

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

August 18, 2014, 6:00 PM.
Municipal Building - Assembly Chambers

Assembly Work Session

I. ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Mary Becker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chambers.

Assemblymembers Present: Mary Becker, Karen Crane, Loren Jones, Jesse Kiehl, Jerry Nankervis, Merrill Sanford, Carlton Smith, and Randy Wanamaker .

Assemblymembers Absent: Kate Troll.

Staff present: Kim Kiefer, City Manager; Rob Steedle, Deputy City Manager; Amy Mead, Municipal Attorney; Beth McEwen, Deputy Clerk; Kirk Duncan, Public Works Director; Bob Bartholomew, Finance Director; Capital Transit Drivers and Staff.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Hearing no objection, the agenda was approved.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 28, 2014 Assembly Committee of the Whole Minutes

Hearing no objection, the minutes of July 28, 2014 Assembly Committee of the Whole were approved.

IV. AGENDA TOPICS

A. Juneau Economic Development Plan

Jim Calvin and Barbara Sheinberg were present to review the material in the draft plan prepared for the Assembly and to hear what the Assembly's thoughts as to what key initiatives needed to be part of the economic development plan.

Mr. Calvin said his team had been working out how to identify the most important initiatives and outline those with action steps. There were three areas they thought were critical to the plan, which included preserving the capital, housing and senior services. He explained how the consultants would flesh out each key initiative and provide steps to accomplish goals, measure that achievement and provide an anticipated return on investment. He said the report would ultimately provide action steps on 6 - 8 key initiatives. The consultants needed the Assembly to select the key initiatives. Other initiatives the consultants saw good potential return on investment was off season travel, strengthening the local work force, attracting the next generation work force, especially in light of pending state worker retirements. The consultants said revisiting the plan at regular intervals was important and they would articulate initial timelines for each initiative. The community should at least annually review the progress. Ms. Sheinberg said the primary goal of the consultants was to make the plan actionable so it was clear how to measure progress. Mr. Calvin said the team was discussing how to best measure return on investment.

The Assembly was tasked with providing the consultants with the 6- 8 initiatives that were the most important to pursue, and any further questions, within the next two weeks.

Ms. Becker thanked the consultant team for their work and report.

B. Capital Transit Revised Plan

Rob Steedle, Kirk Duncan, and Tim Payne, Principal, Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates joined the Assembly to discuss revisions to the Capital Transit Development plan.

Mr. Steedle said the plan adopted by the Assembly in April required \$200,000 more in funding over the FY14 level, and upon adoption the Assembly stated that adopting the plan was not approving the funding for the plan. In May, the Assembly allocated a budget reduction of \$100,000 to Capital Transit, so there was \$300,000 less to implement a plan. Work was already underway to put together a plan to retain as much as possible of the TDP. When put this on the agenda a month ago, he hoped to have a timetable for putting a revised plan together. This is still very much a work in progress. The meeting packet contains 3 memos. Staff and consultants have spent significant time going over the issues in the revised plan, which include the timings that were used for the route segments were incorrect. At the end of July, Kirk Duncan presented the plan to the drivers. Again last night, a productive meeting was held with the drivers. The plan would continue to evolve. There were tradeoffs to be made, such as leaving the 30 minute headways enjoyed in the past, but leaving that makes that timetables harder to remember by the ridership. The headways could be kept, more busses could be run, but service to some areas would need to be limited.

Mr. Payne said the Capital Transit Operators are dedicated to their work and the service to their customers. The schedules have been the same for almost 20 years. The Borough has continued to grow, there are more traffic signals, and transit takes longer time frames to accomplish. The plan was based on the perspective that there was more funding available for Capital Transit and an expansion was anticipated, however this is a challenge to contain resources. The consultants anticipated returning a revised plan to the Assembly in the fall.

Ms. Becker thanked the CBJ staff who met on a Sunday night to work through these issues.

