

ASSEMBLY PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 24, 2025 at 12:10 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar



<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/91849897300> or 1-669-900-6833 Webinar ID: 918 4989 7300

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wish to honor the indigenous 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!

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present In-Person: Chair Hughes-Skandijs; Ms. Hall

Members Present Via Zoom: Mr. Kelly; Mr. Smith

CBJ Staff Present: EPW Director Denise Koch, EPW Deputy Director Nate Rumsey, Contracts Administrator Greg Smith, Chief CIP Engineer John Bohan, Finance Director Angie Flick (Zoom), Municipal Attorney Emily Wright (Zoom), City Clerk Beth McEwen, Administrative Officer Breckan Hendricks, Meeting Clerk Kevin Allen.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Director Koch proposed moving the information item about the electric buses before the items for action. Agenda was approved.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. January 17, 2025 - Regular Meeting - Approved with no changes.

F. ITEMS FOR ACTION

2. Resolution for Phase 1 HESCO Barrier Project Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan

Director Koch voiced that this resolution is good news and very exciting, and it has been great that the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has been so flexible and creative in trying to use the State Revolving Loan funds to provide money towards the Glacial Lake Outburst Flooding (GLOF), Interim Solution for the Phase 1 Hesco Barrier. She explained that Engineering & Public Works is proceeding in a major project to put up HESCO Barriers to form a temporary levee that will be in place before the next GLOF, and the total estimated budget for the project is \$7.8 million. She stated that DEC offered funds that would be advantageous to the community, with 50% of the loan being forgivable. Director Koch thanked DEC for their efforts and said it was another example of the State helping CBJ. She asked the Committee for approval to move this forward to the Full Assembly for adoption, which will authorize the manager to apply for and execute the loan agreement.

Mr. Smith echoed the thanks and acknowledgment of the collaborative and creative efforts between the State DEC, and CBJ. He asked for confirmation that even without the forgivable portion of the loan, it still has lower rates than a central treasury loan.

Director Koch answered that is correct. She added that they fully anticipate that after the Assembly goes through the needed steps, DEC has the money and are ready to disperse that loan.

Mr. Kelly asked what their intention would be in dividing up the loan forgiveness if they do get 50% of the loan forgiven, with the 60/40 split between the CBJ and LID.

Chair Hughes-Skandijs voiced that is something they would have to determine.

Director Koch added that is a decision that the Assembly would have to make.

Mr. Kelly inquired when they would know that they have the 50% loan forgiveness.

Director Koch responded that is why they want to move this forward as quickly as possible, as she thinks DEC will issue the loan to them as soon as the process is done and the Assembly finalizes it.

Chair Hughes-Skandijs commented that the SRF Loan Program does great things across the state, and she appreciates their creativity and help to CBJ.

Mr. Smith moved that the Public Works and Facilities Committee forward a resolution to the Full Assembly for adoption, authorizing the City Manager to apply to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for a loan not to exceed \$7,830,000 from the SRF for the Juneau Barrier Phase 1 Project and to execute the loan agreement. Mr. Kelly objected.

Mr. Kelly made an amendment. He moved that when the resolution is forwarded to the Assembly, that the resolution include a provision stating that should we attain the 50% loan forgiveness, that this will be distributed equally between the 60% obligation of the City and the 40% obligation of the Local Improvement District. Mr. Smith and Ms. Hall objected.

Mr. Smith stated that he was trying to determine if that would be the right piece of legislation to include that, and had concerns about outstanding questions of the total project cost, so he felt it was early to say where the money should go.

Ms. Hall echoed Mr. Smith's objection, stating it seemed there is still potential other funding to come into this, and this decision should be made once they know all the funding in place for the project.

Mr. Kelly responded he just wanted to secure something early, but agreed to withdraw his amendment and motion.

The original motion passed.

3. Juneau International Airport (JIA) Construction Projects Appropriations

Director Koch explained the objective of the memo is to let PWFC know about the various projects they are working on and to get approval to move forward on projects as the funding sources come through.

Patty Wahto, Airport Manager, stated that every year, they have projects related to federal funding they receive from the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration), and this year, they have a combination of Airport Improvement Program Entitlements and Discretionary Funds and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Bill. She discussed some of those projects, which included a wetland water rescue vehicle, an ARFF (aircraft rescue firefighting) truck that requires replacement, shoulder grading, the extension of the MALSR Approach Lighting System, and repair to the Mendenhall River embankment from last year's flooding. She talked about the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) 10 which is the 10th application to impose/use at the airport. These fees go on airline tickets that assist with local match of their projects or things that are federally eligible but not AIP ([Federal Aviation Administration] Airport Improvement Program) eligible.

Mr. Smith asked if the lighting across the river in the airport embankment area is holding up okay.

Ms. Wahto responded that the approach lighting is FAA owned and not on airport property, so that does not fall into their responsibility, but they have forwarded concerns they have received on to the FAA to make sure they look at that on a regular basis. She added that they also have the tech ops people that oversee that lighting on both sides and monitor on a regular basis.

