

DOCKS AND HARBORS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2024, at 5:00 PM

Port Director's Conference Room/Zoom Webinar



<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/84590534008> or (253)215-8782 Webinar ID: 845 9053 4008 Passcode: 277265

A. CALL TO ORDER By Mr. Etheridge at 5:00pm in Port Director's Conference Room and via Zoom

B. ROLL CALL: James Becker, Tyler Emerson, Clayton Hamilton, Debbie Hart, Matthew Leither, Nick Orr, Annette Smith, Shem Sooter, and Don Etheridge

Absent: James Becker and Nick Orr.

Also in attendance: Nicole Lynch

C. PORT DIRECTOR REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES- None.

MOTION BY MS SMITH TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED OR AMENDED.

Motion approved unanimously.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS- none.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. October 31st, 2024 Special Board Meeting

2. October 31st, 2024 Board Minutes

Minutes approved unanimously.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Pubic Requests for Consent Agenda Changes- none.

B. Board Members Requests for Consent Agenda Changes- none.

C. Items for Action

MOTION BY MS. SMITH TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. FY2026 Docks & Harbors Legislative Priorities

Public Comments- none.

Board Discussion/ Action

RECOMMENDATION BY MS. SMITH TO FORWARD, IN ORDER OF RECEDENCE, (1) THE AUKE BAY WAVE ATTENUATOR AND (2) THE AURORA HARBOR DRIVE DOWN FLOAT AS THE TWO DOCKS & HARBORS CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR THE CBJ FY2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY LIST.

4. Project Priorization

Presentation by Port Director: Presentation by Port Director: Mr. Uchytel said that staff and Board members were asked to participate in a survey to rank project priorities. The survey was organized in two categories, one being new projects and the other being recapitalization projects. Docks and Harbors projects were not separated in the survey. There were 12 staff participants and 8 Board members. The purpose of the survey was to establish a priority list of projects for the next six fiscal years. At the end of the FY24 fiscal year the fund balance for Harbors was \$4.4M and Docks fund balance was \$3.7M. Mr. Uchytel said due to funding restrictions, Docks and Harbors seeks out projects that can be completed

with grant funding. The survey results from staff and Board members will be heavily considered when creating the capital improvement project list. The Aurora Drive Down Float and Marine Services Facility were two projected that were ranking highly by staff and Board members. The local match for the Aurora Harbor Drive Down Float is \$2.4M. Mr. Uchytal said that it is possible that the grant agreement will be signed this fiscal year, therefore \$300,000 is being allocated to the Drive Down Float project in FY25. Mr. Uchytal said that there is a chance that Docks and Harbors will receive half of the local match for the PIDP grant from DOT Harbor Facilities Grant; however, the Board should not plan on receiving the DOT grant for the local match due to difficulties with grant submission. The \$2.4M local match represents a significant amount of the Harbor's fund balance. The Statter Harbor roof replacement and Aurora Harbor Phase IV were ranked high by the Board and staff members for recapitalization projects. Mr. Uchytal said that he would like to award the Statter Harbor roof project this fiscal year so that in September of 2025 construction could be completed. Aurora Harbor Phase IV is a \$11.4 million dollar project. The H float that was completed this year was a \$4.3 million dollar project which included a single float, and half the fingers planned for phase IV.

Board Questions

Ms. Smith asked what the square footage of the Statter Harbor office

Mr. Uchytal said the office is approximately 250,000 square feet.

Ms. Smith asked why replacing the roof would cost \$250K.

Mr. Uchytal said the cost is an estimate for replacing the roof.

Mr. Leither asked why the UAS property purchase, and the Marine Services Facility were not ranked on the staff survey.

Ms. Musick said that the data sheet shows the top 20 projects.

Mr. Leither asked for the staff perspective on why some of the major projects were ranking differently for the Board and the staff.

Mr. Creswell said that from the staff perspective, many are focused on the daily operations of the Harbor and can see the clear benefits of the Aurora Drive Down Float on their daily operations. Some of these projects are not on the staff's radar and the survey could be the first time they have been exposed to the project concepts.

Mr. Hamilton asked why Dock money is not being used on most of the projects on the list.

