

## Manager's Update – November 16, 2023

**Meeting with Governor's Office:** On Tuesday, November 14, Mayor Bass, Lobbyist John Walsh, and I met in Anchorage with State Corporation Liaison John Springsteen from the Office of Governor Dunleavy. Topics of discussion included Port of Skagway development, and specifically the Ore Terminal facility that was constructed by AIDEA. At the end of its sublease term, AIDEA opted to leave the Ore Terminal facility in place and allow its ownership to revert to PARN, then to the Municipality. The Municipality is now exploring options for demolition and remediation of the facility. I can give a verbal follow-up report to the Assembly during the meeting.

### **Borough Treasurer's Update:**

**Sales Tax Revenues:** For the third quarter of this year, sales tax collections totaled \$5.7 million, contributing to an expected \$9.9 million in sales tax revenues for the 2023 calendar year. This marks a record-breaking year, surpassing 2019 by approximately \$1 million. This positive trend reflects the thriving economic activity within the community.

**Accounting System Completion:** The accounting system is now fully complete with the installation of the final modules: Sales Tax, Permitting/Inspections, and Business Licensing. Staff is diligently working on getting the online portal operational for Permitting and Business Licensing, providing the public with the convenience of online applications and renewals. Within the next year, the goal is to introduce an online option for sales tax remits and payments via eCheck. Public notices will be disseminated to keep the community informed about these new online services.

This comprehensive project, initiated in 2018, has been a substantial undertaking that could not have been achieved without the persistent hard work of the finance staff & permitting official. Their dedication has resulted in a consolidated system that not only provides better automation but also includes an online customer portal for enhanced accessibility.

**FY22 Audit and Financial Statements:** Calendar year 2022 was the first full year using the new accounting system and the audit process was notably smoother compared to FY21. The Audited Financial Statements for FY22 were completed and approved by the Assembly four months earlier than the FY21 statements. This efficiency is a testament to the effectiveness of the new system in providing accurate and timely financial data.

**One-Year Anniversary of current Finance Team:** November 2023 commemorates the one-year mark of a fully staffed Finance department with the current team members. I want to express my sincere gratitude to each team member for their hard work in learning the new accounting system, adapting to a heavier workload, and contributing to the success of our community. Their dedication has been invaluable, especially during this period of transition.

**Library Director's Update:** The Library's next Book Club meeting will be taking place this Sunday, November 19th at 3:00 pm in the Community Room. We will be discussing Barbara Kingsolver's Pulitzer Prize –winning novel, *Demon Copperhead*. All are welcome to join us!

We are also excited to announce a new aspect of programming here at the Library; starting in December, one Friday night Late Night Library per month will be for 2nd-4th graders – a special Late Night Library, Jr! We will still be hosting two regular Late Night Libraries for 5th graders and up each month, but one additional one will now be aimed at the younger visitors. Our first LNL Jr. will take place on Friday, December 8th – all 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders are welcome!

**Port Director's Update:**

**Ore Peninsula Redevelopment Project:** Work continues with the install of the frame for the falsework to lift the five concrete segments of the ore loader concrete cap. Concrete cap and ore loader platform piles removal is scheduled to begin 11/24. The Pacific Lifter began driving template piles for dolphin 6 on Wednesday 11/15. Cruise dock pile template and trestle pile install is scheduled to begin 11/20.

**Small Boat Harbor Launch Ramp Project:** Work resumed Monday 11/13 after a short pause waiting for low tides. Contractor is currently placing class II rock and will move to reattach the end float and drive the single pile late this week.

**PIDP Grant Update:** On Friday, November 3, the US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration announced port improvement projects approved for the Port Infrastructure Development Program grant. In April, the MOS applied for grant funding for the Skagway Industrial Cargo Transfer Bridge project. Unfortunately, our application was not selected to move forward with award. The press release can be found [here](#). Staff will request feedback and scoring on our application.

