



THE CITY OF WHITTIER

Gateway to Western Prince William Sound

P.O. Box 608 • Whittier, Alaska 99693 • (907) 472-2327 • Fax (907) 472-2404

THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION HEARING

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2017

5:00 P.M.

THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

P-12 BUILDING

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Daniel Blair called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM

2. ROLL CALL

A. Council Members Present: Debra Hicks, Dave Dickason, Dave Pinquoch, Monty Irvin, and Dan Blair

B. Council Members Absent: Victor Shen

C. Administration Present: Mark Lynch, City Manager, Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk, Scott Korbe, Public Works Director and Dyanna Pratt, Tax Administrator

Others Present: Arnie Erickson, Assessor from Appraisal Company of Alaska and Council Member, Peter Denmark

3. TURN MEETING OVER TO ASSESSORS – Arnie Erickson

Mayor Dan Blair turned the meeting over to Arnie Erickson.

Arnie Erickson announced that he had only one appeal this year and it was from Peter Denmark of Alaska Sea Kayakers.

Arnie Erickson read out loud Peter Denmark's letter of appeal. The letter addressed the ongoing issue of erosion behind his shop and how it is slowly making its way underneath the building. Mr. Denmark claims that the erosion is creating an ever-worsening safety issue.

Mr. Erickson provided council members with photos he took the previous Friday which documents the erosion behind Peter Denmark's kayak shop. He pointed out the base-mark from 2007 and compared it to the photographs taken within the last three years. He explained, "The only way to know exactly what Mr. Denmark has is if there is some type of survey that will provide us with good scientific data."

Mayor Dan Blair asked if there were questions or comments.

Peter Denmark added that last year there was an attempt to find the plat of the lots. He asked, "Do you reduce the value with every passing year? If it is a hundred year lease, should it decline in value about 1% a year? If you were in the 99th year of a 100 year lease, the value will have approached to 0."

Arnie Erickson reported that Mr. Denmark has 17 years remaining on his lease. Mr. Denmark reminded the Council that he isn't doing this for the money and he is aware that the issue is small. He stated that this process is the only way he can get the ongoing erosion issue on public record.

Dave Pinquoch asked Peter Denmark if the value on his appeal form is an old value or if it was a mistake.

Peter Denmark replied that he must have used the numbers from last year's hearing. He stated that the number was to back up his argument, and his opinion, given the issues at hand, the land is not worth what it says. The value on his appeal was an estimated amount due to these circumstances. He claimed that the difference between the two numbers is not a significant dollar amount. He reminded the Council that he is only using this process to get the erosion issue, "on the table."

Dan Blair stated that a bid for engineers will be put out this year. He explained that the engineers will be using gabion baskets as a fix. He said this method won't be cheap, but it will be cheaper than using steel structures and sheet piles.

Mark Lynch asked Mr. Denmark if sheet pile would serve its purpose by his shop.

Mr. Denmark replied that he is operating by low-tide. He explained that if the issue was corrected by sheet wall, it would somehow change the perimeters. He said that if they were to use the sheet piling method, he would like to have a stairway going down to the small floating dock where he can launch his kayaks or a polycraft. Mr. Denmark informed the Council that he has been operating business from the Harbor since 1996. He explained that he purchased the property in the Triangle to be closer to the launch ramp. He stated that he was hopeful that whatever solution is selected, it can be facilitated.

Mark Lynch reported that the Corp. of Engineers will require us to obtain a full construction permit because it has passed the stage of calling it maintenance. A RFP for a city engineer has been completed and its approval from the Mayor is needed before it can be published. To name a few, the city engineer will work on all upcoming City projects such as the new city park, Shotgun Cove Road and the harbor's erosion issue.

Peter Denmark stated that the erosion issue at the Inn at Whittier site is parallel, if not, identical to his. He also added that when the tide is low, there is only 15 ft. between water's edge, and the ocean dock piers in that corner of the harbor. He stated that loading from docks like that, where the profiles are a foot or more above the water line, is less than ideal for loading people into kayaks than docks with a higher profile.

Dan Blair stated that the City is in business of leasing property and we should fix the erosion before all the property goes away. He also added that it's in the best interest for both parties to fix the erosion problem. Peter Denmark replied that the light pole is a marker for his business. He often tells his clients to locate his building by instructing them to look for the one light pole that's leaning into the harbor.

Mark Lynch said he hopes this would be a topic for Council when the City hires an engineer.

Vice-Mayor, Dave Pinquoch suggested having the old gangway lead to a small launch dock for paddle crafts. Peter Denmark was in favor of this suggestion.

MOTION: Dave Dickason made a motion to accept the assessor's recommendation of no change to the assessment of the Alaska Sea Kayakers of the Harborview.

SECONDED: Monty Irvin

VOTE: Passed unanimously

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dave Dickason made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

SECONDED: Dave Pinquoch

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk



Daniel Blair, Mayor