Mr. Uchytal said that it is difficult to use Dock money for Harbors projects without the ability to connect the benefit directly to the tourism industry and Docks operations. The projects are projected into future dates, and it is the best interest of the department to act strategically when committing funding for projects. Mr. Uchytal said that at this stage in project planning, the Board should be analyzing whether the project will be successful.

Mr. Leither asked why the Emergency Vessel Lightering Float was ranked so high in the survey.

Ms. Smith said that she ranked it very high in the survey because before it was removed it was her preferred winter diving location. Ms. Smith said that after she joined the Docks and Harbors Board community members from many different groups reached out to voice their frustration on the removal of the float. Ms. Smith said that it has been a consistent priority for her while on the Board.

Mr. Leither said that he understands that community members want access to the lightering float, however his understanding of the project is that it would be an emergency float.

Mr. Etheridge said that the Emergency Lightering Float would function like the lightering float, the only difference is the naming terminology.

Mr. Uchytel said that the float is named that way because the city has expressed that it will not approve another lightering float project. Mr. Uchytel said that his recommendation for FY25 would be to set aside \$300,000 for the design of the Drive Down Float and to complete the Statter Harbor Phase IIID, which would be completed using Dock funds. Mr. Uchytel said that he is waiting for the financial audit to be completed before committing to the project to ensure that there will be sufficient fund balance. Mr. Uchytel said that for recapitalization projects, he would like to award the Statter Harbor roof replacement in FY25, and that roof replacement is not inexpensive.

Mr. Sill said that the roof replacement would constitute replacing the entire roof structure not just the shingles.

Mr. Uchytel said that the ongoing projects that are on the survey list are: Statter Harbor Breakwater, Wayside Park Dredging, Aurora Phase IV, and Taku Harbor. Mr. Uchytel said that in FY26 a FEMA Grant or Marine Passenger Fees may be utilized to procure the Sea-walk security cameras. The Downtown piling inspection can also be a project that Marine Passenger Fees are requested, to know the condition of the timber pilings. Mr. Uchytel reviewed the information on page 14-17 of the agenda packet with the Board. Mr. Uchytel said that the department could request Marine Passenger Funds for the tug slip dredging project.

Mr. Etheridge said that Docks and Harbors has requested Marine Passenger Funds in the past for tug slip dredging, however that was before the CLIA lawsuit.

Public Comments- none.

Board Discussion

Ms. Smith asked if the change of political parties in January will impact on the shore power project.

Mr. Uchytel said that the shore power project will not be funded by federal grant funds and therefore will not impact the feasibility of the project. Mr. Uchytel said that with the changes in administration grant opportunities like the EPA that the department applied for this summer are less likely.

Mr. Hamilton asked if there was a way to measure how strongly certain projects were ranked.

Mr. Uchytel said that the survey was ranked.

Ms. Musick explained the rank survey system used to measure the priorities of the Board and staff.

Ms. Smith said projects that have the best chance of funding and not necessarily the most interest might be better prioritized.

Mr. Etheridge agreed and said that funding for some of the projects will be difficult to secure and that the Board should prioritize the projects that have the best chance of success.

Mr. Hamilton said that he would like the survey to go out to the harbor stakeholders and patrons so that the public could give input on Docks and Harbors projects. Mr. Hamilton asked if this would be something other Board members would be interested in.

Mr. Etheridge said that sending out a survey to the public would put a significant amount of strain on staff interpreting results, while the department's administrative personnel are understaffed.

Ms. Smith said that a public survey is something that has been done before, it should be something that could be posted on Facebook and replicated.

Mr. Creswell said that it depends on the quality and detail of the survey that the Board is requesting. The survey sent out to the Board and staff to rank project priorities assumes a certain amount of understanding of the internal workings of the department and on-going projects. For a successful survey to be released to the public there would be much more development involved.

Ms. Smith said that she likes the idea of sending the survey out to the public. Ms. Smith said that the survey should be split up into two surveys for Docks and Harbors projects.

Mr. Hamilton said that the projects on the list for the Harbors department are familiar with stakeholders and wouldn't require lengthy descriptions.

