

DOCKS AND HARBORS OPERATIONS MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2024 at 5:00 PM



Port Director's Conference Room/Zoom Webinar

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Sooter called the meeting to order at 5:00pm in the Port Director's Conference Room and via Zoom.
- B. ROLL CALL:** The following members attended in person or via zoom - Don Etheridge, Tyler Emerson (arrived late), Clayton Hamilton, Debbie Hart, Matthew Leither, Nick Orr, Annette Smith, and Shem Sooter.

Absent – James Becker

Also in attendance – Carl Uchtyl - Port Director, Matthew Sill – Port Engineer, Jeremy Norbryhn – Deputy Harbormaster, Scott Hinton – Port Operations Supervisor and Melody Musick – Administrative Officer.

- C. PORT DIRECTOR REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES –** No Changes

MOTION By Mr. Etheridge: TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED AND ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion Passed with no objection.

- D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –**

Mr. Kirby Day, Juneau, AK 99801

Mr. Day wanted a status report about the continued concern on the amount of recreational and commercial boats in an out of Statter Harbor and the wake. There was a meeting held a few months ago. He asked if there has been further discussion on moving the five mile-per-hour buoy marker further out or is it a dormant item?

Mr. Uchtyl said there has been various conversations on this topic and there is a private organization set up that is trying to self-regulate themselves. He said the Coast Guard did have a meeting with Alix Pierce and Jeremy Norbryhn attended.

Mr. Norbryhn said the Coast Guard presented voluntary programs that were put in place in Ketchikan years ago and have worked in the no-wake zone. The thought was that this private organization could take this program on as a voluntary program. For this to be law would take years. There is not enough property damage or boating accidents data for it to move quicker. It was made clear that Docks & Harbors jurisdiction ends just outside the breakwater.

- E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. November 13th, 2024 Minutes – Hearing no objection the minutes were approved as presented.

- F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

2. FY26 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) List

Mr. Uchtyl said Docks & Harbors CIP list is due to Engineering on December 16th. On page ten in the packet is advancing projects that we wish to or hope to accomplish in the next fiscal year based on our resources. They also want five other years of projects. Mr. Uchtyl talked about Docks & Harbors fund balance and project costs.

Harbors (Fund Balance beginning of FY25) - \$5,100,400.

- Aurora Phase IV - \$1.5M
- Statter Breakwater Study - \$500,000

- New Boat Yard Trailer – Approx. \$317,000 (we currently have \$225,000).

After these three items, our fund balance will be down to \$3,400,000. The fund balance will continue to grow through FY25 and will be used on what we intend to fund in FY26.

- The PIDP Grant match of \$2.8M (if we get the DOT Harbor Grant, we may not have to pay all the match).
- Army Corp Statter Harbor Breakwater Cost Share - \$600K
- Statter Harbor Zinc Project - \$500K

Mr. Uchtyl said he wanted to point out how easy it is to spend all our money on valuable projects. The list in the packet was put together from Board input. He went over the list below -

• Aurora Harbor Drive Down Float (local match \$2.8M)	\$13,000,000
• Statter Breakwater - Cost Share w/USACE	\$600,000
• Statter Harbor Office - New Roof	\$250,000
• Statter Harbor - Zinc Anodes	\$500,000
• Secure Storage - Little Rock Dump	\$300,000
• Echo Cover -Launch Ramp Float	\$200,000

Committee Questions –

Mr. Etheridge asked if the Zinc Anode project for Statter Harbor is the Legislative request?

Mr. Uchtyl said yes.

Ms. Smith asked if the Echo Cove project will add to Staff Maintenance.

Mr. Uchtyl said we already go out there and it will not increase staffing time.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the Echo Cove project would require more staff time with snow plowing with the float.

Mr. Uchtyl said we typically do not snowplow.

