

**THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
SPECIAL ASSEMBLY MEETING – RETREAT/WORKSESSION**

Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Special Assembly Meeting Retreat/Worksession of the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly, held in-person at Centennial Hall, was called into order by Mayor Beth Weldon at 8:35 a.m.

II. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mr. Barr acknowledged that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wished to honor the people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. *Gunalchéesh!*

III. ROLL CALL

Assemblymembers Present: Mayor Beth Weldon, Deputy Mayor Maria Gladziszewski, Wade Bryson, Carole Triem, Michelle Hale, Christine Woll, Greg Smith, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, and ‘Wáahlaal Gíidaak.

Assemblymembers Absent: None.

Staff present: City Manager Rorie Watt, Deputy Manager Robert Barr, Municipal Clerk Beth McEwen, Chief Housing Officer Scott Ciambor, Library Director John Thill, Lands Manager Dan Bleidorn, HRRM Director Dallas Hargrave, IT Director Matt Scranton, Airport Manager Patty Wahto, Engineering/Public Workers Director Katie Koester, Community Development Director Jill Maclean, Fire Chief Rich Etheridge, Police Chief Ed Mercer, Port Director Carl Uchytel, Eaglecrest Ski Manager Dave Scanlan, (and listening in telephonically Finance Director Jeff Rogers & City Attorney Robert Palmer)

Others present: Brian Holst, Karla Hart

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the retreat. She invited Assemblymembers to share one personal thing that others may know about them and one thing that they were surprised that the city does that they have learned while on the Assembly. After Assemblymembers did their introductions, Mayor Weldon invited Department Directors/Division Leaders to share one thing about themselves and something about their dept. that they thought the Assembly may not be aware.

V. AGENDA TOPICS

A. Progress Update on 2021 Goals

Mr. Watt provided an update on the progress of the 2021 Goals. Assembly and staff have done a good job in moving the work of the goals forward. He said as they work on the upcoming goals, they may need fewer goals or have the Assembly take a lighter touch with better delegation or be better at making decisions in one meeting if they hope to accomplish this level of goals that they set. He said there aren't that many meetings in the course of a year and it is best to approach it with a dose of expectation management. He said in order to stay focused on the goals, "discipline in process" is the key take away.

Current Goal#1: Housing - Assure adequate and affordable housing for all CBJ residents

Current Implementing Actions:

- A. Prioritize Housing Action Plan Strategies
- B. Approve & implement Affordable Housing Fund distribution plan
- C. Develop downtown housing incentives including tax abatement
- D. Focus on developing workforce housing
- E. Develop incentives to encourage long term rentals over short term rentals

Mr. Watt said that it is a big deal that the Assisted Senior Housing is coming to life. He said the Assembly will need to be aggressive with funds for housing with the Affordable Housing Fund (AHF)

He said that with respect to developing downtown housing, CDD and the Planning Commission queued up to similar to where we were before the Assisted Senior Housing project came online. They are getting ready to relax parking requirements in the downtown core. He said things are queued up for more housing grants in the future and perhaps looking at some more code amendments.

He said that while the new Glory Hall is not actually considered workforce housing, it is at the lower end of scale and has a domino effect that leads to other activities that will eventually lead to developing workforce housing.

Current Goal#2: Economic Development – Assure Juneau has a vibrant, diverse local economy

Current Implementing Actions:

- A. Implement Juneau Economic Plan
- B. Revitalize Downtown
- C. Area Plans: Complete Downtown Area plan, followed by Douglas and Valley area plans
- D. Evaluate next steps & benefits with the West Douglas Road and Channel Crossing
- E.1. Update the Comprehensive Plan
- E.2. Protect future industrial land
- F. Explore and review options for the Centennial Hall complex
- G. Explore viability of a summer operation plan for Eaglecrest Ski Area.

Mr. Watt said that the Assembly does not have a goal related to Tourism. They need to create one that would somehow be concentrated on the implementation of the VITF recommendations.

He anticipates the next tourist season schedule will be jarring to the community and that we need to do more to address those concerns.

Mr. Watt said that they need to finish the various area plans and see how the Blueprint Downtown plan folds into all the rest. He suggested they take the implementing action of “Protect future industrial land” off the list. He also suggested that the Assembly either fund the goal to update the Comprehensive Plan or take it off the list.

Mr. Watt said the West Douglas Road & 2nd Crossing as long range goals are good to continue to look at but are currently limited by resource availability. He said there was no bandwidth this year to talk about Eaglecrest Summer Operations Task Force and that while it is a great topic, staff’s ability to have another complicated project is very limited. He said the Assembly as created the Housing Development Task Force (HDTF) and it will be steered productively. He mentioned that the new task forces along with the work with the Systemic Racism Review Committee (SRRC) are big time commitments for the City Manager, the City Attorney, and the department heads.