Mr. Creswell said that he would like the Board to create a responsible timeline and expectations for the use of the survey results before sending a survey out to the public. Mr. Creswell said that the department is particularly busy at this time of the year with the budget and holiday travel. Additionally, the timeline of December 16th for the CIP list to be submitted to the Engineering department would be difficult to achieve. Mr. Creswell, it would be more feasible to conduct a public survey with ample time to ensure quality development and results.

Mr. Hamilton said that he would like to move forward by surveying the public to take the guess work out of public will.

Mr. Leither said that his fear is associated with publishing a public survey without further development or descriptions would be unreliable results. Mr. Leither said that he does see the benefit of larger input from the Board's constituents. Mr. Leither recommended that the list be narrowed down to five options in which the public is asked to select the top three projects.

Mr. Etheridge said that he is worried about publicizing the list of projects and not being able to meet the expectations of the public due to funding.

Mr. Leither said that he agrees with Mr. Etheridge and would not like to let the public down with unrealistic expectations. Mr. Leither said that he appreciates it when the public takes the time to reach out to the Board regarding issues or future projects.

Mr. Sooter said that the majority of the projects on the survey list do not have funding, and staff would most likely have to be prepared to answer the public's reaction to the list.

Mr. Hamilton volunteered to help with the survey development. Mr. Hamilton said that he does not see how staff having to field an increase in questions for the public is a bad thing.

Mr. Creswell said that staff do not have any issues with addressing the public's questions. Mr. Creswell said that it difficult for staff to speak to the Boards intentions and project specifics; especially after the survey if the public does not see immediate results due to the time commitment and constraints of many of the projects. When situations related to Board topics or projects arise, staff are trained to reach out to Mr. Creswell or Mr. Uchytel to present a unified voice for the department.

Mr. Hamilton said that publishing the survey would provide a more robust reason behind which projects are selected and prioritized.

Ms. Smith said that she would like a public survey to go forward at least for the Harbor projects. Ms. Smith said that she would like to have a space in the survey were the public would be able to submit their own ideas for Harbor projects. Given the difference in the survey results from the Board and staff there could be other perspectives that are held by the public that are not reflected in the current survey results. Ms. Smith said that she would like the survey to be used as an informational tool not necessarily for the purpose of establishing the CIP list for the December 16th deadline.

Mr. Leither asked if the Salmon Derby survey was a one off or an annual survey.

Mr. Creswell said that in the past ten years there have been two Salmon Derby surveys.

Mr. Hamilton requested that the survey be a topic of discussion for the Operations and Planning Committee Meeting in December.

Mr. Etheridge said that the topic will be brought before the Operations and Planning Committee.

H. NEW BUSINESS

5. Resolution in Support of Increasing ADOT Harbor Facility Grant to \$7.5M

Mr. Creswell referenced page 18 and 19 of the agenda packet which contains a sample resolution in support of raising the Alaska Department of Transportation Harbor Facilities Grant to maximum funding to \$7.5 million. The grant program was established to help municipalities in recapitalization efforts after the State transfer Harbor ownership to local municipalities. The program is a matching grant program where half of the funds are matched by local municipalities. The grant is broken down into two sections, tier one and tier two. Each harbor facility is eligible for one-tier one grant over the course of the grant program. Tier two grants are unlimited for each facility. The current maximum match amount is \$5 million dollars, therefore facility projects that cost more than \$10 million dollars have to be funded locally along with the match amount. When the grant program was established in 2006 the maximum was set at \$5 million dollars and there has been standard inflation and Consumer Price Index increases. \$5 million dollars in 2006 is the equivalent to \$7.5 million dollars today.

Board Questions- none.

Public Comment- none.

Board Discussion/Action-none.

MOTION BY MR SOOTER TO RECOMMEND THE ASSEMBLY ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ADOT TO INCREASING THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF A HARBOR FACILITY GRANT FROM \$5M TO \$7.5M.

6. Resolution in Support of Full Funding of the FY26 ADOT Harbor Facility Grant Program

Mr. Creswell referenced page 20 and 21 of the agenda packet. This relates to the Alaska Department of Transportation Harbor Facilities Matching Grant Program. The sample resolution on page 20 of the agenda packet is for the City and Borough of Juneau to support full funding of the ADOT Harbor Facilities Grant Program. This resolution is made every year to show support of the grant program. The three communities that have projects under consideration for the FY26 program are Unalaska, Sitka, and Juneau.

