

Special Ketchikan City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Williams at 7:01 p.m., November 10, 2011, with the following members present: Sam Bergeron, Dick Coose, Kj Harris, Matthew Olsen, Robert Sivertsen and Marty West. One councilmember seat was vacant.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all persons in the Chambers.

Staff present were Assistant Manager Martin, City Attorney Seaver, Museum Director Naab, Port and Harbors Director Corporon, Acting Police Chief Dossett, Public Works Director Allen and City Clerk Suiter.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Mayor Williams said there was some information on the new public library crane placement on the table.

### **PERSONS TO BE HEARD**

Steve McDonald said he is in favor of putting the Visitors Building back on the dock the way it is now. He reiterated the functions the facility serves, and he spoke against taking it apart and putting it back together. He expressed concern for handicapped access, feeling that dropping the building down three to four feet to the level of the street would help that issue.

Stephen Reeve said keeping some of the visitor services on the dock is imperative, but he felt the Visitors Bureau administrative functions could be located elsewhere and suggested the Yates Building. He provided a handout of the Yates Building depicting it as a hospital and the Alaska Sportsman business. He noted there are volunteers who can provide much information on the building should it be considered for this purpose.

Joey Wharton, speaking as chair of the Ketchikan Visitors Bureau Board, introduced board members present in the audience and noted they are available to answer questions. He said the Board supports Alternative 1, which translated into keeping the operations together, the overhead down and provided a central location. He noted they support the two-story option, with no down sizing. He explained they want to stay on the dock, retain ownership of the building, enter into a long-term lease, and obtain assistance from the City in moving and modifying the building to its new location. He answered questions from the Council.

Terry Wanzer felt the booths that offer tours are needed near where they are operating now. He reminded the Council of the Preserve America designation, and spoke to preserving our historic structures and making use of them.

Michael Naab urged the Council to consider the costs to taxpayers as well as the possibility of spending less when making their decision. He agreed the tour sales and the

information capability should be on the dock, but he didn't feel the administrative function needed to be there. He felt \$1.3 million is money that doesn't necessarily need to be spent when there are other options. He answered questions from the Council.

Katie Montgomery notified the Council that the Ketchikan Visitors Bureau has never come to the Council and asked for \$1.3 million, but provided an appraisal of the building.

John Stewart expressed support for locating the Visitors Bureau administrative offices in the Yates Building.

Nicolle Church said she has a real passion and concern about our visitors center, stating there is a real chance to look at what we want to present to visitors. She felt the Yates building put out a great message about Ketchikan, and if the Council felt the Visitors Bureau administrative offices are not needed on the dock there are many who would assist.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Phase Two of the Berths I and II Replacement Project – Disposition of the Ketchikan Visitors Bureau Building**

Moved by Coose, seconded by Bergeron the City Council direct the city manager to take action to implement Alternative No. 5, the removal of all KVB buildings from the dock and construction of a new replacement structure housing just restrooms, visitor information and tour sales areas.

Councilmember Sivertsen reminded the City owns neither the Yates Building nor the Ketchikan Visitors Bureau. He reminded there is a cost to tearing down the building in the way of disposal fees, and even after the City invests nearly \$1 million the KVB still retains ownership.

Councilmember Olsen said he understands further economic development in town, but he is having a hard time seeing how the City is being asked to pay for the location/relocation of the Visitors Building.

Patti Mackey, Executive Director and CEO of the Visitors Bureau, said there will be a lot of questions that need to be answered no matter what alternative is chosen. She pointed out the main thing they need to know is whether they are coming back to the dock when it is done, and if so whether it is a building the KVB will own or the City will own.

Councilmember Bergeron felt the City should own the building as it will be on a dock owned by the City.

Motion passed with Coose, Bergeron, Harris, Sivertsen and Olsen voting yea; West voting nay; one councilmember position vacant.

Councilmember Coose questioned whether the City should be replacing the building as part of the dock project, and he felt the contract of putting the building back on the dock should be separated from the dock project itself.

The Council took a short break at 8:00 p.m. and reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

Port and Harbors Director Corporon said if the contract were split, it may not be able to be done completely in one winter season as both contractors might not be able to occupy the site at the same time. He said the project has already been broken up into four phases so local contractors could bid on it. He said staff would talk with local contractors to see what they think about the time frame windows, and staff would bring back an item.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilmember Coose questioned the process for replacement of former Councilmember Shay. Mayor Williams said it will be on the agenda on November 17, to officially accept the resignation and start the process. He said there is an ordinance process where it is advertised for seven days and at the meeting a date will be chosen.

Councilmember Coose said the only reason he is asking is because we are short a person and we are getting into budget. He expressed while the budget may be a monster, if the right person is chosen, perhaps it won't be too big a monster. He explained he hoped it could be done quicker.

City Attorney Seaver said he didn't see any problem with having the clerk start on the public process for a replacement, and simply ratify the resignation at the next meeting. After discussion, the clerk was directed to start the advertising process for the vacancy.

Councilmember Olsen said he filed a letter of intent with APOC to run for House Seat 33 as a democrat.

Councilmember Sivertsen said he liked seeing everyone here talking about the Yates Building, although he didn't know what the City's involvement in it would be. He noted he would hate to see it die, and he wanted to see restoration move forward.

Councilmember Harris said he toured the hospital facilities with Mr. Branco, and he started with the attitude of, "So you guys want \$74 million in bonding....are you kidding?" He stated by the time he spent about 45 minutes in the hospital and he saw cracks in the floor in the surgery room, cracks that white powder comes out of when you step on them, it isn't a sterile environment. He said there are holes in the floor where the gurneys will actually tip. He felt there is need for immediate work at the hospital, and his mind has changed quite a bit.

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Councilmember West said, as community relations person for the hospital, it is safe. She said she would not be able to be at the Tuesday meetings this month for budget. She agreed with Councilmember Sivertsen about the Yates Building, and she thanked the Police Department for working hard under some very thankless circumstances. She spoke of a complaint she received about upper Water Street and parking, and she appreciated Public Works Grant/Contract Administrator Barry for his help.

Mayor Williams reminded the budget meeting will be next Tuesday night.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no further business, the Council adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

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Lew Williams III, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Katherine M. Suiter  
City Clerk