Mr. Norbryhn said the State runs a plow out there and runs one pass through the parking lot. Goldbelt runs a boat out of Echo on really bad days to the mine and they will occasionally ask for gravel when it is icy. Staff goes out to sand when they can.

Mr. Uchtyl went over the Docks projects below.

• Shore Power - 16B (Estimate for phase I)	\$30,000,000
• Downtown Piling Inspection (Marine Passenger request)	\$300,000
• Downtown Seawalk Cameras (MP request or grant opportunity)	\$1,000,000
• Statter Harbor Phase IIID - curb, gutter & paving (possibility to use Docks fund balance for this project)	\$3,500,000

Mr. Uchytel said Docks has approximately \$3.7M in our fund balance.

Mr. Hamilton wanted to provide a survey for the public to rank our project priorities.

Mr. Sooter suggested to add this topic to our next meeting agenda.

Mr. Uchytel said the CIP projects on page eight are projects for the next five years starting FY27 and he read the list. Any items in bold are Docks projects.

FY27 -

Statter Breakwater - Cost Share w/USACE	\$900,000
UAS Property Purchase (Lease runs out 2027/entire area)	\$8,000,000
Aurora Harbor Office - Replacement	\$3,500,000
Douglas Harbor Launch Ramp Extension/Lighting	\$200,000
Douglas Harbor Showers/Bathrooms (eligible for grant)	\$250,000
Aurora Harbor Showers/Bathrooms (eligible for grant)	\$250,000
Emergency Vessel Loading Float	\$1,000,000

FY28 -

Shore Power - 16B (phase II)	\$31,000,000
Statter Breakwater Construction - Local match w/USACE (1% sales tax initiative)	\$20,000,000
Douglas Harbor Uplands	\$6,000,000
Zinc Anode Replacement - 16B	\$3,000,000
Harbor-wide Security Gates	\$500,000

FY29 -

Statter Harbor Garage/Storage	\$1,500,000
Aurora Harbor Dredging - Tug Slip	\$500,000
Marine Services Facilities	\$30,000,000
Deck Over People's Wharf/USS JUNEAU	\$7,000,000
Lone Sailor Memorial	\$200,000

FY30 -

Direct Fish Sales Facility - Harris Harbor	\$300,000
Seawalk Harris & Aurora Harbors	\$10,000,000
Small Cruise Ship Infrastructure	\$15,000,000
Purchase Archipelago Property	\$11,000,000

Mr. Hamilton commented that the UAS area is for the Marine Facilities services, and he sees it twice on this list.

Mr. Uchytel explained that strategically Harbors wants to maintain control of the UAS property and it is important to our operations. The marine services yard is something Harbors can continue to work on which is a big fill project, areas considered are the former Thane Ore House area or Norway Point near the Yacht Club. He believes the Board still wants to maintain these projects which are a vision for a larger marine services yard and obtaining the entire UAS property.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the staff is suggesting moving forward with two separate proposals? He asked if they could be combined to have more leverage.

Mr. Uchytel said he does not see more leverage if they are combined. Harbors will never get a grant opportunity to purchase the UAS property. He talked about the Assembly interest in acquiring the UAS property and commented there could be a small grant for the marine services yard to maybe obtain a travel lift. It is difficult to figure out where the best place is for the marine services yard.

Mr. Etheridge said the Assembly was also interested at one time in purchasing the entire UAS property if it becomes available.

Mr. Sooter commented he would want the UAS property that separates our two assets regardless if there is a boat facility there or another location. He looks at these as two separate projects.

Mr. Uchytel read the future projects below.

Future Years -

Auke Baywalk - Statter Harbor to Auke Bay Marine Station	\$12,000,000
Downtown Safety Railing	\$2,000,000
Amalga Harbor Improvements	\$1,000,000

Mr. Uchytel said the Board can direct any changes to this list.

Mr. Hamilton asked why the Statter Harbor curb and gutter project can be paid from the Docks fund balance but not the roof for Statter Harbor?