Board Questions- none.

Public Comment- none.

Board Discussion/Action

MOTION BY MS. SMITH TO RECOMMEND THE ASSEMBLY ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE TO FULLY FUND THE FY26 ADOT HARBOR FACILITY GRANT.

I. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

7. Annual Letter to the Assembly

Mr. Creswell referred to page 22 of the agenda packet. This is an annual process required by city code that the Board submit an annual letter to the Assembly. The chart under item two contains blank numbers as the FY24 audit is still in progress. The fund balance at the end of FY24 for Harbors will be \$4.4 million dollars and the end fund balance for Docks will be \$3.7 million. The letter provides a summary of the marine passenger counts, the new fee schedule, and the projects that have been completed and that are currently on-going. The letter also highlights the UAS internship program and the North Douglas improvements.

Board Discussion/Public Comment

J. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER REPORTS

1. Operations Committee Meeting Report

Mr. Sooter reported: Mr. Sooter said that the CIP list was moved out of the Board retreat and that there was a small presentation on the status of the Wayside Park Dredging project.

2. Assembly Lands Committee Liaison Report- none.

3. South Douglas/West Juneau Liaison Report

Ms. Smith reported: Ms. Smith said that the main request from South Douglas/ West Juneau Meeting was that they would like a list of the current and recent projects at Douglas Harbor and uplands. Another request from the Committee is a masterplan for the Douglas Harbor Uplands, that will maintain sufficient parking for harbor users and enhance the uplands area. Ms. Smith asked if there is a masterplan associated specifically with Douglas Harbor.

Mr. Etheridge said that there are the original design plans for the harbor.

Mr. Sill said that there is an original design plan for the Douglas Uplands from 2000 that he would be able to provide.

Mr. Hamilton asked for clarification as to whether the committee was asking Docks and Harbors to create a masterplan or if they were asking for an existing plan.

Ms. Smith said that they were asking for an existing plan.

Mr. Etheridge said that the requests for development in the areas from the committee overlap with ADOT and Parks and Recreation jurisdiction.

4. Member Reports

K. PORT ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Sill reported:

- Wayside Park Dredging is under construction. The float has been removed and is being stored on the Ketchikan concrete breakwater that is located near Aurora Harbor. Dredging will begin on Monday; the dredging barge is currently stuck in Petersburg due to weather conditions.
- The Aurora Harbor Phase IV 75% design has been received from PND Engineering. The designs are currently being reviewed by Mr. Sill. The project will go out for bid in mid-January.

L. HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

Mr. Creswell reported:

- Planning for summer season 2025 to improve upon last year. All staff members are engaged in multiple projects related to the improvement of the department for the upcoming season. Policies procedures and regulations are being reviewed by staff to identify areas for functional improvement. The administrative staff has implemented a strategic work plan to address and achieve goals focused on modernizing the department.
- The Uninsured Vessel Disposal Surcharge will be going into effect January 1st, 2025. This impacts all assigned moorage patrons and those who pay monthly, semi-annual, or annual moorage charges that do not have insurance. A communication plan has been established to notify all patrons in early December.
- Preparation for the winter season is on-going. Ice melt is being used in the Harbors for ice patches. The staff have been trained in cold weather conditions.
- Two administrative assistant positions are open for hiring: one at Statter Harbor and one at the Port Directors Office. Interviews for those positions will begin next week.
- December 5th Christmas party, white elephant and ugly Christmas sweater dress code. Email to RSVP for attendance.

M. PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT- None.

N. ASSEMBLY LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Smith reported:

- The Assembly approved the regulation changes that were previously approved by the Docks and Harbors Board.
- The City Manager and the Port Director have been authorized to engage in a property land exchange with Reed Stoops for the National Guard Dock.
- The December 2nd Committee of the Whole Meeting will discuss the Tideland Lease of the Huna Totem Dock.

O. BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- a. Ops/Planning Committee Meeting - Wednesday December 11th, 2024.
- b. Board Meeting - Thursday December 19th, 2024.

P. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.

ADA accommodation available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, TDD 586-5351, e-mail: city.clerk@juneau.gov.