



Gastineau Guiding
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April 23, 2020

To the Juneau Economic Stabilization Task Force:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the impact that this crisis has had on the business community. As we inch closer to the possible reality of a full year with no income for our business, all while chasing after quickly evaporating Federal Coronavirus relief funds, we look now to the City for creative solutions on how we can bolster critical long term industries like tourism.

With respect to your time, I will attempt to summarize succinctly how we feel CBJ could best support the business community now:

1. Refund, Reduce or Eliminate Permit Fees – As of March 2020, our business had already paid over \$1000 to CBJ Parks & Rec for permits we are now unable to use; additionally, we have documented before such illogical policies as a per seat per bus permit fee for both Auke Bay and Statter Harbor (meaning we are paying for our buses to be in two places at once). We suggest eliminating all CBJ fees for any semblance of a 2020 season, and, in 2021, at the very least deferring payment until July or end of season.
2. Reduce or Eliminate Real Property and/or Business Personal Property Taxes – Besides salaried employees, these are our highest fixed costs. Temporary reprieve, and not an increase, would be the single most positive impact for our business. In the case of a business like ours, who could not have any income until May 2021, it would also be the biggest assistance in keeping our salaried employees on through a no-work year.
3. Expansion of Loan Program – We applaud the City's decision to administer loans through JEDC. With the Federal Loans drying up so rapidly, we would support an expansion of the program, with very low or no interest terms.

For tourism to succeed and bring critical dollars back into our community, the City needs to acknowledge that most tourism business owners will have no significant income until May 2021. It is also worth noting that many of our local tour businesses like Gastineau Guiding, who sell tours through the cruise lines, **typically don't receive payment for services rendered until 6-8 weeks after the tour date**. July 2021 could very well be the first time we are able to support the cost of operating our business without dipping into loaned capital. Please keep this in mind as you approach creating a business fee schedule moving forward.

Sincerely,

Sierra Gadaire
General Manager, Gastineau Guiding Company