Mr. Uchytel said there is a strong argument that the parking lots are used by the Cruise Industry going out whale watching and are nearly the exclusive users of that parking lot. To use Docks funds is appropriate. The Statter Harbor roof is more of a Harbor than a Dock facility. There would be push back asking to use docks funds on this project.

Ms. Smith asked because Harbor personnel spend time dealing with the passenger for hire boats if there could be a percentage of Docks funds used on the roof project?

Mr. Uchytel commented that we have not gone down the path of saying there is a good amount of Harbor efforts used on passenger for hire vessels and the appropriate time to bring that up would be in our budget cycle. It could be possible to make that argument, and it is not unreasonable.

Mr. Etheridge commented we get funds per head for every passenger that goes on the passenger for hire vessels. Those fees go to the Harbor funds and that is what those fees are for.

Mr. Norbryhn commented we do have one PTL employee that cleans the Statter Harbor area and bathrooms all summer which is paid out of Docks funds.

Public Comment - None

Committee Discussion/Action

MOTION By MR. ETHERIDGE: TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS LIST AS PRESENTED AND ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion passed with no objection.

G. NEW BUSINESS

3. FY26 Marine Passenger Fee (MPF) Request List

Mr. Uchytel said on page eleven in the packet is the start of the Marine Passenger fee request. Docks collects the five-dollar fee which goes to the City Manager. Approximately \$8M in MP fees are collected that the Tourism Director allocates. The purpose of that fee is to mitigate the impact of the 1.7M passengers. Anyone in the community that is impacted by cruise ship passengers can apply. This list is submitted every year, and it is not prioritized but merits consideration.

He went over the list. In the past we have been awarded \$717K from the Marine Passenger funds.

Pg 12 - Downtown Security Camera's

Pg 13 - Area Wide Port Operations – We typically get this request funded.

Pg 14 – US Customs/Port Office & Visitor Center Building - Docks maintains these buildings at our expense.

Pg 15 –Safety Rail

Pg 16 – Dock Electrification

Pg 17 – Dock Security

Pg 18 – Archipelago Property

Pg 19 – Lone Sailor Statue

Pg 20 – USS Juneau Memorial

Pg 21 – Re-establishment of the Emergency Vessel Loading Float

Pg 22 – Downtown Piling Inspection

Mr. Uchytel said these are the projects he is proposing for the Marine Passenger fees, and this list is due January 2nd.

Committee Questions

Ms. Smith asked if the ask has been increased over the years to reflect the rate of inflation and employee increases.

Mr. Uchytel said no.

Ms. Smith said they should.

Mr. Hamilton asked if these are all equally reviewed and equally important. Is the Board to prioritize the list? He asked for more information how this works.

Mr. Uchytel said we operate in the black for our Docks Enterprise. We could prioritize the list but between the Manager's office they figure out what they want to fund, and they are also trying to fund other interests. The \$717K we receive has been adequate.

Mr. Etheridge commented the Manager will go through the requests and decide what she would like to see moved forward to the Assembly. The Assembly has the final say.

Mr. Uchytel commented that we may get funded for the piling inspection.

Public Comment –

Mr. Kirby Day, Juneau, AK

Mr. Day commented that a lot of these projects have some merit but the way it is decided makes it difficult to get things funded.

Committee Discussion/Action

MOTION By MR. ETHERIDGE: TO APPROVE THE FY26 MARINE PASSENGER FEE REQUEST LIST AS PRESENTED AND ASK UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion passed with no objection.

H. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

4. Maritime Administration (MARAD) - PIDP Grant for Aurora Drive Down Float

Mr. Uchytel said on page 23 is an email received from MARAD that stated there will be a kickoff meeting in January or February for the PIDP grant.

Committee Discussion –

Ms. Smith asked if we were going to fall into challenges with the environment listing of the Sunflower Sea Star?

