

Memorandum

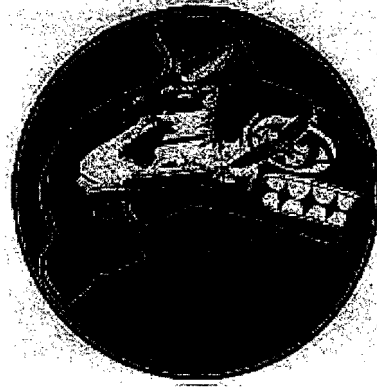
To: Mayor Hill and Assembly Members

CC:

From: Bob Ward, Interim Manager *BW*

Date: 10/27/2009

Re: Activity Report



I arrived in Haines Tuesday afternoon and reported to the office. I was not completely surprised to find that many of the issues and projects that faced us while I was here before are still active. Some have progressed and others have not. Still, there has certainly been much accomplished and many points of new direction for me to undertake at this time. This first report will be a bullet point stream of consciousness report, with more methodical reports to follow.

- Assessor Position – We have short listed 4 candidates and will commence interviews with these candidates on Friday, with one on Monday, November 2. Our salary offering may become an issue, but all are aware of what that offering is. The State Assessor's Office has been a great help in this short list process. The City and Borough of Juneau has also been helpful in developing interview questions. In the meantime, Dean Olson is keeping the assessment update project moving forward. He is now in training to enhance his assessment skills.
- Staff Meetings – I have held one meeting for office staff and one meeting with department heads. As I expected, all is apparently under control. You do have an excellent cadre of employees here that will keep the ship of state afloat through these transitional periods. There are few issues resulting from the departure of Mr. Bolen that are cause for concern as it pertains to the ongoing functions of public service delivery.
- Port Chilkoot Dock Restrooms – It is not a complete surprise that this remains unresolved. It would appear that we are coming closer to closure on this, with a meeting on October 27 with PND to work through some agency concerns with current direction, followed by an appearance before the Assembly prior to venturing forth into the Corps of Engineers permitting process.
- Municipal Election Issues – You are all aware of the issues surrounding the recent municipal election as they pertain to Seat A. Throughout this process I will be deferring to Borough Clerk Cozzi's years of experience in municipal elections, and the input of the Borough Attorney where legal opinion is necessary. I don't feel that it is appropriate for me to "manage" this passionate issue but will do my best to maintain professionalism and decorum at all levels until the successful candidate is determined and seated.
- Portage Cove Harbor – I tagged along with Brad Maynard and the Corps of Engineers on their inspection of the improvements at the boat harbor. I can't speak for them, but I was certainly impressed with quality of the construction on the project. It is a beautiful harbor that should be welcomed and appreciated by all harbor users.
- Speed Limit Adjustments – I am aware of two adjustments to speed limits in Haines that have followed upon the completion of road improvements. One is an increase in the speed limit on

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Lutak Road, which is of concern to some of the area residents, and a decrease of the speed limit on the FAA Road which has been requested by the residents, but not universally well received by others in the community. Pertaining to the Lutak situation, the State is willing to do a traffic study to establish traffic counts and speeds. This would probably have to wait until the spring. In the meantime the 50 MPH speed would stand based upon the road standards used by DOT for determining traffic speed. It should be stated clearly at this point that there is no likelihood that the speed limit will be reduced should this traffic study be completed. The 50 MPH limit on a highway designed for 55 MPH is probably all the concession we can hope for. The FAA Road speed limit was reduced to 15 MPH based upon the request of the adjacent residents and directed by the Borough Manager. This was not based upon any empirical data and may have been beyond the manager's authority to implement. The presumptive speed for a residential area is 25 MPH. A school zone is 20 MPH. 15 MPH is very rare in a residential zone, although it has been assigned on the following streets in Haines: Lynnview (Northbound traffic only), Piedad and Helms Loop. I am not familiar with the first two but I have been to the Helms Loop area and know that it is a narrow, winding one lane gravel road. There are other residential streets in Haines with a 20 MPH speed limit, including some in the area of Ft. Seward. I do not believe that the reduced speed limit is warranted on FAA Road which is a major through road for that area of town. If there are issues of excessive speeds, which sometimes happens when a road is newly paved, then there needs to be some additional focus by the Police Department on traffic enforcement on that street. Short of that, the code calls for a traffic analysis to be done prior to the alteration of speed limits.

- Chilkoot Indian Association/Haines Borough Agreement, Chilkoot Estates – We are waiting for a first draft agreement from the CIA legal staff regarding this project. Once we get their first blush we will send it to our attorney for mark-up and start that back-and-forth until we have a document we can sign. I expect this to commence by next week.
- Manager Search – The caliber of manager candidates appears to be good. To date we have received 20 applications. Many have Alaskan management experience. There are three local candidates. It has been asked of me if we should consider a hiring committee with broad based representation beyond the Assembly. It is not unusual for such to be constituted which may include members of the public, members of staff as well as Assembly members. Of course the Assembly would have the last word in selection, but the committee could get most of the leg work done including application review, interviewing and determining an order of preference for hiring. You may also want to consider some additional requirements for candidate selection criteria including writing samples, conducting mock staff meetings, or other tasks or challenges to get a better handle on candidate attributes prior to offering the position. You will need to establish a procedure for moving forward with the selection process, preferably through a special meeting in the not-to-distant future.
- USDA/USFS/EDA Project Needs & Economic Diversity Concerns, Haines Borough - This long winded title is a program by the Department of Agriculture to provide ostensibly economic development funds to communities. This funding source in the past has been pretty much limited to support of minor projects. We found out late last week that this might not be the case with the prospect of Stimulus Funding coming through this outlet. Many communities in the region have incorporated major infrastructure projects in their needs list. Of course, this Friday is the deadline for submittal of these needs. Consequently Brad, Debra Schnabel and I have put out heads together to come up with a more meaningful list compiled from previous funding requests from the Borough. This list consists of (in no particular priority order) Portage Cove Harbor Improvements, \$7M; Water and Sewer Upgrades, TBD (these are seen as major system-wide upgrades to the system); LUTAK Dock and Uplands Development, \$25M; Secondary Rural Roads, \$24M; Chilkat Center Renovation/System Upgrades, \$5M; Central Wood Heat Construction, TBD; Highway Corridor Planning, TBD. I regret that this comes with such a short fuse and I hope that each of these project needs have seen some level of Borough concurrence. If

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there is any input any of you would like to offer on this list, please let me, Debra or Brad know by Thursday afternoon.