Ms. Crane said this was frustrating. First the study was done with the interest in adding service to Riverside Drive. Recommendations were made, but then it was discovered that connections would be missed elsewhere, and that plan had to be thrown out, which was why this iteration of the plan was done. She assumed that staff had been involved in this second plan. We are back to where we were before and not making progress.

Mr. Wanamaker said he was a transit user and he spoke with the passengers and it is a very important system. He said the Assembly understood the plan would work with the budget reduction based on the information they were provided. He hears from users that it is not necessary to go all the way back into Lemon Creek. Reasonable adjustments could be made within budget.

Mr. Nankervis said he shares Ms. Crane's frustration. The drivers information should have been incorporated in the planning efforts, and it appears it wasn't. The managers needed to figure out how to make the system work within budget.

Ms. Kiefer said that staff was not asking the Assembly to fix the issues, but to let the Assembly know that the plan adopted in April, without the additional identified funding need, in addition to the budget reduction made, could not happen and a new plan was needed. Staff understood that service needed to be provided within existing budget and the main goal is to provide bus service to Riverside Drive. She said that she was frustrated as well but part of the problem is that until the schedules were in place, they were hard to evaluate. It is easier to discuss plans than to test them out. This also needs to go back out to the public.

Mr. Kiehl said the Assembly understood that a \$300,000 budget amount would have an impact on services. His priorities were maintaining 1/2 hour service. Predictability and reliability to users is critical especially for those who use the system to get to work. Mr. Kiehl said winter service for

residents from Churchill and Lemon Creek Road to get safely to a bus stop was important. -

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Payne to rank the efficiency of the technology improvements. Mr. Payne said the most basic parts of an operating the transit system was reliable rolling stock, good schedules and good operators. None of the technology improvements were more important than those key components. Technology tools could assist the basic system. Electronic fare boxes could assist in revenue recovery, for example to issue a day pass efficiently and with a secure payment system. Automatic Vehicle Location and Computer Aided Dispatch work hand in hand. Currently the operators are in continuous touch with each other by radio regarding location and number of passengers to transfer. The technology can help automate that system to enable "Real Time Information," which is an enhancement for users, which may increase ridership. For the size of Juneau's system, would not recommend the investment of computer aided scheduling due to annual fees and employee training. Automated passenger counters were a fairly small add-on to AVL. He said it was more important to decide if AVL was worth it.

Mayor Sanford asked if Federal funds would be available for technology. Mr. Payne said there were some grants for technology improvements but were in small quantity and competitive and there were no earmarks. A business case had to be made to add technology to receive federal funds.

Ms. Crane said she was at a meeting with the Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Transit was an issue and the Secretary said that Alaska would receive an additional \$3 million in transit funds in the coming year.

Ms. Becker thanked the staff and consultants for their time and information.

C. Shattuck Way - Pedestrian Street Proposal

Ms. Kiefer presented information provided in the meeting packet regarding a 2012 Notice of Recommendation from the Planning Commission to partially vacate Shattuck Way from Municipal Way to Front Street at the request of Richard Harris, adjacent property owner. His concerns were the amount of damage from vehicles to his building due to the narrowness of the street and drainage from snow removal entering his building. Mr. Harris requested this matter be brought before the Assembly for consideration. Ms. Kiefer asked Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) for comments. SHI did not take a position, but expressed concerns about the removable bollards described in the proposal based on deliveries and winter use.

The Assembly discussed the potential loss of 8-9 on street parking spaces resulting from this proposal and the overall concern of parking for downtown. There were some questions regarding snow removal responsibilities, and Ms. Kiefer said CBJ would still be responsible for clearing the sidewalk and the PC anticipated the applicant would be responsible for maintaining the street area clear of snow, but that might be renegotiated. There were concerns expressed that once the SHI facility was operational there might be more information or needs identified. Based on the concern about on-street parking availability, there was no motion from the committee to move the matter forward to the full Assembly for consideration at this time.

V. COMMITTEE MEMBER / LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by
Laurie Sica, Municipal Clerk