

**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA**

September 24, 2018, 5:00 PM.
Assembly Chambers - Municipal Building

Assembly Work Session - No Public Comment, (Please Note Start Time Changed to 5pm)

I. ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Jerry Nankervis called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chambers.

Assemblymembers Present: Mayor Ken Koelsch, Jerry Nankervis, Maria Gladziszewski, Loren Jones, Jesse Kiehl and Mary Becker (telephonic)

Assemblymembers Absent: Rob Edwardson

Staff present: Deputy City Manager Mila Cosgrove, Municipal Attorney Robert Palmer, Municipal Clerk Beth McEwen, Airport Manager Patty Wahto, Community Development Director Jill Mclean, Library/Museum Director Robert Barr, Museum Director Beth Weigel

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There being no agenda changes, the agenda was approved as presented.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 9, 2018 Assembly Committee of the Whole Minutes

MOTION by Mayor Koelsch to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2018 Assembly Committee of the Whole Meeting and asked for unanimous consent. *Hearing no objection, the minutes were approved as presented.*

IV. AGENDA TOPICS

A. Historic Preservation Plan Update

Allison Eddins, CDD Planner, gave an overview of the plan outreach to date as well as the next steps in the process. It has been 20 years since Juneau has done a preservation plan. The project currently underway has been grant funded by National Park Service and has taken about 2.5 years so far as it has had to coincide with the grant program. Phase II, which started up last year concentrated on stakeholder groups that had not previously been heard from before such as CBJ departments, native organizations, State DOT/PF, Downtown Business Association, and others. They are launching a 30 day public comment period as of September 26 that will end October 26. In addition to larger public meetings, they will be talking with small focus groups. Following the public comment period, they will incorporate those comments and then go to the Planning Commission and it will then go to the Assembly and hopefully by January or February, Juneau will have a new Historic Preservation Plan.

Ms. Eddins noted that if you are going to have a preservation plan, you have to be able to discuss the items that are uncomfortable to talk about so that is the hope with the small stakeholder groups meetings. She said that some of the comments they have heard to date have included inquiries about the potential for incentives for historic site preservation as well as the desire of the public in seeing the

history and culture available through more public art.

Assemblymembers asked questions about the upcoming process and Ms. Eddins laid out the expected timelines involved starting with the public meeting on Wednesday, September 26. The draft plan will be posted online as of that date and they will be taking public comments via an online survey as well as at the various public outreach meetings. It will then come back to the Planning Commission and the Assembly for eventual adoption, hopefully by February 2019.

B. JEDC Alaska State Legislature & Business Visitor Satisfaction Surveys

Ms. Cosgrove reported that JEDC, in partnership with the Alaska Committee, conducted two surveys in 2018 on behalf of CBJ: A Legislative Satisfaction Survey and a Visitors Satisfaction Survey.

Juneau Economic Development Council and Alaska Committee representatives Brian Holst, Eva Bornstein, and Alaska Committee President Wayne Jensen presented information on the two surveys.

Mr. Holst explained that the first survey was to business travelers who visited during the legislative session. This was the fourth in a series of similar surveys that had been done in 2009, 2013, 2015, and 2018. They have done the surveys at the airport with visitors to Juneau who were traveling for business purposes.

He said they also did a survey specifically with legislators and their staff. He said they received a great response of approximately 42% response from legislators and their staff.

Ms. Bornstein explained the process they used in collecting the survey responses. Alaska Airlines gave them the necessary permissions to survey travelers within the secure departure lounge at the airport. They pre-screened those that received surveys to ensure they were travelers coming to/through Juneau and were not locals. She stated that out of the 500 paper surveys handed out, 351 of them were business travelers and the remainder were visitors not traveling on business.

Ms. Bornstein explained that Alaskans that are predominantly traveling to Juneau for legislation session and/or state, federal, or tribal government related business. As for the non-Alaskan visitors, they are primarily traveling for private sector purposes. She also noted that those individuals traveling primarily for legislative session purposes are staying in the downtown area whereas those traveling for private sector business are primarily staying in the airport area hotels/motels.

The surveys covered a variety of questions about their visit. The top five areas identified were:

- Walkability of downtown
- Information on activities
- Recreation
- Friendly and Efficient Service

The bottom five areas identified were:

- Cleanliness of downtown
- Restaurants hours of operations
- Safety of downtown
- Parking downtown
- Accommodations value for money

Both surveys showed that visitors reflected the following results:

- Enjoyed the scenery and people in Juneau
- Would like improved access to Juneau and within Juneau
- Voiced concerns about downtown: 1) Safety and vagrancy, 2) Business hours and seasonality, 3) Cleanliness

Ms. Bornstein noted that the issue of safety and vagrancy became one of the key concerns in these surveys whereas they had not seen these concerns with previous years' surveys. Also of concern dealt with the cleanliness of downtown and with the Legislative Survey, the hours of businesses in downtown were not convenient for the late hours that the legislature ends its work during the day as well as the vast number of restaurants closed on Sundays.

