

City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, September 20, 2021

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Civic Center Conference Room

Ports and Harbor Commission

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hirsch called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Valdez Civic Center Conference Room.

II. ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Chair Stu Hirsch
Commission Member Mark Swanson
Commission Member Tim Bouchard
Commission Member Monty Morgan
Commission Member Alan Steed *(by GoToMeeting; Arrived 7:30p.m.)*
Chair Pro Tempore Colleen Stephens *(by GoToMeeting; Arrived 7:30p.m.)*

Excused 1 - Commission Member Ryan Sontag Jr.

Also Present 3 - Harbor Office Manager Karisa Friend
Harbor Master Sarah Von Bargaen
Director Ports and Harbor Jeremy Talbott

III. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no public business from the floor.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Recommendation to Valdez City Council to Approve Resolution Naming Rates and Fees for Use of Facilities in the Valdez Harbors and Repealing Resolution No. 20-06 Naming Such Rates and Fees

MAIN MOTION: Commission Member Swanson moved, seconded by Commission Member Morgan to approve recommendation to Valdez City Council to approve Resolution naming rates and fees for use of facilities in the Valdez Harbors and repealing Resolution No. 20-06 naming such rates and fees.

Chair Hirsch asked staff if they wanted to speak about any information provided in the attached documentation. Ms. Von Bargaen stated she missed adding that a 1% increase annually will occur after the 3 year rate increase for moorage. She said she would add it in.

Mr. Talbott explained the rates and fees document represents staff recommendation. He said that Commissioners can change or recommend changes. Ms. Von Bargaen stated she was directed to get rates to a fair market value status, some are already there. She mention a new addition is a Senior Citizen Discount, but it needs to be a legal discussion first because it is only limited to Valdez Residents, she is unsure if it can be limited in that way and it is only for annual moorage, not monthly or daily.

Chair Hirsch stated he has the document printed and expected that they would be able to go through it line by line.

Commission Member Swanson questioned Mr. Talbott stating Port and Harbor is a revenue producing department, he wondered if there was any direction or guidance provided to him by City Council or City Manager of the direction the department is going.

Mr. Talbott stated he is working with City Council, and City Council has not been direct with suggestions. He said City Council is wanting to put money back in the permanent fund. Mr. Talbott said that funds need to be built up for major maintenance and facility replacements. Mr. Talbott stated the intent is to break even with implementing the rate increase. He stated there is no problem justifying a rate increase.

Chair Hirsch stated he made a note to find out what the intent of making these increases is. He stated one of the reasons he joined the Commission is to be a voice for his Customers.

Mr. Talbott said that overall the Harbor breaks even operationally. He said that grant money will be coming in to help with H-K construction, but it will still be short.

Ms. Von Barga made comment that it should be taken into account that City Council approved hardship forgiveness in 2020 and 2021, so the Harbor wouldn't have had such a shortfall if that had not happened. In 2020 there was between 50,000 and 70,000 dollars because of that and then in 2021 of about 16,000 dollars.

Commission Member Swanson stated he believed the Senior Citizen Discount should apply to all Harbor Customers regardless of where they come from. Ms. Von Barga asked for clarification if he agreed with it being only annual moorage. He said yes, agreed to it being only annual moorage but available to any Cities resident.

Commission Member Swanson stated that since this was not a discussion item he was making a motion to amend the main motion to apply the Senior Citizen Discount to all annual moorage, tenant and transient holders. It was seconded by Commission Member Morgan. *This motion was later rescinded and adjusted to a postpone motion due to the additional recommended changes throughout the rates and fees document.*

Commission Member Bouchard stated that he did not feel a discount was necessary as this is a luxury item not a necessity. He feels like it is a nice gesture but not something that should be applied. He asked for data that would show the percentage of users that are considered seniors. Commission Member Swanson stated the discount does not have to be 15%. It could be less. Commissioners agreed that if 75% of the Harbor Customers were over 65, then the discount would not be a good idea. Ms. Von Barga stated she would collect this data to share with the Commission.

Commission Member Bouchard stated that he did like the idea of it being for Valdez Residents only because he has supported doing things locally.

Commission Member Swanson stated he wanted to clarify his motion to state that he wanted to amend to have the discount be 5% instead of the 15% and to apply to Tenant and Transient annual moorage to any resident over 65.

All Commissioners agreed they would still like to know what the percentage of users is over 65. Ms. Von Barga stated she would bring this information back to the Commission.

Commission Member Swanson commented on the \$1.00 per head charge and asked if it would apply to Stan Stephens. Mr. Talbott confirmed yes and Ms. Von Barga listed other businesses that it would apply to.

Commission Member Bouchard stated that he was in agreeance with this charge but it would be nice to have an area such as the Tour Dock for all Charters to make it easier for their Customers to find.

Chair Pro Tempore Stephens and Commission Member Steed arrived at 7:30 p.m. and participated in the meeting virtually using GoToMeeting.

Chair Hirsch asked Commission Member Stephens about her opinion of the \$1.00 per head tax. Commission Member Stephens stated that they would have a very large complaint if services at the facility are not changed. She stated the tour dock is already paying a higher rate and they are suffering enough on a maintained dock.

Commission Member Swanson stated another fee that he noticed was the live aboard fee but he understand these users have an increased impact on the facilities. Ms. Von Barga stated that it is the cheapest rent in the City of Valdez, which goes into the general fund as property tax. These users cause wear and tear on the facilities.