**Tourism Director's Update:** Please see the attached Tourism Director's Report.

## Explore Skagway Tourism Director Report – October/November 2023

### A. November is Alaska Native / Native American Heritage Month

- a. Recognizing that we are conducting business on the Traditional Land of the L̓k̓oot Kwáan (Chilkoot Tlingit People) since time immemorial.
- b. By Presidential Proclamation:
  - i. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/10/31/a-proclamation-on-national-native-american-heritage-month-2023/#:~:text=During%20National%20Native%20American%20Heritage,governments%20in%20the%20United%20States.>
- c. <https://www.alaskanative.net/cultural-knowledge/>



### B. Winter Hours of Operation for Skagway Businesses

- a. Report your hours to [skagwayinfo@skagway.org](mailto:skagwayinfo@skagway.org)
- b. Find the list featured on the Skagway Visitor Department Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/thisiskagway>

### C. #ThisIsSkagway Photo & Video Contest

- a. The contest closes at 11:59pm on November 15th. We received some amazing contributions from visitors and locals. THANK YOU for sharing your talent and Skagway experience with Explore Skagway!
- b. Winners will be announced next month.
- c. View submissions here: <https://www.skagway.com/thisiskagway2023/>

**D. Skagway Holidays in Lights! Winter Light & Decorations Contest begins December 1st (SPONSORED BY ROYAL CARIBBEAN GROUP)**

- a. Enter here: <https://www.skagway.com/skagway-holidays-in-lights-winter-light-decorations-contest/>

**E. October Ship Schedule Recap**

- a. October 6th – The Sun turned away in the morning but came back at 1pm
- b. October 23rd – The Sun came in a day earlier than scheduled to avoid tendering.

**F. Extended Season Challenges**

- a. Unheated public restrooms had to be closed prior to the last three ship days because of cold weather. SVD informed CLAA so that the ships could inform passengers.

**G. Port Communities of Alaska**

- a. Meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss formalizing our group.
- b. Meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup> for Port Updates.
  - i. A Sitka resident has proposed his second ballot initiative to limit cruise traffic.
  - ii. The Juneau Assembly unofficially voted via/thumbs up or thumb down on November 6<sup>th</sup> to reduce the number of cruise passengers is sees.
  - iii. Ketchikan is working through a list of Port priority action items created by their Assembly.

**H. JEDC Tourism Working Group Meeting: November 1, 2023**

- a. Regional Partners shared 2023 season recaps and selected top priority items to work on prior to 2024.
- b. Housing, bathrooms, benches, outdoor recreation and more.

**I. JEDC Infrastructure and Land Access Working Group Meeting: November 15, 2023**

- a. I accepted the Co-Chair position for this group talking about desires for trail infrastructure upgrades in Southeast.
- b. Skagway trail upgrades that could help relieve pedestrian congestion include Pullen Creek Stream Walk, AB Mountain and Jánwu Sí't'i (Mountain Goat Glacier)/Denver Glacier Trail.

#### **J. JEDC Seasonal Workforce Housing Initiative Meeting: November 15, 2023**

- a. The objective of this group is to assist companies and workers in the Visitor Industry find adequate seasonal housing during the busy travel season.
- b. Potential outcomes include understanding the demand, identifying, and inventorying existing housing, conceptual designs for dorm-style housing, financing options, collaborative efforts and more.

#### **K. Tongass National Forest Plan Revision**

- a. Recreation, Tourism, and Tribal Involvement are some of the priorities.
  - i. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/tongass/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fseprd1105492>

#### **L. Alaska Seaplanes Community Advisory Board Meeting: November 1, 2023**

- a. Alaska Seaplanes purchased the airport building in Skagway. I requested permission to continue advertising a public restroom at the Airport building in our visitor guide and permission was granted.

#### **M. Skagway Visitor Guide 2024 has gone to print.**

- a. For the second year in a row, the cover photo is Kari Rain's shot. Rain has consistently contributed to #thisisskagway photo contest. We appreciate her willingness to share her art form so that Explore Skagway may add it to our inventory of visual assets.
- b. The inside cover includes a land acknowledgment for the first time:  
*"Shgagwéi is located on the traditional land of the Ḻḵoot Kwáan (Chilkoot Tlingit People). We recognize the Indigenous ownership of the area and the special relationship that the first peoples have with their environment. Your choice to acknowledge that you are a guest on traditional land of the Ḻḵoot Kwáan is a choice to enter into a mutual, respectful relationship with tribal members and it is a commitment to being a responsible and respectful steward of this land. Gunalchéesh (Thank you!)"*
- c. Electronic copy is available here: <https://www.skagway.com/plan-your-trip/visitor-guide/>
- d. 3,500 copies have been sent to INFOX for distribution to travel agents around the world.