Assemblymembers asked a number of questions regarding the surveys as well as which community groups these results have been shared with. It was suggested that they also share the survey with the downtown restaurant owners. Mr. Holst said they have shared the results with the Downtown Business Association (DBA) and the Chamber of Commerce and there is another presentation scheduled for the DIG (Downtown Improvement Group).

Additional discussion took place regarding the accessibility/walkability of the downtown area and if the construction of the Court Plaza Building and Franklin Street were issues of concerns. Ms. Bornstein noted that was not brought up but that the issue of snow removal did come up as a concern.

Mr. Jensen shared that the surveys have given us an opportunity to look in the mirror and make Juneau a better host community. He talked about the small but significant things that have been done such as the umbrella program that was implemented by the Alaska Committee and JEDC and the weekly notice to legislative offices about recreation opportunities that Senator Egan's office would send out a notice to all the legislative offices. He also noted that the value of Gavel to Gavel is consistent and very important to bring that service across the state consistently.

Additional discussion took place highlighting some of the changes that have been completed since past surveys were taken such as Airport facility improvements and downtown street remodels. Other discussion focused on what future improvements in downtown might be. Mr. Jensen asked the Assembly to be sure to share with the Alaska Committee any issues they would like to see the committee work on in the future.

C. Juneau Business Freight Survey Final Report - Juneau Chamber of Commerce

Jim Calvin, McDowell Group provided a high level overview of the Freight survey that was prepared for the Juneau Chamber of Commerce and given to a number of community groups. He explained that some of the data was from 2015/2016 and they are looking forward to seeing some of the additional statistics coming from 2017.

He touched on the various methods by which freight comes and goes out of Juneau and the impacts to the businesses and the community at large resulting from rising freight costs. Mr. Calvin addressed that the impact of changes to the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) may be a higher impact on freight movement than most people think. He stated that the factors on how and when people ship items are not just the cost and mode of shipment but also the frequency factor on how quickly it can be sent or received comes into the mix. It is becoming increasingly difficult for local retailers to compete with the online markets (Amazon Prime, etc.). He also noted that there has been a lot of disruption due to Alaska Airlines changes surrounding Air Freight fleet changes. He also noted that Juneau doesn't have the full robust spectrum that others have (Air, Road, Ferry, Barge) and lack of competition or the likelihood of competition from other carriers is a Juneau reality.

He noted that the survey identifies some of the following opportunities for improvement:

- Small businesses with less than full containers needing to be shipped can work with other business to try to combine shipments into one full container, thereby cutting down on shipping costs.
- To support sustainable/reliable AMHS service.
- Look for opportunities to build infrastructure such as 2nd crossing/West Douglas. Juneau is unique in that we do not have any publicly owned deep water port structure facilities. He suggests the Assembly look at what Juneau's public investment will be the case 15 or more years from now. Do they want all freight coming through downtown from the rock dump or other

solutions?

Mr. Calvin and Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Craig Dahl answered questions from Assemblymembers. Discussion also focused on the competitiveness and/or lack of competition from the purchase of Alaska Marine Lines by Northland and how Sampson is also operating as part of that purchase agreement. Concerns were noted that the resulting freight charges have been rising by 10% since those ownership changes were made.

D. Museum/Legislative Affairs Collaboration (Informational only, no packet items)

Juneau-Douglas City Museum Director Beth Weigel provided a brief informational presentation regarding a partnership that the Museum established with the Legislative Affairs agency to provide walking tours of the Capitol Building. They put together a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) enabling museum volunteers to lead walking tours. The Museum has approximately 26 volunteers who provide staff support and walking tours during the summer. This past summer they began a program in the beginning of August that last approximately 8 weeks providing six walking tours per week of the Capitol Building.

The MOA is set up such that the tours remain free to the public but the JDCM receives a small stipend from the state to provide the tours. Part of the proposal was also to sell capitol items such as pins, mugs, ties, and the book that features art in the Capitol at the JDCM gift shop with 60% of the proceeds going to the Legislative Affairs Agency and 30% going to JDCM. Ms. Weigel noted that they only do the tour if someone signs up at the Museum. To date, they have offered 50 tour slots, 46 of which were signed up with a total of tours which have had been sign up to take for a total of 249 persons having taken a tour so far.

They did a First Friday tour of the art at the Capitol and it was a great success with the locals who attended enjoying the opportunity to see the Capitol in a new light. This has an added benefit of allowing CBJ to properly welcome visitors, both Alaskan and non-Alaskan alike to the capital city in a new way. They look forward to continuing the program next summer and expanding it as well.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Following the presentations staff and the Mayor provided updates of events coming up over the next week:

Wednesday, September 26, 3-4:30p.m. Jackie Street House Build event

Friday, September 28, Noon: Ribbon Cutting event for the West Douglas pilot road

Saturday, September 29, Noon: Project Playground ribbon cutting with speeches and program until 12:45 and the actual ribbon cutting to take place at 12:45 followed by a community celebration.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Beth McEwen, MMC
Municipal Clerk