Mr. Uchytel said there is a new process called AK-SLOPES initiative that is specifically set up for Alaska which is supposed to streamline the permitting process. PND has applied on our behalf for the Taku Harbor project so we will see how that turns out. It has been a while since we have done a federal grant and you need to make sure everything is correct.

Public Comment – Mr. Hamilton brought public concerns forward. There are people concerned with the vehicle traffic flow passing through the yard.

Mr. Sooter commented that everywhere in the downtown area is crowded. He thinks this is a good project and it will help.

Mr. Uchytel said he believes the vehicular congestion is a solvable problem.

Ms. Smith asked if the concern is with the access to Egan?

Mr. Hamilton said it was in the yard and having the big trucks behind you and also getting a trailer through there.

Mr. Uchytel said there could be a way to limit access with a gate or human intervention.

Mr. Hamilton asked why it isn't by the Yacht Club?

Mr. Uchytel said he is unsure where it would go at the Yacht Club.

Mr. Etheridge commented this location was the cheapest and it is too late to change the location now.

5. Additional Charges for Cruise Ships without Electronic ID Verification

Mr. Scott Hinton said on page 28 in the packet is a letter outlining the need for the additional charge. He said he runs the Port and a big part of his job is security for passengers coming on and off the ships with dual ID verification. Most of the very large cruise ships have the electronic ID verifications and we

need about four people for security for ID checks. Some of the boats do not have this and that means we must have more staff, like eight or nine, to effectively meet the dual verification requirement. Letters have been written to those ships that do not have the electronic ID verification and nothing has happened. The hope is this fee will nudge them to get the electronic ID verification. He pointed out that when you must look at everyone's ID it creates more stress in the security shelter not only from Docks staff but from the passengers as well. This affects our staff retention.

Committee Discussion

Ms. Smith asked if this new tariff falls under the head tax?

Mr. Uchytel said the way we are looking at this it is a fee assessment. This does not merit a regulation change. In regulation, we have an hourly rate and we will use that as an incentive to go to electronic ID verification. We will let the Tourism Director know, and every January we send a letter out to Mr. Green and Mr. Day with our current rates. We will let them know we are implementing this fee.

Ms. Smith commented that they also need to understand that this fee will increase as our costs increase.

Ms. Musick commented that the staff labor fee is tied to CPI adjustment.

Public Comment

Mr. Kirby Day, Juneau, AK

Mr. Day commented that all his ships have facial recognition or electronic ID verification. He asked Mr. Hinton if they need Wi-Fi or a network?

Mr. Hinton said they are a stand-alone unit and does not need Wi-Fi or a network.

Mr. Day said he will reach out to M/V QUEEN ELIZABETH to see if he can nudge them to get the electronic ID verification.

Mr. Etheridge suggested to send this to the full Board for approval.

6. Statter Harbor Phase IIID - 65% Review

Mr. Sill said starting on page 34 in the packet is the 65% review set for the Statter Harbor phase IIID project.

He went over page 34 which is the overview of the site and explained what is included in this project.

- Seawalk Connections
- Curb, gutter, and paving the parking lots for angle bus parking and boat trailers with a make ready lane
- The old launch ramp will have smaller fill for easier access to the water for the kayak users.
- Sidewalk on the Dehart's side of the parking lot
- Better Pedestrian access sidewalk – Mr. Sill commented that Harbors is encouraging Dehart's to add stairs going down the hill so pedestrians would be off the access road.

Mr. Sill said overall encumbered cost is about \$3.5M.

Committee Discussion –

Ms. Smith asked if he knows how many people get off the buses and go to Dehart's? She knows several of them do stop to get soda pop.

Mr. Sill said he does not.

Mr. Norbryhn said he has not seen any people off the bus crossing the parking lot, only deckhands off the fishing boats.

