

Mayor's Report - 1_19_2023

Drug-related health crisis

My heart goes out to the family and friends of the community members we lost this week. The response from our police, first responders, and health providers was incredible and I thank you. After reaching out for help, entities from across the state including the Department of Health, SEARHC, and other state agencies put together a teleconference of 40 professionals who are helping Skagway through this difficult time. I also cannot thank them enough and was deeply moved by the level of response.

Let's be honest with ourselves, Skagway has drug problem and has for some time. To battle the insidious nature of fentanyl and the destruction it brings, we all have to work together. NARCAN kits and fentanyl test strips have been distributed around town and this program will expand when the season begins. The police are working overtime to bring those responsible to justice. Everyone in the community has to step up and report drug activity to the police because this is not an issue that is ever going away, no matter how hard we try.

Fentanyl deaths in Alaska and across the country are rapidly increasing. We are all in this together and protecting the health of our families and neighbors should be our highest priority. I urge everyone to familiarize themselves with how to use NARCAN and the other emergency tools at our disposal and if you know someone that is using, please urge them to get help.

For those who are suffering from grief, Mental health services have been made available and in-person care will soon be physically available in Skagway. In the meantime, let's embrace one another and stand strong as a community.

Clinic Board Recommendations

I want it on the record that I'm recommending Leah Mauldin be removed from the board only because of the reasons outlined in the attorney's memo, which have nothing to do with her performance. Leah has been a tremendous asset on the board and I hate to see her go. With the president and vice president both on lengthy vacations, Leah stepped up and ran the last meeting and did an incredible job. I believe the two new clinic board volunteers will be tremendous assets to our community and I'm grateful they stepped forward to serve.

Lobbying Proposal

John Walsh is an incredible asset to this community and I can't imagine attempting to do my job without his professionalism and expertise. I urge the Assembly to approve this proposal, which does not ask for any monetary increase.

Thank you to Megan Brocklesby

Megan dropped everything to attend our Public Safety meeting and tonight's Assembly meeting. I learned more from her about drug-related health response issued in 30 minutes than I've learned in my lifetime. There is no doubt in mind that her willingness to help Skagway will save lives. Megan is Skagway's official support representative from the Department of Health.

60 days

In 60 days, Skagway takes over control and management of its port for the first time in its history. We were bound by a lease for 55 years and I'm sure we are all excited to be free from its limitations on our town. I'm concerned that some of our uplands users suddenly seem unable to abide by the lease terms but hopeful they will eventually understand that we are all bound by the terms of the lease, not by our emotions. I want to acknowledge the hard work from staff and dedication of our assembly members for all of the hard work happening to prepare for this historic occasion.