

# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686



## Meeting Minutes – Final

Monday, July 6, 2020

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

## Ports and Harbor Commission

**REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM****I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Swanson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Valdez City Council Chambers.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present 6 - Chair Mark Swanson  
Commission Member Colleen Stephens (Telephonically)  
Commission Member Alan Steed (Telephonically)  
Commission Member Tim Bouchard  
Commission Member Stu Hirsch  
Commission Member Steve Cotter

Excused 1 - Commission Member Ryan Sontag

Also Present 3 - Port Operations Manager Jenessa Ables  
Harbormaster Sarah Von Borgen  
Ports and Harbor Office Manager Karisa Friend

**III. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

There was no public business from the floor.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS****1. Discussion of Proposed Live-Aboard Requirements**

Chair Swanson opened the floor by reading the summary statement of this discussion item and invited those present to make comment. Ms. Katherine Walters, Valdez resident and Harbor live aboard, commented that this was discussed 15 years ago and there was a task force that sat together over a 2 week time frame to come up with guidelines. She visited City Hall and located the 8 page document being discussed. Ms. Walters stated that it was about 90% of the live aboards were invested in the community and considering this topic it is very important to her and others that choose the lifestyle and she wanted to make that very clear.

Ms. Von Borgen stated this document has been in draft form over the last 4 months and that she was never aware of a task force. Ms. Walters stated there was a Harbor Users Association and from that came the task force. Ms. Walters stated the task force started over a debate of property tax and the question of why live aboards were not paying.

Ms. Von Borgen stated that the Harbor is not trying to add any additional costs. There is only the Harbor Residential Surcharge that is listed in the rate resolution. Ms. Von Borgen reiterated that the document is only in draft form.

Chair Swanson provided some history by stating the Ports and Harbor Commission asked Ms. Von Borgen to research best practices at other marinas and how they deal with their live aboards. Chair Swanson also confirmed that this is just the first step. Ms. Walters stated the bottom line is the same as 15 years ago, and its user discrimination.

Ms. Von Bargaen stated the document was piece milled from other Harbors and their agreements. She was collecting information on what could be applicable to our Harbor users or what is not applicable. She said again this is a very rough draft of this document. She said that this is a starting point and asked that if the live aboards have information to provide it would be helpful. Ms. Von Bargaen stated the Harbor is not always sure who is living on their boat.

Commission Member Hirsch stated the Commission and staff will be going through the document line by line and that once all is discussed, notes taken and then changes will be made and presented to the Commission again. Commission Member Hirsch also mentioned a grandfather clause could be put in place for users that have been in the Harbor for an extended period of time already.

Ms. Walters asked what prompted this to take place. Ms. Von Bargaen stated accountability and one of the biggest issues is not using the pump out facilities. Ms. Walters stated in the winter it was impossible to use. Ms. Walters stated she did not want the discrimination against this one user group.

Chair Swanson asked if other members of the public had comments.

Commissioners and staff reviewed each section of the presented document providing their comments and input for each one.

Ms. Von Bargaen stated she would make the revisions that were suggested and send out the updated document to be reviewed. She stated that the intention was to have as much input as possible.

## **V. REPORTS**

Ms. Von Bargaen stated it is business as usual and the Harbor is easing the commercial fishing vessels into town. Staff is working directly with fisherman on mutual aid packets to be filled out and returned. Staff has also setup porta-pottys and quarantine areas for users coming in.

Ms. Ables stated she would touch on a few items. She confirmed the Ammo move was the largest it's ever been. She stated the office has changed out billing software. Ms. Ables also mentioned there is a company that is considering moving containerized LNG through Valdez. Also cell site agreements are now being reviewed. Port Security Camera project and Kelsey dock re-decking project is beginning.

## **VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Chair Swanson opened the floor for business from Commissioners.

Commission Member Stephens thanked Ms. Von Bargaen for bringing the information about live aboard policies to them and responding to their requests.

Commission Member Steed stated no business.

Commission Member Hirsch stated he spoke with Port and Harbor staff member Larry Ables and a mentioned project potentially interferes with a Waterfront Masterplan project and hopes the project is reviewed before proceeding. Ms. Von Bargaen stated the electrical vaults are a safety issue and that's why they are a higher priority and slated to be done.

Ms. Ables stated Mr. Ables is researching the projects after it was brought to his attention. Chair Swanson asked what Mr. Ables title is and Ms. Ables informed them he is the Ports and Harbors Project and Maintenance Manager.

Chair Swanson mentioned a new employee in the office. Ms. Ables confirmed a new Port Administrative Assistant had been hired, Vickie Martel, from the Ferry Terminal.

Commission Member Cotter stated no business.

Commission Member Bouchard mentioned the current status of the Crowley Fuel dock and wondered if there is anything the City could do to assist the situation, it's not with local management but higher up, there is a 2 hour or more wait most days to get fuel at the dock. Crowley said there was a hiring freeze and they won't open the second dock. Ms. Von Barga mentioned a local company reached out about providing fuel and their own staff, but were denied. Chair Swanson asked if there were any performance elements to their lease. Ms. Von Barga stated no.

Commission Member Stephens mentioned the Harbor working with Economic Development to help the situation not only is it an issue for boaters but a safety management issue. Commission Member Bouchard said they cut back operating this year assuming Covid would slow things down but they've cut back so far now, it doesn't have anything to do with that now.

Commission Member Cotter asked if someone from the City would call and find out what their plans are and if they plan on keeping it closed down the rest of the year. Commission Member Bouchard said he heard there was no plan to open the second dock. Commission Member Steed stated he'd heard it was a staffing issue.

Chair Swanson stated he had no business.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Swanson adjourned the meeting at 9:01p.m.

City of Valdez, Alaska  
Ports and Harbor Commission

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Mark Swanson, Chairman

Attest:

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Karisa Friend, Ports and Harbor Office Manager