

CALL TO ORDER

The April 19th meeting of the Port Commission at City Hall, Council Chambers was called to order at 7:30pm by Chair Richardson.

ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the Commission, the following were present:

Buster Richardson
Allen DeSousa
R. Thor Williams

Brandon Leary
Donna Chris

Absent: Jeff Severn called the City Manager on Monday afternoon to ask to be excused because of illness.

Also in attendance: City Manager Bob Herron, Grants Development Manager John Sargent and City Clerk Amanda Byington

People to be Heard:

Greg Roczicka, ONC Director of Natural Resources Dept. indicated that he would wait until the Old Business agenda item on logs.

M/M by DeSousa to review and approve the minutes of the March 15th meeting at the May meeting, 2nd by Leary: passed unanimously.

M/M by Williams to approve the agenda, 2nd by Chris: passed unanimously.

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

2004 Season: Two fish processors, Coastal and Inlet have requested lease space on the seawall for fish-buying operations. Howard Elliott will be returning to work at the end of April. Joanne Galliard has resigned and will not be returning this summer to work as she will be caring for her elderly mother. Jim Colonel has returned to working full-time this week at the dock. I have provided a location for Northland Services to set up a temporary office (this season only). It is where Crowley's office was at before moving their modular building to the Crowley tank farm.

FY05 Budget: Essentially the same as the FY04 budget with one notable exception, the City Manager has requested an additional position, Dock Operations Chief. In part, this is due to the resignation of Joanne Galliard. Additionally, Brandon Leary, formally of Kuskokwim Lighterage, has assumed the management of the Crowley tank farm.

Office Relocation: With input from Howard Elliott and Joanne Galliard, I decided that the relocation of the Port Office should be postponed. This will allow the port crew to prepare for the office move this summer. The surveillance cameras played a part in the decision and as well as having sufficient preparation time for the construction of the sand pad without adversely impacting the operations of the fast approaching 2004 barge season. I explained that a vote on the new office design money should occur at the April 27th Council meeting.

M/M by DeSousa to work on a port five-year plan in the next five months in "once-a-month work sessions" outside of the regularly scheduled commission meetings, **2nd** by Leary: There was a discussion of when the last "five-year plan" was developed and a brief listing of some projects, goals and objectives that the commissioners may visit during the advertised work sessions. Passed unanimously.

Grants: The commissioners shared their ideas and thoughts on the pursuit of grants to the City Manager and the Grants Development Manager that may prove beneficial to the Port, Small Boat Harbor and related activities.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

None

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE'S COMMENTS:

Vice-Mayor Williams explained that the City Council is beginning the budget work session schedule and encouraged interested individuals to provide their input on the proposed budget.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

DeSousa – Honorary Captain of the Port: Datu Samuelson has passed away and requested that the nomination process begin and accept names for consideration so as to honor a "sea-faring" elder and to continue the tradition of bestowing the title of Bethel's Captain of the Port on that deserving individual.

Donna Chris – Homeless people: Asked if the Port of Bethel is addressing the issue of homeless individuals in the willows between the Crowley tank farm and the OEH yard near the City's Bus Barn. The City Manager indicated that the area described is actually BNC's property and he would call Mark Stemp to inquire as to their continuing efforts on the "temporary squatting" trespass of their property and get an update for the May meeting.

Brandon Leary – Ports and Homeland Security: Explained that his current employer sent him to Seattle for training to prepare for the requirements that must be implemented for ports and fuel facilities. Commissioner Leary inquired if the City has been notified of any new requirements that the Port must adhere to in the future. City Manager responded that he is unaware of any new or additional requirements since last fall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Firewood Logs in the Small Boat Harbor

Greg Roczicka, ONC's Director of Natural Resources presented a letter detailing the concerns of ONC and requested the Port Commission amend the Bethel Municipal Code's current prohibition of logs and logs rafts in the Small Boat Harbor and offered draft language for their consideration. There was discussion about the safety of the boating public around logs and the limited and congested areas that people could reasonably harvest and transport logs from the waterfront.

M/M by Leary to ask the City Manager to draft an ordinance that changes "shall be unloaded and placed..." to "may be unloaded and placed..." and under a permit system and supervision of the Port Director, **2nd** by Chris: Passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Donation of Picnic Tables

A letter was received from Dave and Sharon Ausdahl offering to donate six picnic tables to be used on the riverfront across from 1st National Bank. Discussion among the commissioners included other areas that could benefit from this donation and protection of these possible future assets from vandalism.

