

**VISITOR INDUSTRY TASK FORCE  
THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA**

November 5, 2019 12:05 PM  
City Hall, Conference Room 224

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Meeting called to order by Chair Triem at 12:05 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Carole Triem, Assemblymember Wade Bryson, Bobbie Meszaros, Holly Johnson, Alida Bus, Meilani Schijvens, Paula Terrel (telephonically) and Dan Blanchard (telephonically)

Members Absent: Vice Chair Craig Dahl and Kirby Day

Others Present: Deputy Municipal Clerk, Diane Cathcart, City Manager Rorie Watt, City Attorney, Rob Palmer, Mayor Beth Weldon, Assemblymembers Loren Jones, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs and Greg Smith, Port Director Carl Uchytel, Planning Manager Alexandra Pierce, P&R Deputy Director Michele Elfers and 25+ members of the public.

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Agenda approved as presented

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

None

**IV. AGENDA TOPICS**

**a. Brief Discussion on Public Comment**

Chair Triem recommended that members of the public wishing to submit public comment to the Task Force do so via [city.clerk@juneau.org](mailto:city.clerk@juneau.org) email. The Clerk's Office will print off those comments and add them to the VITF binders under the Public Comments Tab. Public Comments will also be posted to the Visitor Industry Task Force webpage <https://beta.juneau.org/assembly/visitor-industry-task-force> which can be accessed from a link on the home page under Current Issues. Ms. Triem also noted the Task Force will look at setting meetings after the first of the year specifically to take public comment and allow citizens to testify in person, until then anyone is welcome to submit comments via email or regular mail. Mr. Watt mentioned that any public comment regarding visitor industry issues that are sent to the Assembly or him will also be given to the Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force is to advise the Assembly and members need to see everything that is being sent in. All public comment will be collected and submitted to the Assembly with the final work product.

**b. Juneau in the Region, where do we fit? What do we know about the future?**

Mr. Watt gave a slide and verbal presentation on the cruise industry in Juneau with an emphasis on where does Juneau fit within the region and how does Juneau look to

outside entities. One example is the Mental Health Trust Land along the waterfront that was just purchased by Norwegian Cruise lines for \$20 million. Slides included graphs on growth on number of cruise passengers from 1970-2019 along with a 50% increase in passengers from 2010-2019 from 875,000 to 1.31 million. Slides also included maps showing property ownership along the waterfront and tidelands, what a typical week with visitation numbers looks like, how the cruise ships have increased in size, Port of Seattle cruise ship passenger growth and how Juneau fits within the ports of call throughout southeast. Juneau has changed and updated its waterfront through the 16B project to accommodate the larger ships coming into port. Mr. Watt stated it was important to think of ourselves as part of that regional system; cruise ships aren't just coming to Juneau they are originating in Seattle or Vancouver and stopping in other Southeast ports other than Juneau. The Port of Seattle's growth is driving Southeast's growth and Juneau is a desired location.

Mr. Watt then walked the Task Force through John Brinkley's slide show that discussed how the cruise ship industry is contributing to local economies, touched on the CLIA lawsuit, how it was resolved and highlighted Skagway greeting its one millionth passenger.

After the presentation by Mr. Watt, Chair Triem opened up the time to questions of the Task Force. Mr. Drew Greene with Cruiseline Agencies was in the audience and invited to the table to answer some questions of the Task Force.

Mr. Bryson asked if Skagway was mirroring Juneau's peaks; Mr. Greene mentioned that Juneau tends to be busier in the middle of the week. Visitors' desire to have week-long vacations that start and end on the weekends influences which days of the week see more cruise ships in Juneau. Ms. Johnson asked how many people are here on Tuesdays. Mr. Greene stated that 14,000 passengers can come through port on Tuesday's but they are "hot-berthing" so not all 14,000 are here at the same time. Ms. Schijvens asked what CBJ is telling Norwegian Cruise Lines. Mr. Watt said the message of "go slow" and where do we want to go as a community. The overwhelming comments when creating the waterfront plan was 67% responding were "unsupportive" or "very unsupportive" of a dock at the sub-port; and very supportive of the seawalk.

**c. Brief Explanation of the complexities of ship berth scheduling CLAA Schedule**  
<http://claalaska.com>

Ms. Bus asked how difficult it would be to shift some of those high capacity days. Mr. Greene said it would be difficult to sell some of the large cruises mid-week, there is not the same demand. Mr. Blanchard asked what the cross-gulf traffic looks like and perhaps looking at more roundtrips in state. Chair Triem wondered with the ships getting bigger how are we dealing with that and not just the number of ships in port but also the size of those ships. Mr. Watt said there is a broad range of ideas of what is a small ship; Docks and Harbors is working small cruise ship berth planning.

Ms. Terrel commented that Juneau used to have a “free-ship” day such as Saturdays. She asked what has changed within the system that we no longer have those and is it possible to revisit that as a possibility. Mr. Watt stated that while Juneau did have some free days during the 1990’s what has changed is demand and dock ownership. Two docks are owned by CBJ and two are owned by private entities. The cruise ship companies figure out their scheduled based on consumer demand.

**d. Visitor Industry Task Force Discussion**

Ms. Terrel stated that all these presentations are good but it was important to look at a mission statement. She would like to have a mission statement that takes the Task Force into the guidelines they are tasked with.

The Task Force liked the mission statement that Ms. Terrel said: *Support a viable tourism industry that enhances quality of life.*

Chair Triem stated that if Ms. Terrel wished to flesh the mission statement out a bit to create a full sentence she could bring that to the next meeting. Chair Triem also noted that the Task Force members were on board with the statement pretty much as stated.

**e. Next Meeting – Potential reschedule from 11/19 to 11/26**

With several members gone during mid to late November for Alaska Municipal League and the holidays, it was decided the next meeting of the Visitor Industry Task Force would be Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 12:05 p.m. in the Assembly Chambers.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Task Force, meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.