Commissioners continued reviewing the document and discussed the drive down float rate increase and confirmed that boaters already paying annual moorage don't pay a fee at this float. Also additional moorage for added smaller, auxiliary vessels alongside main vessel. Seiners are not charged for a single skiff as long as it is alongside the primary vessel, if they have a second skiff it is a charge.

Commission Member Swanson mentioned parking on Kobuk drive where trailers are left. He mentioned encouraging the upland parking space in South Harbor but with a lesser rate. Commission Member Bouchard mentioned maybe it may be an educational issue and customers not know the space is behind the hill. He also mentioned placing no parking signs along the roadway. Ms. Von Barga agreed with educating Customers about the available parking at South Harbor. Nate Duvall, Capital Facilities Director, suggested no parking signs as the better option.

Commissioners continued questioning pricing changes and language at Fishman's dock storage and blocking of crane area. Commission Member Swanson suggested that it be a fine versus a fee. Commission Member Stephens agreed because it prohibits other users from performing work. She suggested a rate of \$200 per day. She stated it needs to open their eyes and encourage people not to do it.

Additionally the environmental fee is new and comes with adsorbs being placed under and around vessels. The Impound fee was discussed and addressed the issue on collection of the fee.

Commissioners read there is a fee in place now for use of skiff trailer for emergency situations only. Ms. Von Bargen confirmed the Travelift and trailer are the same rate. They reviewed the price structure of boat lift with Travelift and what's included.

Commission Member Swanson asked for clarification on the clearing of slip for tenant and then if they don't arrive a \$50 fee now applies.

Commission Member Morgan reminded to add item #24 \$200.00 fine for blocking cranes at fisherman's dock.

Ms. Von Bargen said per recommendation the pad fees were increased. Electrical will be upgraded at the maintenance locations. Chair Hirsch suggested that while work is not being performed on a vessel at the maintenance pad that as long as electric is not being used and no work being performed that the rate go to regular storage rate. Commission Member Swanson said the idea is not to have vessels just sitting there. Commission Member Stephens suggested a maintenance plan be completed and an estimated timeline.

Commissioners moved to the last section of the rate and fees document. Ms. Von Bargen said this is more difficult to enforce with the businesses that show up after hours. She said based on training and other information it is recommended to have this type of fee and ensure businesses are operating with correct forms and insurances. Commission Member Swanson questioned fish filleters, Ms. Von Bargen confirmed they are harder on the facilities than any other user group. Commission Member Swanson asked about snow shovelers. Ms. Von Bargen said a fee may not be assessed or insurance a requirement but they will be required to complete paperwork. Commission Member Swanson said he would prefer snow shovelers be removed because of boaters using teenagers and them not truly being able to afford the fee. Mr. Talbott stated that there could be a 1st and 2nd warning and then the third could be a trespass. Commissioners agreed a third warning they will be trespassed.

Commission Member Morgan asked how this would appear at the next regular meeting. Ms. Von Bargen said she would come back with the additional information that Commissioners asked for and make the proposed changes. Commission Member Swanson said with the bit of information showing what a 5% discount would look like on the Senior discount, and projected revenues on the \$1.00 per head tax for charters and a discussion item for congregating Charter vessels together. Ms. Von Bargen asked Commission Members Bouchard and Stephens to provide a head count so she can get a ball park figure.

Chair Hirsch stated to make a motion to postpone.

MOTION TO POSTPONE: Commission Member Swanson moved, seconded by Commission Member Bouchard to postpone approval of recommendation to Valdez City Council to approve Resolution naming rates and fees for use of facilities in the Valdez Harbors and repealing Resolution No. 20-06 naming such rates and fees to the next regular commission meeting of November 1, 2021.

Commission Member Morgan wanted to confirm it would be approval item at next meeting.

There being no further discussion. Chair Hirsch invited a vote on the motion:

VOTE ON MOTION TO POSTPONE:

Yays: 6 - Chair Hirsch, Chair Pro Tempore Stephens, Commission Member Swanson, Commission Member Steed, Commission Member Bouchard, and Commission Member Morgan

Excused: 1 - Commission Member Sontag

MOTION TO POSTPONE CARRIED.

V. REPORTS

1. Directors Report

Mr. Talbott, Ports and Harbor Director provided a verbal overview of his written report included in the agenda packet. He stated it has been a good fish season, lots of fish and lots going on. Almost ran out of containers for fish. Military operation completed. Commission Member Swanson asked about the Use Agreement and Mr. Talbott stated there was an amendment to extend and will be in the works until February. Mr. Talbott invited Commissioners to go to conferences.

Mr. Talbott mentioned the Port of Anchorage. The City Mayor asked Mayor of Valdez to endorse a federal Port grant application. They are asking a lot of municipalities to help out by signing so they can receive funds. Mr. Talbott stated it will hurt Valdez a little bit, but it is the right thing to do for Alaska. Commissioners agree it should be signed but it is unfortunate that their facilities are in just that bad of condition they'll need even more money later.

Mark Detter, City Manager stated Anchorage Mayor did personally reach out to our Mayor based on the request from Senator Sullivan and they understand that other communities are in need as well and they are supportive of that. Mr. Detter mentioned the Mayor did say the right things, however not binding, but the recommendation is to sign.

VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Chair Hirsch opened the floor for business from Commissioners.

Commission Members Morgan, Bouchard, Steed and Stephens stated no business.

Commission Member Swanson stated he is going into winter travel mode and he will not miss meetings but will be participating by phone. He asked that other Commissioners that can try to be present to meet a quorum.

Chair Hirsch stated he had no business.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Hirsch adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

DRAFT