouse Preservation Association but do so without consideration was short-sighted.

Mr. Hamilton asked staff if there was any downside to listing it on the market for a set amount of time with a minimum bid and then moving on to a donation if they don't get a minimum bid.

Ms. Smith withdrew her motion.

Mr. Sooter said that he thought that they could get at least ten thousand dollars for the gangway maybe more. He thought shipping would probably be another ten thousand dollars.

Mr. Ridgway said that if they put it up on public surplus, they may be able to recoup some of their investments from the past. If they set the minimum bid and they don't get it then they could consider giving it to a worthy organization.

Mr. Sooter said he would recommend putting twenty-five thousand as the minimum bid.

Mr. Ridgway said he recommended twenty thousand and thought staff could recoup their time invested in the gangway.

Mr. Sooter asked Mr. Sill if the gangway had any damage?

Mr. Sill said he believes it is in serviceable condition, but it has not been picked up and examined underneath.

Mr. Ridgway asked if there could be any issues with selling this in an unknown condition.

Mr. Uchytel said it would be sold as is and where is. The bidder would be responsible for examining it and not break it if it was lifted to examine underneath.

Ms. Smith recommended putting a \$35K minimum on the gangway, which is half what it would cost to build a new one.

Mr. Ridgway recommended going with \$25K because if we go higher, we may not get any money.

Mr. Hamilton recommended setting the minimum bid at \$20K.

Mr. Leither asked if one month was the standard time or how are auctions typically done?

Mr. Creswell said with something like this he does not believe there is a requirement for how long this needs to be posted. He said it is ready to post, and the Board could give direction on how long they want it posted.

Mr. Ridgway provided a draft motion – Move to recommend that staff place on auction the National Guard Gangway with a minimum bid of \$25K, if \$25K is not met, the Board then recommends that the gangway be donated to the Marine Exchange of Alaska for use at Eldred Rock Lighthouse and would ask unanimous consent. This is for discussion.

Mr. Sooter pointed out that the offshore portion of the gangway looks precarious in the picture and would not want to lose it in the water.

Mr. Becker recommended just giving it to Marine Exchange of Alaska.

Mr. Leither said he has not decided what to do yet.

Mr. Hamilton wanted to vote?

Mr. Uchytel said the Marine Exchange is looking to do something by the 30th of May. If the Board wants to donate the gangway, it will be brought back to the Board meeting next week. If the Committee wants to try to sell it, just direct staff so this can get on the auction as soon as possible. It may be valuable enough to Marine Exchange that they may even buy it out right. This would still allow them to purchase it and get it installed by the 30th.

MOTION By MR. RIDGWAY: MOVE THAT THE BOARD RECOMMEND THE GANGWAY BE PLACED ON AUCTION FOR A MINIMUM BID OF \$25,000 AND IF IT DOES NOT SELL THE BOARD DONATE

THE GANGWAY TO THE MARINE EXCHANGE OF ALASKA FOR USE AT ELDRED ROCK AND ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion Passed.

H. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

4. Lone Sailor Statue Placement

Mr. Uchytel said on April 7th at Northwind Architects there was a meeting on the downtown bathrooms at the Peratrovich Plaza. He showed the public meeting presentation. In the presentation the Lone Sailor Statue is shown in the Peratrovich Plaza location. This caused some controversy with members of the Tlingit and Haida tribe indicating they were not happy with the location of the Lone Sailor Statue. This area was built and paid for by Docks and Harbors. After the deck over and parking area was built, we wanted a good name for the area. Through the legislative process, Docks & Harbors petitioned through the Assembly to name it Elizabeth Peratrovich Plaza. During that process Mr. Uchytel said he reached out to Roy Peratrovich Junior who is the son of Elizabeth and her granddaughter and they had no objection to the naming. He said he will reach out to Tlingit and Haida to explain the use of the plaza, and Pioneers of Alaska to deconflict the concern with Tlingit and Haida.

He said there are 19 Lone Sailor Statue's around the world, and this one is in Cleveland. It is a 7'4" bronze statue and represents all sea services.

Committee Questions:

Ms. Smith commented that she was at the meeting and the loudest objection she heard was from the Douglas Indian Association. Their objection was from having a military symbol in the Elizabeth Peratrovich Plaza given the fact there was military action against Native Communities in Southeast. This would cause insult and opening old trauma wounds to have it there right in front of Elizabeth Peratrovich.

Mr. Ridgway said this Board was very active with choosing the name Elizabeth Peratrovich Plaza.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the bathroom price tag is now?

Mr. Uchytel said \$3M. That is based on the bathroom being twice the size as the bathroom at Statter Harbor that was \$1.5M.

Mr. Hamilton asked when the bathroom across the road of Douglas Harbor was going to be opened?

Mr. Creswell said he does not know when the Parks & Rec bathrooms will be open.

Mr. Ridgway asked if there was any opportunity to maybe remove one of the Aquileans to place it there.

Mr. Uchytel said it is made to walk around and not put it on a bollard. There are other options and locations being talked about. The Board is supporting the Pioneers of Alaska's efforts for this Lone Sailor Statue.

Ms. Smith asked if there is space for it by the Fisherman's Memorial?

Mr. Uchytel said the Fisherman's Memorial is on property owned by Hank Bamgard.

