

Tourism Advisory Board Meeting/ Meeting Agenda

Thursday, April 14 – 8:30 a.m.

Meeting Call to Order: Gregg Johnson

Roll Call: Present - Gregg Johnson, John Hunt, Jason Gaffney, Jeff Butcher

Absent - Judy Heinmiller, Juanita Lidholm, Chris Schelb

Also Present - Jerry Lapp, Lori Stepansky, Tom Bolen

Hunt motioned to excuse absent board members, Butcher seconded; all approved.

Approval of March 2009 Minutes: Butcher motion to approve; Hunt seconded. All approved

Public Comments: N/A

Approval of Agenda: N/A

President's Report: N/Z

Old Business: Pavilion Project update

Manager Tom Bolen provided a packet of drawings and cost breakdowns of the pavilion project with an update of the status and proposed options. Board members inquired about the funding and structural issues of the pavilion in weather along with options for beach access. Bolen indicated the Waterfront Committee has opted for proposal #3 but the Planning Commission did not. Hunt motioned to endorse concept #3; Gaffney seconded for discussion purposes. Butcher inquired of Bolen how to word the motion or what could be done by the board to move the project forward expeditiously. Discussion followed regarding bus staging areas and construction schedules. Hunt asked about the temporary bathrooms. Gaffney state he'd like to see access to the beach. All were in favor on the motion.

New Business: Budget

Stepansky presented copies of manager's proposed budget and a copy of her proposed amended version of the budget to reflect different cuts of the advertising and travel sections to comply with the desired reductions the manager proposed. Stepansky went over the line item changes. Discussion followed regarding the tourism economic development budget and funding and also the position of Economic Development Director. Assembly member liaison Lapp indicated this position had not been approved by the Assembly nor had the proposed budget been discussed at the Assembly level to date. Butcher questioned why the reserve funds could not be used to supplement the tourism budget. Other board members indicated they would like questions and more information regarding specific items in the Tourism Economic budget. Stepansky indicated the result she would like to see from this discussion was for board members to look over the information provided and attend the Committee of

the Whole meeting scheduled for the Tourism budget on April 21. Board members commended Stepansky for her work to comply with the requested reductions and taking the time to sort out the details.

Directors Report: Yukon Trade Show

Stepansky reported the management of the Yukon Trade Show was being taken over by the Tourism Department and this year would be transitional with Joan at the Chamber assisting administratively with the organization of the show for the community members. Stepansky noted details of forthcoming emails to gather literature and giveaway items for the show. Stepansky also noted she would be staying a few extra days to provide vacation planners and promotional materials to RV and Car rentals and RV parks and other locations to promote Haines this year.

SATC

Stepansky reported the SATC retreat had taken place the week prior and she was still maintaining her position as president. Stepansky noted the projects scheduled for regional promotion of the Inside Passage which included securing a discounted ad in O-Magazine.

Board Comments: Board member Gaffney touched on his visit to Holland America the week prior and the delicacy of the cruise ship schedule for next year.

Board member Hunt asked Stepansky about in-state advertising. Stepansky reported on the opportunities ATIA provides for in-state advertising and the statistical reports for Alaska residents traveling to other locations in Alaska to visit. Stepansky also noted the advertising and promotional efforts for Haines in other locations such as Anchorage, Fairbanks, Southeast, and Whitehorse which she intends to enhance this year.

Butcher thanked Stepansky and her department's efforts for securing conventions this year which will make a huge difference for his hotel in April and September.

Johnson commented at the last Assembly meeting it was reported Haines spends twice as much as other communities to get visitors. Johnson stated he didn't care because the statistics show the return is well worth it and we need to keep up what we are doing in these tough economic times. Stepansky concurred stating despite all the attributes Haines has, there are other communities to do many of the activities they could here and they are making sure they are getting their message out and with the tourism pie being sliced thin, others would be happy not to have Haines in the mix.

Further discussion took place regarding the pending 2010 cruise ship schedule and sales for shore excursions this year.

**Set Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2009 – 8:30 a.m.
Assembly Chambers, Public Safety Building**

Hunt motioned to adjourn, Butcher seconded; all approved.