

## **Tourism Advisory Board Meeting/ Meeting Agenda**

Thursday, March 11, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Call to Order: Judy Heinmiller

Roll Call: Present - Judy Heinmiller, Gregg Johnson, Jeff Butcher, Jason Gaffney (joined later via phone), Chris Schelb

Absent - Juanita Lidholm, excused; John Hunt, unexcused

Also Present - Michael Ahmuty, Lori Stepansky, Jerry Lapp

Approval of February 2009 Minutes: Schelb motioned to approve; Johnson seconded; all in favor

Public Comments: N/A

Approval of Agenda: Schelb motioned to approve; Johnson seconded; all in favor.

President's Report: N/A

**New Business:** *Schedule of Meetings (Tourism Director Stepansky requested an evening time for today's meeting and has suggested the board discuss the option of having board meetings in the evenings occasionally to accommodate board member schedules and more public participation.)*

Discussion took place regarding pros and cons of evening meetings verses those held during the day. Various situations affecting attendance of board members and public were evaluated. It was decided holding board meetings at an earlier time in the day would work best and any additional discussion could take place at the end of the current meeting when setting the next meeting date.

**Old Business:** *Bathroom/Pavilion Project (Any updates regarding the construction project this summer and possible parking issues)*

Discussion took place regarding in-season construction challenges for the project. Stepansky reported the Borough Manager had indicated he was investigating various construction schedule options to move the project forward. Ahmuty mentioned having met with the Borough Manager regarding the parking situation, flow of traffic at the PC Dock, and construction options for evening.

*Tourism Survey (Stepansky has researched on-line survey options and will provide information on her selection.)*

Stepansky reported looking in to survey options as discussed in the previous meeting. Board members present expressed second thoughts about moving forward with a tourism survey indicating not being in favor such a survey. Schelb noted a meeting to develop questions did not take place.

*Southeast Conference Support Draft Letter (The board agreed in the last meeting to draft a letter of support to the Mayor, Manager, and Assembly adding staff to the Visitor Center to manage the Southeast Conference in the fall. Board member Schelb has drafted the letter.)*

Discussion took place regarding the letter drafted by Schelb with notations by Chair Heinmiller. Schelb commented the letter had been emailed to board members with no feedback and was then sent to the Mayor and Assembly. The letter was in the March 10 Assembly meeting packets. Board Assembly liaison Lapp commented the letter was in the packet but no discussion took place at the meeting regarding the letter.

**Directors Report: Visitor Numbers**

Stepansky presented a documentation she compiled of 2008 Haines visitor data from various sources and a list of Visitor Center services provided.

**AMHS Meeting**

Stepansky reported AMHS marketing manager, Danielle Adkins, held a meeting regarding the See Alaska program and other statistics of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Stepansky reported approximately 12 people came by during the meeting time.

**Scenic Byways**

Stepansky reported she had inquired when the Byways designation awards would be announced this year. The Alaska Scenic Byways Coordinator indicated they were unsure and waiting to be informed of the date. Stepansky commented a Scenic Byway Board would be useful in preparing details of projects and goals outlined in the Corridor Management Plan to help give direction to the DOT Haines Highway Improvement project and take advantage of applying for grants when application periods were open.

**Haines Delegation visit to Holland America**

Stepansky reported she was exploring options for Haines Borough Administration to visit with Holland America in Seattle. Gaffney commented this would be a good idea as the loss of a Royal Caribbean ship to Alaska in 2010 has resulted in an open berth in Skagway on Wednesdays which could adversely affect the number of ships Haines receives next year.

**Board Comments:** N/A

**Set Next Meeting Date:** Tuesday, April 14, 2009 – 8:30 a.m.  
**Assembly Chambers, Public Safety Building**

Schelb motioned to adjourn, Johnson seconded: all in favor.