

**City and Borough of Juneau Assembly  
Committee of the Whole  
June 12, 2000, 5:00 pm., Chambers**

**I. Call to Order**

Deputy Mayor MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**II. Roll Call**

Present: Ken Koelsch, John MacKinnon, Cathy Munoz, Frankie Pillifant, Jim Powell

Absent: Dennis Egan, Don Etheridge, Tom Garrett, Dwight Perkins

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Cathy Munoz moved to approve the Committee of the Whole minutes of May 31, 2000. The minutes were passed without objection.

**IV. Discussion Items**

Trails Working Group Report

Cathy Munoz made a presentation for the Trails Working Group (TWG), referring to the documents in the packet, which included a cover letter to Mayor Egan and the Assembly from Ms. Munoz dated June 8, 2000, meeting minutes of a May 23, 2000 "Commercial Use of Trails Public Meeting," a summary of the results of the survey taken by the TWG regarding commercial use of trails in Juneau, the comments received within the survey and a sample of the survey document. Ms. Munoz thanked the TWG for the hard work over the winter, and gave a special thank you to Pete Griffin, Cindy Lavitikas, Ken Leghorn, Bob Janes, Sandy Warner, Kim Kiefer, Bob Grochow, Gary Mendevil, Bill Gary, Ron Schonenbach, and Alice Rarig.

James King, Executive Director of Trail Mix, said that when Mayor Egan wrote a letter to Trail Mix asking them to respond to the concerns about commercial use of public trails, they formed a working group to determine what the problem was and how to address it. They determined that the problem was "increasing commercial use of public trails is diminishing the experience of non-commercial users with no areawide review of the commercial impacts and commercial users have not areawide guidance for commercial use of trails." They set a mission statement, goals, and met twice a month over the fall, winter and spring. They performed a city wide survey of community sentiment regarding commercial use of public trails.

Alice Rarig, the President of Trail Mix, presented the survey results. Trail Mix did a city wide mailing to inventory the trails and how people felt about those trails in regard to commercial use. 750 surveys were returned, and the committee received approximately 30-40 letters. The TWG held a public meeting on May 6, 2000 on the subject. Results of the survey showed that the public is more receptive to small groups using the trails than large groups, and that the least objections were to travel on trails already experiencing commercial use. Neighborhood concerns are that there is a lack of infrastructure for the hikers, including restrooms, and parking. The TWG feels strongly that there should be a moratorium on use of the Granite Creek Trail until problems with the trail are resolved.

Ken Leghorn, owner of Alaska Discovery, participated in the TWG, and said that 18 trails were deemed appropriate for commercial use. Twin Lakes is excluded. There is room for expansion on all trails, and there are possibilities to create new trails. He felt the survey results were generally supportive of commercial use on trails and didn't see much anti-tourism sentiment, but did see people wanting some limits placed on trail use. He want the industry to know that there were some who expressed that their personal level of tolerance had been reached. Smuggler's beach was determined as an area NOT conducive to commercial tourism. He said that this type of advanced planning needs to be done in Juneau and it gives industry an idea as to where there is room for expansion.

James King said that there are five trails listed without any conclusion and the TWG has agreed to reconvene this fall to discuss those five. Other issues to discuss are group sizes, number of groups, days and times of use. He recommends that the Juneau Trails Plan be implemented in 2001 and that the issue needs to be revisited every three years. He would like to see the information gathered put onto a web site, to let people know when and where commercial use of trails is happening. He said that many trails are hitting their threshold of commercial use and would like to see new trails created, possibly with funds from the commercial passenger fee. He thanked all the volunteers on the committee.

Ms. Munoz also thanked Jack Moseby for facilitating, Brad Newfelt for his work on the survey and Elma Bomtragen for her work recording minutes.

Mr. MacKinnon asked Mr. King where new trails should be. Mr. King referred to the upper end of Perseverance Trail, improvements there could move people out of Granite Creek. Mr. King would like to have more public process on location of new trails. Mr. MacKinnon said that money for trail maintenance is included as an item on the passenger fee proceeds schedule.

#### Status of Tourism Advisory Committee

Mr. MacKinnon reported that the TAC Chair Kathleen Morse has resigned and feels that the PPC is duplicating the TAC's efforts and feels it may be time to disband the committee. Rod Swope, TAC member, also sent a letter earlier in the year expressing his frustrations with the working of the TAC. Mr. MacKinnon opened the meeting up for assembly comment and comments from the members of the TAC present.

