



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Coast Guard City, USA

SITKA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Regular Monthly Meeting
Harrigan Centennial Hall
July 8, 2020 6 p.m.

FINAL MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Littlefield called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Present: Roby Littlefield (chair), James Poulson, Ana Dittmar, Scott Saline

Absent: Bob Sam, Kevin Mosher (Assembly liaison)

Staff: Amy Ainslie

Public: Tom Gamble (telephone)

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

M-Poulson/S-Saline moved that the current officers remain in place for another year (Roberta Littlefield, Chair; Bob Sam, Vice Chair; James Poulson, Secretary). Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

The Commission agreed to maintain their officer positions for another year. Ainslie explained that the agenda item was to re-elect all officers on the first meeting in the fiscal year, as determined in the municipal code.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

M-Poulson/S-Dittman moved to approve the agenda, and agreed to discuss items E and F before item V, Reports and Correspondence. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 10, 2020 minutes

M-Poulson/S-Dittman moved to approve the June 10, 2020 minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

IV. GUESTS &/OR PERSONS TO BE HEARD

None

V. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

Ainslie noted that a request made by Sam to add an agenda item after the packet and newspaper notice had been published was not able to be accommodated. Due to the Open Meetings Act, the agenda had to be set and sent to the newspaper the Friday prior to the Wednesday meeting. Ainslie stated that she would try to be as flexible as possible in getting agenda items added, but she needed enough lead-time to get items on the agenda. Commissioners should try to contact Planning staff with agenda item requests approximately a week in advance of the meeting.

Poulson provided an update on the Baranof Statue placement, stating that the executive director of the museum along with Sam had been outside washing the statue. STA passed a resolution support the removal of the statue from outside of the Centennial Building and having it placed in the Sitka Historical Museum. The Commissioners discussed some of the history of the Russian American Trading Company (which Baranof was a managing member of), and how it had been divested to modern day companies such as Alaska Commercial.

Saline expressed some of his frustration in lacking language to engage in dialogue with other community members on white supremacy and racism, and their effects on the development of Sitka, and livelihoods of Sitkans today. Saline felt that studying history and governmental actions was an important factor in making Sitka a more affordable, thriving, and inclusive place to live. Poulson noted that the 200th anniversary of the Sitka Indian Village was coming up and may be something for people to celebrate and learn about. Littlefield noted that the wall used to run all the way up Katlian Street, parallel with Marine Street. Saline concluded that investment being diverted away from improvement on Katlian Street in favor of Lincoln Street was a continuation of stratification issues.

Dittmar provided an update on the St. Michaels's store, stating that the lease for the store was set to expire. The church leadership had decided that the continued operation of the store was an integral part of church operations and was therefore going to seek lease renewal, but noted that the lack of cruise ship visitors this year was limiting operating hours.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

B. Historic Preservation Plan

Ainslie confirmed that she has followed up on her action and sent the Preservation Plan draft to STA. The tribe acknowledged that the plan is still in draft form. Ainslie had communicated with Alicia Gassman, executive manager for STA, and Gassman expressed gratitude on behalf of the STA for the opportunity to weigh in on the plan. Littlefield requested a timeline be established for the STA review of the document. Ainslie agreed.

C. Commissioner Recruitment

Ainslie named the sole applicant for the Native Community seat, Chuck Miller. His application was going to the Assembly for approval on July 14th. Commissioners were excited that Miller had applied for the Commission.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

D. 419 Lincoln Street Remodel

M-Poulson/S-Dittmar moved to recommend approval of the project of the 419 Lincoln Street remodel and encouraged the owners to match the character of the existing exterior and surrounding historic buildings. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

Ainslie described the property as a former retail space and that the property owners recently received a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Commission to turn the space into a dwelling unit after a lack of interest in the commercial market. Ainslie explained that in order to meet safety code, the remodel would need to include an egress window. The contractor had communicated to Ainslie that the owner would consider different finish options for the window if the commission saw fit. The window had to be placed on the front of the building, as there was insufficient space between the rear of the building facing the alley and the property line to accommodate an egress window that met the building code.

Dittmar had some questions about the internal layout and how the apartment would be accessed. Ainslie pointed out some of the internal flow on the floor plan, but clarified that the focus of this decision was on the impact to the exterior structure. Poulson recommended that the owners build the window in a manner that would fit the architectural style of the historic structure.

E. Request for support and recommendations for a statue commemorating the lifework of Elizabeth Peratrovich

M-Poulson/S-Dittmar moved to recommend support for a statue commemorating Elizabeth Peratrovich. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

Tom Gamble informed the Commission that he was looking to find community support for the commissioning, placement, and dedication of a statue commemorating Elizabeth Peratrovich. Gamble spoke to Elizabeth Peratrovich's work on securing civil rights and voting rights for Alaska Natives and also her significance as a female historical figure. Poulson asked for clarification on the type of support that Gamble was looking for, as the Commission itself did not have the capacity to commission the statue. Gamble stated that he was working with several organizations in town on this effort including the tribe, and wanted to ensure that he had the support of the Commission in this endeavor.

F. Invitation and request for Commission support and participation in a Peace Ceremony

Gamble stated that he was working to organize a Peace Ceremony between Kiks.àdi clan representatives and descendants of Alexander Baranof at Centennial Hall on August 8th. Gamble felt the event would be historic in nature, and that Commissioners should, and were invited to, attend. Gamble stated that he would send details on the event to Ainslie; Ainslie stated she would pass along any information received to Commissioners. No action was taken.

G. City Seal Redesign Project

Ainslie gave context regarding the project; a contest was held for 45 days for all interested artists to redesign the City Seal. The contest closed at the end of March but was put on hold due to Covid-19 until June. The design review committee, composed of two Assembly sponsors, the Municipal Administrator, Ainslie, the Municipal Clerk, and a representative of the tribe (Bob Sam) met and reviewed the contest entries. A preliminary screening was held to ensure all accepted entries met the contest criteria, those that did were before the Commission for feedback. Ainslie requested that the Commission concur on a first, second, and third choice from the entries with room for suggested edits and alterations as well as additional comments. Ainslie listed suggested guidelines for considerations. Poulson recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

The Commission agreed on Entry #5 as their top choice, Entry #10 as their second choice, and Entry #4 as their third choice. Littlefield noted that some of the depictions of tribal art and the fauna in the picture did not appear authentic and somewhat cartoon-like, but liked the concept.

IX. SET NEXT MEETING DATE(S):

(2nd Wednesday of the Month, 6 pm **Harrigan Centennial Hall**)
Wednesday, August 12, 2020 – Regular Monthly Meeting

X. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Littlefield adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.