M/M by Williams not to accept the donation from the Ausdahls, 2nd by DeSousa: Discussion ensued about the difficulties with these assets out in the community without "community ownership".

M/M by Williams to amend the main motion to accept the donation with the stipulation that partnerships with other agencies and/or individuals are created for "ownership" to insure the life expectancy of these donated picnic tables, 2nd by DeSousa: Continued discussion focused on the process of identifying other agencies/individuals that would take "ownership" in these picnic tables and help the City maintain and watch over the tables. Also, alternative locations were considered further. It would be the intent to store these tables during the winter months. City Manager Bob Herron said he would delegate the effort to solicit other community partners and individuals to the Grants Development Manager.

Vote on the amendment: 4 – 1 (DeSousa)
Vote on the amended main motion: 4 – 1 (DeSousa)
Motion passed.

B. Committee/Commission Procedure Training by City Clerk

Amanda Byington, City Clerk presented a Committee/Commission Manual to all commissioners in attendance. She provided highlights of common concerns by other committees and commissions. During the presentation, discussion ensued; questions were asked and answered by the City Clerk, Council Member Williams, the City Manager and fellow commissioners.

DISCUSSION:

A. 2003 Audit

Vice-Mayor Williams placed this on agenda and briefed the Port Commission on the audit.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/M by Chris and 2nd by DeSousa to adjourn the meeting at 9:59pm: Passed unanimously.



ORUTSARARMIUT NATIVE COUNCIL

To: Bethel Port Commission, April 19, 2004 meeting

Re: Current prohibition of logs or log rafts in the small boat harbor

Thank you for your willingness to put this matter on your agenda and address in a productive manner when it was brought to your attention at last months' meeting.

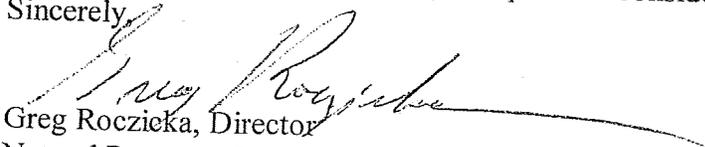
Gathering and tending to annual firewood needs for steambaths and/or home heating in the small boat harbor has been commonly practiced by Bethel residents since its creation. Others bring whole logs home to construct shelters, fish racks, simple yard decorations, fences, etc. The rule in place has seldom (if ever) been enforced and we believe that few (if any) are aware that it even exists. We understand this was enacted some years ago when someone left some logs loosely tied either too close, or directly to, one of the boat ramps - and they inevitably caused a problem. There has been occasion when people have not tended their logs in a timely fashion and one may speculate that some more recent arrivals in Bethel viewed them as an eyesore and complained accordingly; or somehow construed them all as a significant danger regardless of their location to traffic channels; and we may concede there is a possible liability to the City by their presence.

Some of these are valid concerns which then, as now, deserve consideration and corrective response. However, prohibiting the activity entirely as currently effected, is like using a railroad spike to "fix" a problem where a 16 penny nail would do as well or better, with the latter serving a much broader and beneficial public purpose. Present language in Small Boat Harbor Ordinance 14.10.040 M. states: **No logs or firewood shall be unloaded and placed on the beach of the small boat harbor. Log rafts shall not be allowed within the small boat harbor or the entrance thereto.** We request the Commission to recognize the traditional, valid and compatible use of tending logs in the small boat harbor by amending the existing paragraph on point as follows:

"Logs or log rafts brought into the small boat harbor shall be secured or moored in a manner that does not present a hazard to navigation. No logs may be parked or secured in immediate proximity to the boat launch ramps other than in the process of removing them from the water, subject to the same conditions or limitations of other authorized on/off-loading activities. The city shall be held harmless for any loss or incidental damages resulting from logs brought into the small boat harbor. Individuals who do so are granting their implied consent and acceptance of responsibility for damages resulting from their activities, except when due to negligence or engagement in otherwise prohibited activities by another."

Thank you again for your timely and positive consideration regarding this issue.

Sincerely,


Greg Roczička, Director
Natural Resource Dept.