Mr. Powell said that the TAC has made significant accomplishments, but the PPC is now able to shine a bright light on tourism issues at the assembly level, and considering the letters of Ms. Morse and Mr. Swope, recommends repeal of Resolution No. 2020 which created the TAC. Mr. Powell thanked the members for their work over the past years.

Kim Metcalfe Helmar, member of the TAC, said that this discussion has come with short notice and said that disbanding the TAC has not discussed with members of the board. She thinks that this is poor public process and the issue has been political from the start. She said that the TAC has been swinging politically away from pro industry and feels that there is a minority view that is not being heard and the conflict on the committee reflects the conflict in the community. She said the assembly may not agree with her, but there are members of the public who do, and to disband a committee because of disagreements is not right.

Ms. Pillifant asked Ms. Helmar if there was a way for the TAC to resolve the differences and work on issues. Kim said that the tourism flightseeing issue was taken away from the TAC. The TAC is a place that allows public testimony, and a place for discussion of tourism issues. PPC discusses issues in addition to tourism. Ms. Helmar said that staff has been taken away from the TAC, and that the TAC had planned to do a long range areawide tourism plan. Ms. Helmar compared the working of the Trails Working Group as a good example of a working committee. She feels there is a way that the group can work together.

Mr. Powell said that the TAC has not produced the work that the assembly has asked of it, and that the PPC is a more direct way to get action taken with the assembly. He wants work to move forward under the direction of the PPC.

Kirby Day said that he and Donna Pierce are the only two "survivors" of the original committee set up by Mayor Mallott. He said that the group was never set up as a pro-tourism group. He said that on a nine member committee there were never more than about three industry members on the committee. He said the TWG/TAC have tackled several issues, including tour operators in the Pioneer Avenue residential area, commercial use of trails, the Tourism Hotline to gauge public sentiment, voluntary compliance with tour operators and flightseeing tours. The number one issue has been and still is downtown congestion. Many bus trips have been eliminated in congested areas, and more will follow next year. The TAC has done statistically valid research, has run the hotline and instituted voluntary compliance, which he think works for the most part in a positive manner. He said there is no way for the TAC to accomplish the assembly's goals, as there is no staff and the members have limited time, and he feels the staffing issue is a result of the disfunctionality of the committee. There has not been a consistent assembly member liaison assigned since Rosemary Hagevig left office. He said he doesn't have an opinion as to whether or not the committee should be disbanded but feels the TAC has been successful in many areas.

Ms. Pilifant asked for information on tourism studies produced by the TWG/TAC. She said that the PPC did not appoint an assemblymember liaison as they were going to give the TAC time to work things out, however, there have been no meetings for quite some time.

Ms. Munoz said that the voluntary compliance program has been successful, and feels there has been much less noise this summer than in the past. Mr. Day said that voluntary compliance has heightened awareness of problems and solutions and the responsible operators are working hard to reduce impacts. Ms. Munoz asks that the voluntary compliance program stays in place.

Mr. Powell made a motion to move consideration of Resolution 2020 to the full assembly for consideration as a new resolution to repeal the establishment of the TAC. There was no objection to the motion.

Mr. MacKinnon acknowledged Sandy Warner as a member of the TAC. She said her primary concern about disestablishing the TAC that there needs to be a forum for public comment about tourism. Ms. Warner said that TAC can continue to work, but not without assembly and staff support.

#### Fall Ballot Issues

Mr. MacKinnon said that the ballot propositions are starting to stack up, and the deadline hasn't been reached yet.

Mr. Powell supports the funding of the Treadwell Ice Arena and wants to discuss getting an item on the ballot to complete the funding for construction, using the committee's funds they have raised in addition and get the facility done. Craig Duncan figured that only three months of the 1% tax would be needed. Mr. Powell would like to have the Ice Arena as a separate item on the fall ballot.

Mr. MacKinnon said that this would be 1% for 5 years, with 4 years of that revenue going to match Bartlett funds for their hospital expansion project, The other year will take care of revenue to pay back general obligation bonds for \$7 million dollars of school district major maintenance projects. He said the confusion comes from the year of tax for the school would generate approximately \$5.5 million, but the school district only needs to pay back \$3 million on the bonds due to state reimbursement, so there are a couple million dollars left in revenue, in actuality, about \$5 million according to Craig Duncan's calculations. Mr. MacKinnon said that Mr. Powell is asking that a portion of this excess be used for the ice arena, and it be a separate question on the ballot.