Mr. Sill talked on the schedule for this project. This is a very busy area and is very difficult. This is largely an asphalt project which is only open when the cruise ships are here. It won't take a lot of time to pave, but it must happen when the cruise ships are here. The plan is to take this out to bid immediately so at the end of the 2025 cruise bus season, the contractor can move in to start working on curb, gutter, fill, grading, seawalk, and everything done so at the beginning of the 2026 season they can pave as soon as the asphalt plant opens. It is really a timing complication with this project.

Ms. Smith asked when the asphalt plant closes?

Mr. Sooter said the end of October.

Mr. Sill said there is a lot of prep work before the asphalt and the contractor will just be getting to the site in October to begin work.

Mr. Sooter asked if there is any underground drains and things that will need to be adjusted?

Mr. Sill said the storm drain structures are in place but the lid height will need to be adjusted for the parking lots. The storm drains for the gutters will all need to be installed.

Mr. Etheridge asked where the buses will go during construction?

Mr. Sill said there could be a lot of juggling. Early in the season, there may be space in the trailer parking area. We will need to work around the contractor.

Mr. Emerson asked what is the fate of the old travel lift?

Mr. Sill showed on page 33 in the packet existing conditions, and he pointed out an area showing a small decrepit building, conex boxes, a shelter, and the travel lift. This is also where employee's park. The small building will be torn down, the conex's and shelter will be moved and we will likely surplus the travel lift. The employee parking will also move.

Public Comment - None

7. Historical Review of Douglas Harbor Projects

Mr. Sill said this is on page 56 in your packet. He added in the packet the 1962 and 2000 Douglas Harbor site plans that show the Harbor really hasn't changed. The floats were swapped out at some point but not a lot of change. Docks & Harbors took ownership in 2003 from the State of Alaska and prior to taking ownership we started an aggressive construction recapitalization plan master planning program that essentially lasted until a few years ago. From 2001 to 2024, we have spent over \$31M in Douglas Harbor. We did spend money before 2001 but not much. What is left on our master planning is the things people see, paving, curb & gutter, stripping, a seawalk along the wall, landscaping, and restrooms and showers. This presentation is to show that we have not abandoned Douglas Harbor and we feel we have invested heavily in this facility.

Committee Discussion –

Mr. Hamilton commented that he was diving in Douglas Harbor and it is filling in very quickly with silt. He asked if we have a plan to address it?

Mr. Sill said there is isostatic rebound that is happening at about 1/2" per year. Every 20 years the land comes up about a foot. We are not concerned right now with the depth in the harbor due to the past issues with dredging and permitting.

Mr. Hamilton said at a low/low tide it is getting tighter to Mr. Dimond's keel.

Mr. Sill commented that staff will keep an eye on it.

Mr. Etheridge commented that Douglas Harbor is a nightmare to try to dredge due to the mercury in the soil.

Ms. Smith asked if it was dredged to bedrock?

There was more discussion on the past dredging history.

Mr. Emerson said he sees Douglas as a great harbor. Having a restroom and a shower would be nice.

Public Comment - None

I. STAFF, COMMITTEE AND MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Smith said at the South Douglas West Juneau Committee meeting she is only allowed to sit and listen. They want a well-maintained Harbor to support recreation and fishing.

Mr. Norbryhn said he wanted to commend Aurora staff for performing CPR on a Harbor patron who collapsed in the parking lot as Angela Thrower was getting out of her car. Angela performed CPR and two other Harbor personnel came out and one called 911 and the other assisted with getting an AED. The patron began breathing again and the EMT's showed up and took him to the hospital. They saved the man's life.

Mr. Uchtyl said the crew gets training in CPR and first aid every couple years. Jeremiah put the AED on the man and it said to not shock so they followed the guidance as they were trained which is very commendable.

Mr. Uchtyl said he will be on leave for the next Board Meeting. Mr. Creswell will be filling in.

J. COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Next Operations/Planning Committee Meeting - Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025

Ms. Smith said she will be in Balleza for the next meeting.

Mr. Uchtyl said the meetings in January will be to approve the budget.

K. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.