
SITKA TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 8, 2010
Harrigan Centennial Hall – Maksoutoff Room

Mission: To advise and assist the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka regarding its management of tourism in Sitka.

Tourism Commission Members: Bruce Conine, Matt Lawrie, Rachel Moreno, Theresa Weiser, and Allen Turner. Two vacant seats.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Weiser volunteered to temporarily chair this evening's meeting; an election of a new Chairperson/Vice Chairperson will be covered as an agenda item under New Business.

Ms. Weiser called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bruce Conine, Rachel Moreno, Allen Turner, and Theresa Weiser.

Staff: Crystal Duncan, Contract Secretary.

Members of the Public: John Belcher.

III. WELCOME TO THE NEWEST TOURISM COMMISSION MEMBER

Ms. Weiser welcomed Mr. Turner to the Tourism Commission. She stated that his new and unique perspective will be beneficial and greatly appreciate by the Commission.

Mr. Turner provided a brief introduction. He has been a resident of Sitka for approximately 2 years. He moved here when Wells Fargo Bank transitioned him from a branch office in Anchorage to the Sitka branch where he currently works as a Business Relations Manager.

Mr. Turner accepted the position with Wells Fargo after a brief retirement. He has lived in Utah, Washington, and Texas, during those times his occupation was that of a small business owner. In his free time he likes to do artwork. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and sees his contributions to the Tourism Commission as an opportunity to be more involved in the community as well as learn more about the City of Sitka's governmental processes.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: M/S Moreno/Turner moved to approve the agenda for Monday, March 8, 2010.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a voice vote.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: **M/S Moreno/Weiser** moved to approve the minutes for February 8, 2010 Tourism Commission meeting.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a voice vote.

VI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Belcher stated that he is the husband of Ms. Weiser. He noted that he is originally from Puerto Vallarta, a tourist destination that views tourism as a positive economical stimulator by way of taxes, job creation, and revenue for local businesses. He had no further comment.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- *Commission Vacancies* – Ms. Weiser confirmed that there are two Commission vacancies: Conservation Society (formerly held by Steve Ash) and an at-large seat. She encouraged the Commissioners to extend an invitation to anyone that may be interested in the local tourism industry.

Mr. Turner mentioned that there are over 28 City Commissions. He heard that the City, or Assembly members, that may be interested in consolidating the number of Commissions and wondered if the Tourism Commission may be complimentary to one or more of the existing 28. He was tasked with finding out the names of the other Commissions; follow up will be done at the next meeting.

Mr. Turner was also wondering if Commission members had information about a newly created Commission to deal specifically with the head tax fund. Ms. Weiser stated that the Tourism Commission was originally created to do that however over time that has changed. She also informed him that former Chairman Ash represented the Tourism Commission on the MRV Steering Committee.

Mr. Conine liked Mr. Turner's idea and stated that blending the Tourism Commission with another commission may be helpful for purposes of establishing a meeting quorum.

- *Update on Resident Survey* – Ms. Moreno sent out an email link to all of the Tourism Commissioners prior to the meeting; it included the requested changes from the previous meeting.

MOTION: **M/S Moreno/Conine** moved to approve the final version of the resident survey with a change to question 1 (demographic information) – making a response to occupation a requirement as well as the addition of the following text *“The information gathered in this survey is for helping the Sitka Tourism Commission, your specific information will not be shared outside this Commission.”*

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a voice vote.

With an approved survey, the Tourism Commission then made a motion to distribute the survey for community responses:

MOTION: **M/S Moreno/Conine** moved to approve sending the survey link to: Sitka Visitors and Convention Borough, the City of Sitka, the Sitka Chamber of Commerce, and the Sitka Sentinel with an understanding that all of the listed organizations may not be able to post the survey link free of charge.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a voice vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- *Election of New Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson* – Ms. Moreno nominated Ms. Weiser for the position of Chairperson and Mr. Turner for the position of Vice-Chairperson. After a lengthy discussion the Commission unanimously agreed that Ms. Weiser would be proficient at running the meetings and Mr. Turner would be a great spokesperson at the Assembly Meetings. The Commission voted and unanimously elected new officers.

	Chairperson: Theresa Weiser	Vice-Chairperson: Allen Turner
Bruce Conine	Aye	Aye
Rachel Moreno	Aye	Aye
Allen Turner	Aye	Aye
Theresa Weiser	Aye	Aye

IX. CLOSING

- NEXT MEETING: Monday, April 5, 2010
- Agenda Items:
 - i. Unfinished Business
 - 1. Resident Survey Update
 - 2. City Commission's Update
 - ii. New Business
 - 1. Sitka Visitors and Convention Borough Discussion

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: **M/S Moreno/Turner** moved to adjourn at 7:33 p.m.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a voice vote.