#### **N. Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)**

- a. Convention was in Fairbanks on October 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>. Highlights included meetings with Yukon Tourism partners, Cruise partners, DMMO colleagues, Keynote Speakers Denise Lee Yohn, Randy Durband, and more.

- b. Annual Awards were given out including one Skagway recipient; Robert Murphy and the Alaska X Team received the Stan Stephens Stewardship Award for their hydropower installation in Dyea.
  - i. See a list of all the winners here:  
<https://www.alaskatia.org/members/atia-convention/past-industry-award-winners>
- c. A beautiful memorial video was shown honoring the tourism industry people we lost this year which included Skagway's own Bea Lingle, Harry Adrian Bricker, George Butt, Fred Hosford, James Cook, Anthony Bowers, Howard Mallory, Alan L. Anderson, Del Almond, and Al Mosley.
- d. Next year's Convention will be in Juneau, Alaska, "Immersive Alaska", October 22 - 24, 2024
- e. The new ATIA board members are:
  - i. Southeast- Craig Jennison, TEMSCO Helicopters
  - ii. Southeast (outside Juneau)- Jacqui Taylor-Rose, White Pass & Yukon Route
  - iii. Southcentral- Julie Saupe, Visit Anchorage
  - iv. Interior- Wade Binkley, Riverboat Discovery
  - v. Arctic- Matt Atkinson, Northern Alaska Tour Company
  - vi. Outside- Scott Habberstad, Alaska Airlines
  - vii. Outside (Cruise) – Dave McGlothlin, Holland America Group
  - viii. At-Large (Alaska Native)- Jordan Sanford, Kantishna Roadhouse
  - ix. At-Large- Lanie Downs, Cruise Lines International Association-Alaska

#### **O. Yukon Visitor Statistics**

- a. <https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-yukon-tourism-visitation-report-january-march-2023.pdf>

#### **P. Yukon Tourism**

- a. Indigenous Recommendation for Respectful Travel
  - i. <https://indigenouslyukon.ca/things-to-do/respectful-travel>
- b. Shannon Powell Consultants is an Environmental Specialist that frequents our Skagway Small Boat Harbor. She traveled the Klondike Highway a lot this summer and noticed that there was an increase in unsafe wildlife viewing by rental cars drivers this year. She is writing a grant to produce a brochure to distribute to Skagway Rental Car businesses that will promote

safe and respectful travel along the Klondike Highway. Explore Skagway provided a letter of support and will help with edits and distribution of materials if funding is received.

#### **Q. Visitor Feedback**

- a. "Hey Jaime! Didn't know who to Thank in Skagway for being such gracious Hosts at the start of the Klondike Road Relay every year! Always fun to stay in hotels, rent cars, and eat in the restaurants before and after the race! I have been running the Klondike Road Relay since 1991 and have had nothing but the best time in Skagway! What can you say other than Skagway is a beautiful town with beautiful people! Thank you, Don Bremner, Yakutat"

#### **R. 2024 Cruise Ship Schedule**

- a. The June 26<sup>th</sup> version of the cruise ship schedule indicated our first ship would be April 9<sup>th</sup>. But an updated version lists the first ship on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, The Norwegian Jewel.

#### **S. 2024 Skagway Event Magnets are on their way.**

- a. All of those events have been posted here:  
<https://www.skagway.com/events/>

#### **T. Yuletide Schedule**

- a. I appreciate Wendy's hard work getting this schedule together and all those willing to host an event in December!
- b. See all the event here: <https://www.skagway.com/events/>
- c. And here: <https://www.facebook.com/thisiskagway>