Ms. Hall asked if any of the funding is jeopardized by what is happening at the federal level.

Ms. Wahto answered that if it is bipartisan infrastructure law, it is not affected, as that funding was already appropriated, and the FAA regional people still want all the grants put into motion. She said they did not know the answer to anything using entitlement funds at this time, but they are still urging people to continue to plan and send in applications. She added that they are putting extended lengths of time on all bids and RFPs just in case it is held up.

Chair Hughes-Skandijs asked if the Passenger Facility Fees apply to smaller companies such as Alaska Seaplanes and Ward Air.

Ms. Wahto answered no, that they are independent fees that are collected by the federal government and are federally authorized, and Alaska has a waiver for anyone under 60 seats to not have to impose those fees.

Mr. Kelly moved that the Public Works and Facilities Committee recommend the projects outline on Item 3 of today's agenda to the Assembly for appropriation of the outline funds and in anticipation of grants from the FAA and local match funding sources. Motion passed.

4. Water Code Amendment - Removal of Thawing Services to Reflect Current Practices (CJIC 75.01.210)

Director Koch reported that this is a housekeeping update, as it has been over a decade since CBJ has provided these services, and they want the code to reflect that.

Ms. Hall moved that the Public Works and Facilities Committee forward these revisions to CJIC 75.01.210 and other miscellaneous charges be forwarded to the Full Assembly for approval.

Motion passed.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

5. Battery Electric Bus Update

Director Koch gave an update on the electric buses. She reported that things are going much better and they are very optimistic. She noted that they received the last GILLIG electric bus in December 2024, and battery electric technology continues to evolve and improve. She stated that they got to try the buses during the recent cold snap, which is the most challenging situation for the buses, and they performed really well, with the exception of a few minor hiccups to work through. She added that they are getting positive feedback from both the drivers and riders on the buses.

Chair Hughes-Skandijs asked what the current status is with the delay in charging infrastructure grant agreements.

Director Koch responded that the delays they had in executing the grant agreements for the charging infrastructure happened before the change of federal administration, so they were not related to recent Trump administration actions or freezes. She said they have grant agreements in place for the electric buses and for charging and fueling infrastructure, and will proceed as if the federal government will honor those agreements and they will be reimbursed. She added that there is more uncertainty about new notices of funding opportunities for low and no emission buses and grants in the future, as Trump has voiced that electric vehicles are not a priority for the administration.

Mr. Kelly pointed out that under Assembly goals, it listed an indefinite pause on grants for the EV charging infrastructure. He asked for clarification on that.

Director Koch explained that is a different grant on installing, charging, and fueling infrastructure that is aimed towards private vehicles, and she discussed the steps in getting those grants. She noted that they received notice that their application won a charging and fueling infrastructure grant in early January, but there was not a grant agreement yet before the administration changed. That is now paused, and there are low expectations that they will get a grant agreement for that now.

H. PWFC 2025 ASSEMBLY GOALS

6. PWFC Milestones

Director Koch explained that they were waiting for the Assembly to finalize their goals before reinserting them as a regular part of the PWFC packet.

Regarding Item 2(c), the Juneau North Douglas Crossing (JNDC), the last and final stakeholder meeting will be on March 4th.

For item 5(a), which focuses on zero waste and waste reduction plans, the next step will be to present a waste disposal options study to the PWFC. This study will provide the Assembly with high-level cost estimates for different waste disposal options moving forward.

Director Koch also mentioned that contractors working with the local landfill reported that Waste Management, the private contractor for the landfill, had changed some of their requirements for accepting construction and demolition debris due to asbestos concerns. She noted that Waste Management is in negotiations with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regarding this issue as part of the Waste Management's permit.

Director Koch reached out to Waste Management earlier that day to get written information on the current policies. Although they didn't have details at that time, and could not provide current policies, Waste Management hoped to provide the information soon and mentioned they expect to implement stricter long-term policies for handling construction and demolition waste due to the asbestos concerns.

Mr. Kelly commented that last week, he requested a tour of the dump because he had questions about them not knowing how much more capacity we have, and the district manager gave him a tour and helped clarify and explain some things and was open to any other Assembly members wanting a tour.

In regard to 5(c), Chair Hughes-Skandijis asked if they have a sense of how many grants or projects are in play right now that have been paused or that they expect will be affected by changing federal priorities.

Director Koch responded that they will have the big list of all the grants at the next meeting. She noted that she has low expectations that there will be any notices of funding opportunities for more electric buses or charging and fueling infrastructure.

I. CONTRACTS DIVISION ACTIVITY REPORT

7. January 23, 2025, to February 14, 2025

J. NEXT MEETING DATE

8. March 17, 2025 @ 12:10 PM

K. ADJOURNMENT

ADA accommodations 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.