Mr. Koelsch said that there are several projects, including the Diamond Park recreation center and we are coming off a couple years of recreation needs. He feels that the assembly hasn't focused on the needs at the current high school, and that when there are two high schools, there needs to be some equity between them. He discussed the large

area of district wide storage under the school that is counted against the school district in money calculations. The area needs to be used again for parking. Also the auditorium has some major repairs that need to be made. It is a community facility and the city needs to take better care of it. Feels that there should be some more outdoor space in the area and referred to the Marine Highway Building area. He said that central services at the school such as pupil services, counseling and administration needs to be centrally located and reconfigured. He said he is not against the ice rink, but would like to know if there are any funds left in Prop 3 money to take the ice rink further.

John Stone of the CBJ Engineering Department said that it appears that there will probably be an excess of \$100,000 in the Prop 3 projects, but all the taxes have not been collected at this time and not all of the projects have been completed. Mr. Koelsch asked about Passenger Fee Funds, and Mr. Stone said that those funds could be substituted for sales tax funds for the project, freeing up some extra sales tax funds. Mr. Koelsch said he would be happy to fund the ice arena project to more than \$250,000 if funds could be found.

Mr. MacKinnon agreed that the JDHS rehab may be underfunded and has spoken with Joe Mueller about school storage needs and parking areas. There is \$1 million for the Marine Highway site which includes demolition. There is storage space below the auxiliary gym that stores surplus "junk" which has been stored for a long time, that takes up about 8,300 sf in area. Mr. Mueller's and Minch Ritter's CAD figures can determine actual areas. It doesn't all count for classroom space, some is considered open storage, 25%. The net effect is there is the equivalent of 4,476 sf in the school district's inventory, which hurts us as it makes the capacity of the school larger than it really is, and is included in the square footage per student calculation without being actual useable space. If the school gets some warehouse space to get the junk out of there and open the area for needed parking (approximately 20 stalls), it reduces the capacity of the school down to below 1200 students, which is a number used in calculations by DOE. It takes square feet out of the space inventory, which means that the school can get more reimbursement from the state when the new high school gets on the list or when its time to renovate the existing high school. It is not an insignificant amount of money, but almost 4500 sf at \$250 per sf which is over \$1.1 million dollars in additional reimbursement. It more accurately reflects the crowding at the high school. Mr. MacKinnon said that the city also has a need for record storage space. He said that part of the sales tax proposition should include funds for school/city storage space.

Ms. Pillifant asked clarification of issues. Mr. Koelsch said that Craig Duncan estimates \$5.7 million in surplus revenues from the 1% sales tax and that there should be a discussion with the school district on storage, the auditorium, the Marine Highway Area, take a look at moving the administrative offices, and these items should be part of the discussion in addition to the ice rink, and Diamond Park. Mr. MacKinnon said that the tax should either be reduced or the assembly should identify specific projects.

Ms. Pillifant supports discussion on the school issues and is very supportive of seeing the ice arena project completed, which would not take up all the surplus revenues, but could be done in addition to other projects. She said that Bartlett is healthy and the schools are in need, and wonders if it is worth putting the schools with the ice rink, vs. putting the school with the hospital?

Mr. Powell prefers that we separate the issues as much as possible. Mr. Koelsch thinks there is strength in keeping the 1% tax issues together to avoid ballot fatigue. Mr. MacKinnon said that with the ice rink a separate issue there are up to 6 ballot propositions, including: Prop 1 3% temporary sales tax, Prop 2 1% tax for Bartlett and the school district for 5 years, Prop 3 is GO Bond for school district major maintenance, Prop 4 is Charter Commission question, Prop 5 is Charter Amendment for Public Notice Requirements, and Prop 6 is Treadwell arena, and growing weekly.

Dave Palmer said that people vote on the length of time on taxes, and as it sits now, there are fairly clean dates and numbers for the items. He suggested that the ballot can generally discuss the arena, storage and school improvements, but we should sit down with school and arena people to get more accurate estimates of the numbers. If the assembly can agree on the concept that some money will go to the three projects and include them in the 1% tax language, he prefers to have fewer questions presented to the voters.

Donna Pierce suggested waiting until the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in July to present the ballot questions to the assembly.

Mr. MacKinnon asked Gary Bader if he had any comments he wanted to make about the discussion at the meeting. Mr. Bader said that he is working with Craig Duncan on procurement procedures and that there are difficult disposal procedures to follow.

Mr. MacKinnon asked the staff to come back with a package discussion the ballot issues. There was general consensus to get all the 1% sales tax issues into one question.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

---

Laurie Sica, Municipal Clerk

---

Date Approved

I:\Minutes.doc wp\assembly\minutes\assembly\COW\200006-12 COW