

Sitka Bear Task Force Minutes

Thursday, August 4, 2022 12:00 p.m.
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Task Force Members: Robert Baty, Stephen Bethune, Lillian Feldpausch, Harry Greene or Michael Harmon, Olivia Magni, Martha Moses, Alix Snelling, Andrew Thoms, Claire Turner

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Feldpausch called the meeting to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Task Force members present: Lillian Feldpausch, Harry Green, Martha Moses, Andrew Thoms, Robert Baty, Stephen Bethune (arrived 12:30 p.m.)

Absent: Claire Turner (excused), Alix Snelling (excused), Olivia Magni (excused)

Staff: Administrative Coordinator, Holley Dennison

Others:

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

None.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda)*

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 7, 2022

Motion was made to approve the July 7, 2022, minutes. Member Baty noted his name was missing from roll call. He confirmed his absence prior and he will be added as excused in final draft.

Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

VI. REPORTS

None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Reports on problem bears and enforcement

Member Baty noted officers continued to respond to bear calls on Sawmill Creek Road. Last year the SPD made approximately 200 contacts regarding bears in trash, the first contact a warning and the second contact a ticket. Chair Feldpausch voiced interest in seeing a map of ticket locations. Member Thoms discussed a Facebook post of a bear killed. Baty explained while brown bears are state-managed, police respond to public

safety issues which involve bears when available. He reminded officers can't drop primary calls to respond to bears in garbage. Member Moses noted an economic divide where trash cans are in areas without garages, or the resident doesn't have ability to transport trash. She reminded of a bear population issue, noted waste of bear meat and hide is against the culture of the tribe, and supported an extra garbage pickup day in high bear traffic areas.

Member Baty discussed although calls are lower this year than last year, its's cyclical and tracking annual data may not be a reliable indicator due to bears killed. Chair Feldpausch told of a bear in garbage and difficulty finding a solution with the current ordinance in place for those without a location to store cans or transport garbage. Member Thoms suggested Member Magni create and release a map showing citation locations. Member Baty offered to ask her but cautioned using isolated data to solve the bear problem in Sitka. He noted Girdwood's use of shock pads around canisters. Members Greene, Thoms, and Baty discussed information distributed with warnings.

Member Moses made a motion to ask Member Olivia Magni to add 2021 Citation Tracking Map provided she has time and resources, and Member Thoms seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Member Moses made a motion to accept Member Magni creating a map, but the group opted to wait until Member Magni was present.

Motion failed.

C. Discussions on Community Town Hall meeting/survey

Member Thoms told of Member Magni's idea for a bear issues community survey. He offered to assist with coordinating social service groups to help residents who required help transporting garbage. Member Greene reminded of the bear garbage account at the transfer station. Chair Feldpausch supported sharing information with those new to Sitka. Timeline and process of a survey to address bear issues was discussed. Chair Feldpausch asked each member to send 3 survey questions to her by August 23. A working group to assist with leading the survey was discussed.

IX. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda)*
None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Feldpausch asked for agenda items by August 24. Member Moses suggested to add the survey and the town hall meeting. Next meeting was scheduled for September 1, 2022, at 12:00 p.m., Harrigan Centennial Hall.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

Attest:
Holley Dennison, Staff Liaison