Current Goal #3: Sustainable Budget & Organization – Assure CBJ is able to deliver services in a cost efficient and effective manner that meets the needs of the community

Current Implementing Actions:

- A. Maintain Assembly focus on deferred maintenance including BRH & JSD
- B. Protect Budget Reserve
- C. Continue to evaluate sales tax structure
- D. Develop plan to address reduced state support for School Bond Debt Reimbursement
- E. Reduce the relative cost of living in Juneau where possible.
- F. Examine life cycle and life cycle costs of CBJ facilities including City Hall

Mr. Watt said that he is pleased where we are currently with the budget. Staff has made progress on the goals focused on deferred maintenance and after an initial pause with the Augustus Brown Pool, they are moving forward on those maintenance needs. They have continued to protect the Budget Reserve. He said that an ordinance related to the onboard sales tax is coming up following the discussion at the December 1 AFC meeting. With respect to reviewing the overall sales tax structure as well as trying to reduce the relative cost of living in Juneau are attractive topics to review but will have some thorny areas to be able to navigate solutions.

Mr. Watt said that they will need to watch how the state/legislative landscape unfolds in real time on the School District reimbursement issue.

He said that with respect to a new City Hall, the Assembly will need to decide to pull the trigger on that or pull trigger on major maintenance programs that will address system failures.

Current Goal #4: Community, Wellness, and Public Safety – Juneau is safe and welcoming for all citizens

Current Implementing Actions:

- A. Reduce homelessness

- B. Working with non-profits, BRH Board and CEO, develop a plan for non-profits and BRH's role with public health and social services in the community
- C. Assess legislative impact, community services, and operations through the lenses of systemic racism.
- D. Develop and implement strategies to reduce and deal with the impacts of crime in the community.

Mr. Watt said he would give a gold star on the work towards this goal in light of the pandemic. He said that BRH does need focus as they are clearly in a very tenuous position with changing management in a dynamic world. He said that it is good the joint BRH/Assembly Committee was created. It is hard to try to operate similar to a private business but under public sector constraints.

He said with respect to the SRRC, the committee and Assembly is learning a lot. There is still a lot to learn, he suggests they stay the course and see what evolves.

Mr. Watt said that crime has not been a strong focus of the Assembly but JPD continues to do a great job. He said that JPD is the biggest and most expensive CBJ department and is a key cornerstone of our community but they are experiencing difficulty with recruiting and retaining officers.

Current Goal #5: Sustainable Community – Juneau will maintain a resilient social, economic, and environmental habitat for existing population and future generations.

Current Implementing Actions:

- A. Develop strategy to measure, track and reduce CBJ energy consumption
- B. Make a long term plan to achieve reliance of 80% renewable energy sources by 2045
- C. Develop climate change adaptation plan
- D. Develop solid waste strategy including plans to increase recycling and deal with abandoned/junked vehicles

Mr. Watt said that with respect to Climate Change, the Juneau Commission on Sustainability (JCOS) has been working on identifying sustainable goals and he referenced the letter that JCOS sent to the Assembly.

With respect to current Goal #6: Pandemic Recovery – Protect Public Health and Recover Economic Strength during the COVID pandemic, he said they have been doing a good job in protecting public health and the economy but that this will need to be the subject of future discussions.

B. Financial Update

Mr. Watt said that they covered a lot of good information at the December 1 AFC meeting. This Assembly now has the opportunity to do more strategic planning financially than many other past Assemblies. Debt is coming off the books and we have a substantial Reserve Fund Balance and as we get to our post COVID awakening, we have tamped down on many activities. This is an opportunity to affirm what we are going to do. He suggested the Assembly pick the goals they really want to concentrate on rather than trying to do everything but doing it poorly. He said they

have the potential to dissolve the PWFC and LHED and just have more COWs. He suggested they be aggressive and take advantage of opportunities to do things different, more efficiently.

C. Assembly Goal Setting

Mayor Weldon called the Assembly back together to go through their goal setting exercise. Assemblymembers briefly discussed how they wished to approach the goals and implementation strategies. Mayor Weldon suggested that they begin with Mr. Barr explaining the process she set up with Mr. Barr and then the Assembly can continue on implementation strategies at the end.

Mr. Barr described the three phased approach. For Phase 1, they will break into small groups of three members at three different tables. They will rotate for each goal so that by the end of all 5 goals, each of Assemblymembers will have had a chance to work with all other members. During Phase 1, they will be asking the following questions for each of the current goals and implementing actions: ***Do we want to keep the goal, change it, add implementing action, or take away an implementing action?***

During Phase 2, they will consolidate all the input into one final group list. He said they will come to an agreement as a whole body as to what will finally be voted upon and anything that didn't come up during the small group process could be added to the list during phase 2. At the end of the day, the plan is to take some time to briefly talk as a large group about goal #6 – pandemic recovery.

Phase 3 will consist of a multi-voting exercise. All the consolidated goal sheets will be posted so everyone will be able to vote on the implementing actions. Votes will be tallied and that will be what sets the priority order for the implementing actions. That phase will also determine if any goals/implementing actions get dropped.

