
SITKA POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 1st, 2006 – 7:00 P.M.
Harrigan Centennial Hall

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Dave Moore Ms. Gwen Lazzarini
 Mr. Michael Wise Ms. Gail Roderick

Absent and excused: Mr. Dennie Daniels

Others Present: Police Chief Sheldon Schmitt
 Fire Chief Scott Elmer
 Lt. Garry McCrary
 Don Kluting

Members from the public: Ryan and Sherri Fahey

The Chair welcomed and introduced Ms. Gail Roderick as the new member of the Commission.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCT. 4TH, 2006 MEETING

MOTION: M/S **Lazzarini/Roderick** moved to approve the minutes from the Oct. 4th, 2006 meeting.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED 4-0** on a voice vote.

D. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA - NONE

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

F. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair mentioned the letter he received from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) regarding concerns parking and traffic within the Sitka Indian Village. A discussion of this letter was added as item no. 3 under New Business.

G. REPORTS

1. **Chairperson - None**
2. **Vice Chairperson - None**

3. Police Chief

Lt. McCrary told the Commission that Chief Schmitt is in another meeting within the building and would try to catch up with the Commission meeting later. He drew his report from the written Police Chief's Report and highlighted the following:

- The weapons incident at Blatchley Middle School involving a student
- Traffic accident on Sawmill Creek Road at Wolff Drive that resulted in the accidental death of a 2-year old child
- Various trainings attended by police officers
- Geo-referencing project spearheaded by the marine coordinator
- Resignations and hiring of police officers
- New parking software program
- Purchase of the live scan fingerprint system
- Removal of the barricades from DeGroff St. and implementation of the double traffic fines
- Security issues at the Animal Shelter

He also responded to queries from the members regarding Halloween-related incidents and the Eyewitness Media Manager.

4. Fire Chief Scott Elmer

Fire Chief Elmer spoke about assigning another Assistant Fire Chief while Assistant Fire Chief Dave Swearingen is recuperating from a mild heart attack. He also briefed the members on the continuing training courses that the Department is offering and discussed the concept of institutionalizing a controlled substance policy for the storage and handling of some medications used by EMTs.

5. Assembly Liaison - None

H. OLD BUSINESS

1. DeGroff St. Permit

The Chair said that the Assembly did not take action and let the permit lapse, allowing the State DOT to take the barricades down. The 90-day emergency double fine has been enforced.

On Mr. Wise's question about the recommendation they have to make to the Assembly when the 90-day period is up, the Chair said that they have to remain pro-active and continue to find ways or solutions to the DeGroff St. situation. He also mentioned that City PW Director Rich Riggs has offered to research on the different options and they can request him to make a report in the next meeting.

The members briefly discussed some alternatives such as video cameras, rumble strips, speed humps, flashing lights, and dents in the road. Chief Schmitt pointed out that another possibility would be to extend the double fines or reconfigure the intersection or the slope of the road to slow down cars coming off Sawmill Creek Road.

This agenda item was tabled to the next meeting.

2. Swan Lake Crosswalk Update

The Chair that this item is now in the Administrator's hands. He recalled that the Commission passed a motion to ask the City Administrator to bring the proposal to put a crosswalk in the

Swan Lake area to the Assembly with Staff recommendations no later than the end of the calendar year.

This item will remain on the agenda for updates.

3. Turning Lane at Jeff Davis St. & Raptor Center

Discussion on this agenda item was brief in view of the fact that the members do not have a copy of the Transportation Study (TENW) recommendations regarding the turning lane at Jeff Davis and Raptor Center. The study, which looked at the impact of increased activity at Sawmill Cove Industrial Park on traffic flow, briefly touched on this segment of Sawmill Creek Road.

The Chair directed the Secretary to provide the members a copy of the study and requested the members to go over it and bring back their comments to the next meeting.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Search and Rescue (SAR) and the Commission

The Chair said that he was supposed to the Administrator about this agenda item but didn't have time to do it. He suggested tabling it to the next meeting. He explained that the Commission is looking for an input from the Assembly whether the Commission should oversee Search and Rescue or not.

SAR Department Head Don Kluting told the Commission that he has strong feelings about SAR being under the purview of the Commission. He pointed out that SAR regularly reports to the State Troopers and to the Alaska Department of Health and Human Services. According to Mr. Kluting, if he has to report to the Commission, he will have to ask for more wages. He added that when he took on the position as SAR department head, he did not get additional funds. He invited Commission members to stop by his office anytime and talk to him about SAR.

This item was tabled till the next meeting.

2. Tour Bus Parking on Lincoln St.

Ms. Lazzarini raised concerns about buses being allowed to park next to exits. She explained that in summer, tour buses are blocking the view as one exits from the Wells Fargo drive-through. She also suggested making Maksoutoff St. one-way.

A member of the public and a Wells Fargo employee Sherrie Fahey concurred with Ms. Lazzarini's observation and also suggested changes in the parking policies for tour buses and along Maksoutoff St.

Lt. McCrary recommended inviting Traffic Officer Judy Puckett to the next meeting to shed light on the history of downtown parking and agreements the City might have made with tour bus companies.

The members briefly discussed the different parking situations in the area and the different possibilities of reconfiguring the traffic flow. Mr. Fahey suggested eliminating the parking spaces on Maksoutoff St. on the Wells Fargo side.

The Chair said that he would invite Mr. John Litten of Sitka Tours to the next meeting to discuss the situation. Ms. Puckett will also be invited.

3. STA Letter

The Chair said that in the letter, STA expressed the following concerns relating to traffic and parking within the Sitka Indian Village:

- High rate of speeding along Katlian and Kaagwaantan Streets
- Large volume of commercial vehicles parked or stopped on Katlian St. without adequate traffic controls
- Concern about whether there is adequate access to all residents in the Village for emergency services such as ambulance and fire
- Traffic flow at the intersection of Marine St., Kaagwaantaan St., Barracks St. and Seward St.
- The use of Kaagwaantaan St. for commercial-based traffic

He suggested that the Commission form a sub-committee to take a look at some of these issues and bring it back to the next meeting. The sub-committee may discuss with STA staff about the specific issues and what are their proposals.

The members briefly exchanged ideas on the parking and traffic issues in the Village and gave their initial observations.

For lack of concurrence with his suggestion for the creation of a sub-committee, the Chair offered to talk with STA staff and get information from them which will be included in the packet for the next meeting.

Ms. Lazzarini suggested that the Chair draft a response to the STA letter.

J. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Mr. Wise proposed that the Commission discuss the idea of putting guard rails on Sawmill Creek Road in the vicinity of Wolff Drive and to make a recommendation to the State. This will be added as an item under New Business in the next meeting.

Ms. Roderick asked about an ordinance on four-wheelers on the street which should be impounded. Lt. McCrary offered to research on that ordinance.

K. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Next Meeting Date: December 6th, 2006

Agenda items: Old Business

1. DeGroff St.
2. Swan Lake Crosswalk Update
3. Turning Lane at Jeff Davis St. and Raptor Center
4. SAR and the Commission
5. Tour Bus Parking on Lincoln St.
6. Maksoutoff St. Traffic Flow
7. Lincoln St. Parking
8. STA Letter

New Business

1. Guard Rails on Sawmill Creek Road

L. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: M/S **Wise/Lazzarini** moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

PREPARED BY: MARIA FINKENBINDER
Contract Secretary