#### **U. Medias, Ads & Internet finds for Skagway & Alaska Industries**

- a. Tourism Planners Shift Focus to Communities
  - i. <https://sitkasentinel.com/2012-05-10-22-08-10/local-news/22807-tourism-planners-shift-focus-to-communities>
- b. How I Became a Disney Adult: Just Back from Disney Wonder in Alaska
  - i. <https://www.cruise critic.com/articles/just-back-from-a-disney-wonder-cruise-to-alaska-with-disney-cruise-line>
- c. Six incredible short walks from cruise ship ports
  - i. <https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/traveller/inspiration/six-incredible-short-walks-from-cruise-ship-ports-20231006-p5eae4.html>
- d. Trippin' with The Ganja Traveler: Cruising the Inner Passage of Alaska
  - i. <https://www.greenstate.com/travel/trippin-with-the-ganja-traveler-cruising-the-inner-passage-of-alaska/>
- e. NDP slams Yukon gov't plan to spend \$44M on Alaska port upgrade

- i. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/ndp-slams-yukon-gov-t-plan-to-spend-44m-on-alaska-port-upgrade-1.6998859>
- f. Alaska X in Skagway receives the Stan Stephen's Stewardship Award
  - i. <https://localfirstmediagroup.com/alaska-x-in-skagway-receives-the-stan-stephens-stewardship-award/>
- g. Alaska Cruise Port Guide: Everything You Need To Know
  - i. <https://cruiseaddicts.com/alaska-cruise-port-guide/>
- h. Royal Caribbean Opens Alaska Cruises for 2025
  - i. <https://cruiseradio.net/royal-caribbean-opens-alaska-cruises-for-2025/>
- i. Skagway end of week wrap-up with Melinda Munson | KHNS Radio
  - i. <https://khns.org/skagway-end-of-week-wrap-up-with-melinda-munson>
- j. 10 Best Road Trips You Can Take Through The Scenic State Of Alaska
  - i. <https://www.thetravel.com/best-road-trips-in-scenic-alaska/#skagway-to-haines-south-klondike-highway---coast-and-mountains-in-one-drive>
- k. Sitkan files second petition to put cruise visitor limits out to voters
  - i. <https://www.kcaw.org/2023/10/27/sitkan-files-second-petition-to-put-cruise-visitor-limits-out-to-voters/>
- l. These Small Towns In Alaska Have The Best Historic Districts
  - i. <https://www.worldatlas.com/cities/these-small-towns-in-alaska-have-the-best-historic-districts.html>
- m. Most Assembly members express preference for fewer cruise visitors after record season
  - i. <https://www.juneauempire.com/news/most-assembly-members-express-preference-for-fewer-cruise-visitors-after-record-season/>
- n. Alaska's Craft Distilleries Are the Darlings of the Cruise Industry
  - i. <https://vinepair.com/articles/cruise-industry-alaska-craft-distillery-boom/>
- o. Cumbres & Toltec to Purchase White Pass Diesel
  - i. <https://railfan.com/cumbres-toltec-to-purchase-white-pass-diesel/>



V. Visitor Statistics obtained from US Customs & Border Services (Thank you for your partnership!)

2023 - 16C Monthly Stats for Port 3103 - Skagway, AK													
Data Element by Port	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Total
<b>Trucks</b>	153	246	249	146	159	216	242	281	244	237			2,173
<b>Truck Passengers Arriving</b>	153	246	250	149	166	220	243	388	253	243			2,311
<b>Buses</b>	-	-	-	92	1,587	2,103	2,077	2,244	1,666	121	-	-	9,890
<b>Bus Passengers Arriving</b>	-	-	-	1,513	31,064	42,689	45,863	46,829	29,034	2,208	-	-	199,200
<b>POVs</b>	288	398	765	1,596	5,598	7,276	8,843	7,944	4,816	1,273			38,797
<b>POV Passengers Arriving</b>	683	957	1,866	3,396	11,646	15,872	19,913	17,446	18,089	4,279			94,147
<b>Pedestrians Arriving</b>	-	-	5	4	36	55	90	148	39	38			415
<b>Trains</b>	-	-	-	-	58	72	86	90	67	7			380
<b>Train Passengers Arriving</b>	-	-	-	-	14,353	17,160	19,610	21,198	9,207	576			82,104
Source													
CBP- 16C													
73103-01X													
Ships	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Total
<b>Passenger</b>	-	-	-	12,753	178,466	235,666	261,897	254,683	178,919	43,421			1,165,805
<b>Crew</b>	7	-	24	5,115	77,097	101,165	103,571	100,716	74,878	17,540			480,113
<b>Ships</b>	3	1	2	7	79	106	107	108	73	12			498