Members briefly discussed ideas on how best to proceed with implementing the goals once decided upon. Suggestions ranged from Michelle Hale's handout with one person championing a particular goal through the process, or assigning particular goals to a particular Assembly Standing Committee, or the Mayor's suggestion of rotating focus on one goal per Assembly or COW meeting. It was determined that the Assembly can spend some time after the goal setting and voting to discuss the process for how they will be addressed.

The meeting then split into the various breakout groups for Phases 1 and 2.

PHASE 3 consisted of each Assemblymember being given a total of 20 dots with which to vote on each of the implementing actions they wished to prioritize. [Vote totals are highlighted after each implementing action.]

Mr. Barr led the group through each of the existing goals, the small group feedbacks, and polled the membership on any changes, deletions, additions etc. to the goals as well as the implementing actions for each of the goals. The finalized list that subsequently was voted upon using the dot voting method is distilled below.

GOAL #1 HOUSING: Assure affordable housing and a welcoming community environment for all CBJ residents.

Implementing Actions:

- A. Implement projects & strategies that advance the goals of the Housing Action Plan [6]
- B. Continue a robust use of the AHF and its sustainability [5]
- C. Reduce barriers to downtown housing development [5]
- D. Increase workforce in the building trades [1]
- E. Address impacts of short term rentals on housing [1]
- F. Revise and improve Title 49 to facilitate housing [7]

GOAL #2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Assure Juneau has a vibrant, diverse local economy that is affordable to all. (Note: the new lettering below is based on the compilation of the final list and does not necessarily correspond to the letters from the previous goals; i.e. former Goal #2.C. is now new item #2.B.)

Implementing Actions:

- A. Implement project strategy for JEP including revitalizing downtown (with regular updates) [6]
- B. Work existing area plans into existing decision making process [0]
- C. Pursue & plan for West Douglas and Channel Crossing [5]
- D. Update the Comprehensive Plan [9]
- E. Explore financing for Capital Civic Center [6]
- F. Support Eaglecrest Summer Operations Task Force & self-sufficiency of Eaglecrest [5]
- G. Increase number of independent travelers [3]
- H. Support Housing Development Task Force Recommendations [4]
- I. Consider changes to Assessment & BOE process [0]
- J. Adopt and implement strategies developed by the Visitor Industry Task Force to mitigate impacts & increase economic benefits of tourism. [8]
- K. Examine options for a tourism governing structure that mitigates impacts & increases economic benefits of tourism. [8]
- L. Develop strategy for workforce development and remove impediments [4]

GOAL #3 SUSTAINABLE BUDGET ORGANIZATION: Assure CBJ is able to deliver services in a cost efficient and effective manner that meets the needs of the community.

Implementing Actions:

- A. Maintain Assembly focus on deferred maintenance including BRH and JSD [5]
- B. Develop strategy for fund balance and protect restricted budget reserve [7]
- C.1. Continue to evaluate sales tax structure including equity and evaluate removing sales tax on food. [7]
- C.2. Continue to evaluate sales tax structures [1]
- D.1. Address reduced support for school bond debt reimbursement [0]
- D.2. Long term strategic planning for CIPs [7]
- E. Reduce mil rate as appropriate [6]
- F. Address inflationary effects on CBJ projects, programs, & payroll [2]

G. Allocate resources to implement Assembly goals [5]

GOAL #4 COMMUNITY, WELLNESS, & PUBLIC SAFETY: Juneau is safe and welcoming for all citizens.

Implementing Actions:

- A.1. Reduce homelessness [0]
- A.2. Advocate for strategies & policies identified by Juneau Reentry Coalition & JCHH [3]
- A.3. Examine social service funding levels and process. [5]
- B. Continue working with BRH, JCHH, & other non-profits [2]
- C. Assess legislative impact, community services and operations through the lenses of systemic racism. [2]
- E. Acknowledge and honor Juneau's indigenous culture, place names, naming policy, and recognize Elizabeth Peratrovich Day. [5]
- F. Explore government to government relations with tribes [5]
- G. Address Environmental Equity [4]

GOAL #5 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Juneau will maintain a resilient society, economy, and environment for existing and future generations.

Implementing Actions:

- A. Develop strategy to measure, track and reduce CBJ energy consumption [6]
- B.1. Make a long term plan to achieve reliance on 80% of renewable energy sources by 2045. [0]
- B.2. Implement projects & strategies that advance the goal of reliance on 80% of renewable energy sources by 2045. [6]
- C. Develop Climate Change Adaptation Plan. [5]
- D. Develop a Zero Waste or Waste Reduction Plan [7]
- E. Develop strategy to reduce abandoned/junked vehicles. [5]

Following the retreat, Mr. Barr will compile and tabulate the voting results and have an updated goals document for the Assembly to review/approve at the December 13, 2021 Assembly meeting if possible or a subsequent meeting as soon as it is ready.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Assembly, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Signed: _____
Elizabeth J. McEwen
Municipal Clerk

Signed: _____
Beth A. Weldon
Mayor