Mr. Leither wanted to talk about the Douglas Harbor bathrooms.

Public Comment - None

5. Aurora Harbor Boat Shelter G22 & G23 Update

Mr. Uchytel said there was a bid process with a minimum bid of \$500 for the rights to build a boat shelter. Dr. Dan Holt won that in January of 2025 and had to build it in a year. In November of 2025 he contacted us and said he had some personal issues and was not able to meet that timeline. We did the same process again and advertised through February 13th and we thought we had interest but had no bidders by the deadline. We have since moved a catamaran in that location and that is a good fit for them. This is to let the Board know we had no bids in February and Mr. Creswell is working with the owners of the catamaran and suggesting if they want to stay in that location until we find an applicant to build another boat shelter, they will need to pay for two slips at that location. Currently they are only paying for one slip.

Mr. Creswell said the catamaran owner said they are amenable to paying for the two slips and make it assigned stall only on an annual basis and be reviewed every year. They will be required to clean up the vessel and do a seaworthy trial before it is assigned.

Committee Questions:

Mr. Hamilton asked if the boat owner was in town because the boat looked like a trainwreck?

Mr. Creswell said he sent a letter with details that they needed to clean up the boat to be able to get an assigned stall. There is a person living on the boat.

Public Comment - None

6. Infrastructure Week — May 18th - 22nd

Mr. Uchytel said this is an annual National event and the time we typically do ribbon cuttings. There are at least three ribbon cuttings we can do this year.

Tuesday May 19th – Statter Harbor Phase IIID with hotdogs.

Wednesday May 20th – We would like to charter an Allen Marine boat to go to Taku Harbor. We would leave at 9 and be back at noon.

Friday May 22nd – Aurora Phase IV with hotdogs.

He will also put together a resolution for Infrastructure week for the Assembly for Proclamation. We will also do American Society of Civil Engineers report card event in City Hall. May 22nd is also the Memorial Day weekend. The Navy League is hosting the Chair of the Federal Maritime Commission and giving tours to her. This is a presidential appointed committee that deals in maritime trade, and she will be in town that day touring Alaska.

Committee Discussion:

Mr. Sooter asked if Mr. Uchytel needed direction?

Mr. Uchytel asked if the Allen Marine boat was too extravagant?

Mr. Ridgway suggested the Taku Harbor trip is slightly too extravagant.

Mr. Leither commented maybe we could get a picture of staff the next time they are at Taku Harbor to hold up a ribbon and cut it for a picture.

Mr. Uchytel said he wants people to see, and not just on paper, that this was built with 1% sales tax money, staff efforts for grant money and have it known that this is a completed million-dollar project. If people are willing to come down and look at it. An hour down and a 15-minute ceremony and an hour back.

Ms. Smith asked if the project came in under budget? What is the cost for the Allen Marine charter? Is the trip only for officials and newspaper people or for the public?

Mr. Uchytel said it would be their smaller vessel and not their catamaran. It would be for the Board and selected members of the public including the Assembly, it would be DNR which runs the cabin at Taku Harbor, the Contractor and Fish & Game who granted the money. It is beneficial to have these ceremonies and thank Fish & Game for the grant money and show what it bought. The same people making the decisions for the grant money would be the same ones that we invite to Taku Harbor. Mr. Uchytel said it did come in under budget at \$930K and no change orders.

Comment from committee member, this is a good way to show the public what Docks & Harbors is doing for the community.

Mr. Ridgway said he is convinced that Docks & Harbors should rent the Allen Marine boat to have the ribbon cutting ceremony at Taku Harbor.

Mr. Sooter commented that he was happy to hear the Fish & Game representatives that help make this happen would be invited to attend this event.

Mr. Creswell said regarding the repairs to the float, the crew will go down to Taku Harbor prior to Infrastructure week and repair the float and do the annual clean up to the facility.

Mr. Ridgway said speaking as a boat owner and a boat house owner, he uses Taku Harbor more than anything else and he knows several other boat owners that use that facility.

Mr. Uchytel showed a Fish & Game Sport Fish Grant required sign that will be put up by the kiosk at Taku Harbor.

Public Comment - None

I. STAFF, COMMITTEE, AND MEMBER REPORTS

7. Assembly Liaison - None

- 8. Visitor Industry Task Force Liaison** – Mr. Sooter said last week's meeting was mostly informational and centered around whale watching. Some will involve us and some will not.

9. Harbormaster - Mr. Creswell reported

Our first ship is Monday, so staff are focusing on cleaning up in that area. Staff is behind a little with dock clean up due to the snow still needing to melt. He will have a full report at the Board meeting next week.

10. Port Engineer - Mr. Sill reported

Aurora Harbor Phase IV – This project is nearly complete. Harbors plan to start moving vessels into that facility on May 1st. There are some ongoing electrical issues that will probably cause some outages as people move in but that will all get sorted out.

Taku Harbor - Staff is going down to do the substantial completion walk through Friday. He showed a picture of Taku Harbor; everything looked good and there were no complications. Trucano Construction did a great job. In this project, we tore out the old boarding float that was built in 1985.

- 11. Port Director** – Mr. Uchytel said he has been gone for two weeks and got back today. He will provide a report next week at the Board meeting

J. COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS - None

K. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 6:37pm.