



Glacier Valley Rotary Club
P.O. Box 34418
Juneau, AK 99803

August 17, 2011

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Juneau International
Airport

Jerry Godkin, Chair
Juneau International Airport Board of Directors
and Jeannie Johnson, Airport Manager
1873 Shell Simmons Dr., Ste. 200
Juneau, Ak 99801

Re: Use of the Alaska Room – Juneau Glacier Valley Rotary Club

Dear Jerry,

This letter is directed to both you and the entire Juneau Airport Board by way of providing some history and other background information as the board reached a point of making decisions on the use of the new "Alaska Room". Needless to say, access and cost for the weekly use of the new room is of great interest to our club, which has made its home at the airport for many years. I would like to give you a short overview on our Rotary club, take you back to the days of the Taku Room, and describe our involvement in the new Alaska room.

Juneau Glacier Valley Rotary Club was formed in 1964 currently has about 65 members. The very nature of Rotary is that each member represents the top of their respective business or profession, typically being the owner or primary manager of the company. In Glacier Valley Rotary's case, our members range from the University of Alaska Southeast, the Juneau School District Administration, insurance, banking, and contracting, medical, real estate, on to a variety of privately owned and operated businesses. Rotary's motto is "Service Above Self", and the club sponsors many worthwhile events, provides scholarships to graduating seniors and volunteers countless hours over the course of a year.

Seeking a home: By virtue of the club's name, holding our weekly meetings in the "the valley" has always been a priority. When the club was first formed, it was so small that members met at tables in the old Glacier Restaurant overlooking the runway. As membership grew they moved into a small meeting room off the restaurant. However, as the club grew even more we were forced to seek a larger meeting space, and for a number of years we were very nomadic as we looked for a permanent location.

Following the first major expansion of the Juneau International Airport, there was a large unfinished space on the second floor, designed with the future in mind. It sat vacant and unused. It had an unfinished concrete floor, no window coverings, open ceiling and no other amenities. Glacier Valley Rotary approached the airport to determine if we could use the room. We agreed to pay for and provide all the tables and chairs, and eventually assisted with the cost of window coverings for part of the room. In exchange for our investment in furniture, we were allowed to use the room for no additional charge. The "Taku" room was born, and soon other groups,

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looking for larger meeting space in the valley, found this room to be perfect to hold a variety of receptions and other events. There was clearly a community need.

Move to the Aurora Room: However, the Taku Room was eventually closed and the space leased to the FAA, clearly an opportunity to have the space generate revenue. Rotary was moved to another vacant space on the ground floor of the old end of the airport. As part of that move, the airport remodeled the room and ensured that a room was still available for a variety of events. Rotary continued to provide the tables (we purchased the 8-foot white tables in the Aurora room in 1992), and eventually paid for the installation of an overhead projector for its meetings, making sure it was available to anyone using the room. We have always tried to maintain a spirit of cooperation and collaboration with the airport staff and with other users of the room and hope that spirit continues.

Latest remodel of the airport: The Rotary club's growth pressured the capacity of the Aurora room and the topic of finding larger space was back on the table. But consistent access, parking and catering were the positive attributes of the location that kept us in place. However, the moment there was an indication that a new expansion would take place; Rotary started a dialogue with the management of the airport (Dave Palmer) to lobby for the return of the "Taku Room" to accommodate larger groups, and provide for the club's weekly meetings. Members of the Rotary club, along with other community members, testified as to the need for this community room and encouraged it's inclusion in the final design of the remodel.

Consistent throughout this process, was Glacier Valley Rotary's expectation that the club would have access to any new room with an arrangement that mirrored the same level of fairness and cooperation as had been in place for more that twenty years. The club waited patiently for the remodel to be complete, and the space sorted out. As the club brought Rotary year 2010 to a close, the board made a decision to purchase an expensive but extremely functional podium to accommodate today's technology, in anticipation of moving into the new room very soon. The club had also offered to provide a new overhead projector for use in the room. The only other special need that Rotary has is for some type of storage closet for the various trappings of a weekly meeting (banners, badges, bell, awards etc.)

Current concerns: During the last several months as we checked on the status of moving in, the club became aware that the airport board was considering a change in how the new room would be managed and priced. In a recent meeting with the airport manager, it became very apparent that the room would be managed much like the rooms at Centennial Hall, and would be treated as a source of revenue for the airport, and in turn holding down operating costs. Certainly no one could disagree with that concept.

While we respect the need for additional revenue, we also must point out that there are no weekly meetings being held at Centennial Hall, primarily due to cost. For an organization like ours that meets weekly, the rate for use of the space would have to be very accommodating considering the consistent revenue versus the inconsistent use for one-off events. Rotary is held in high regard world-wide and posting a bronze plaque stating "Rotary meets here" is an asset to wherever the location happens to be.

ATTACHMENT #5

We appreciate you taking the time to read this. We also ask that the Juneau Glacier Valley Rotary Club be given special consideration for the use of the new Alaska Room, different that what might prove to be the "retail" rate. The work done by our membership has an impact on this community, our long history with the airport, and our commitment to working with the needs of the airport, should be taken into consideration as you set policies for the management and use of this room. We also hope to begin using the space soon, and don't understand the long delay in the public being able to use the room that the public advocated for throughout the design process.

We stand ready to discuss a fair arrangement for both sides.

Respectfully



Chris Letterman, President
Juneau Glacier Valley Rotary