

Mayor's Report
General Meeting August 14, 2023

Salmon River Park Shelter Clean-up

I begin with a thank you to Lewis Sharman, the Tidelands Institute, and the Institute's current program attendees for the much-needed clean up of the Salmon River Park Shelter roof and surrounding area. The roof was overgrown with moss and sprouting trees and adjacent tree branches encroached it. The group cleaned off the roof, removed the sprouting spruces and trimmed the branches from adjacent trees. They also cleaned up grounds in the wooded area between the shelter and the City Hall access roadway. The work will help sustain the integrity of the shelter for years to come. Thank you!

GVA Welcome Kiosk Relocated



Thanks to the Gustavus Visitor Association and to Gustavus Construction (with concrete pad from Glacier Bay Construction) for the excellent relocation of the welcome kiosk on Dock Road to the west side where it has a much better background of Gustavus for photos and visitor appreciation. The new concrete pad makes for a neater site. The City Council's appropriated additional visitor bed-tax revenues to the GVA to cover the cost. Watch for new, upgraded GCA displays on Gustavus history and visitor opportunities.

Beach Park developments

In early July there were several occasions of vehicles being driven past the vehicle limits onto both sides of the Beach Park causing rutting and damage to vegetation and to the new hardened trail. Tracks and ruts appeared across fireweed meadows from Dock Road behind the new welcome kiosk location, and motorcycles were driven through the hardened trail entry causing erosion of the trail surface.

Consequently, we installed several signs indicating the area is closed and extended the log barrier along the west side of Dock Road to the northern boundary of the beach tract A, where it adjoins with the DeBoer property, which is also closed to motor vehicles. At the suggestion of several residents and council members we also installed a game camera on the west side for a couple weeks to monitor for vehicles. There were *no incursions* during the time the camera was in place, and we have since removed it. We are hopeful that the new log barriers will be sufficient to prevent further damage to the meadows by off-road vehicles. *Thank You* to Vince Schaffer for donating the logs and Glacier Bay Construction for placing them neatly along the Dock Road right-of-way edge.

There are divided views on signs and cameras at the Beach Park. The State Troopers tell us that without photographic evidence of vandalism they can't take enforcement action even when the damage or thefts amount to third-class felonies. Some residents press the City to post signs and cameras if necessary to deter or catch vandals whose activities damage resources or cost the City repair and replacement costs. Others object to signs and cameras as an infringement. In late July, several of the signs and posts were stolen from the west side of Dock Road and a camera monitoring the area outside the restrooms and trash bins on the Bulk Fuel Facility Pad disappeared. The post by the hardened trail entrance also had the dog-waste supply container stolen. Some residents who object to signs and dog-waste stations have suggested that we would have better cooperation with the vehicle closure area if the signs and dog waste supply were not replaced. At our work session on August 7, 2023, the council discussed giving that suggested approach a try. For an indefinite trial period we will not replace the stolen signs and dog waste supply station, except for one no-vehicles symbol sign on a log at the entrance to the hardened trail as a reminder for the motorcycle riders not to enter there. We will also not reinstall cameras in the park or by the trash/restroom facility while we monitor cooperation. We will work with the Gustavus Visitors Association to make space for a small posting of Beach Park rules on the Welcome to Gustavus Kiosk. The administration will consult with the council for direction before using cameras at the park. I am hopeful that further signs and photo surveillance will not be needed.

Dock/Beach Restrooms and Trash Containers

City Marine Facilities Coordinator, Larry Platt, is diligent in keeping the restrooms clean and the trash/recycling picked up at the site on the Bulk Fuel Facility Pad. It is discouraging, though, when people misuse them and leave messes for him to clean up. Someone has occasionally dumped *and spilled* honey buckets in the restrooms and people drop off bags of household or boat trash in the trash or recycling bins. Reminders are now posted asking the public not to dump honey buckets in the restroom and to take household or boat trash to the DRC. *The trash and recycling bins there are for incidental beach use trash only.* Let's all do our part to keep Gustavus beautiful, clean, and sanitary by disposing of waste appropriately. Larry will especially appreciate it!

July PFAS Monitoring Results Good for City Facilities

On Friday August 12, Shannon & Wilson sent the City the laboratory analytical results for water monitoring at the City Hall, Firehall, Library, and Community Garden. Per the City's contract they sampled raw water from the wells and treated tap water inside facilities. No PFAS compounds were detected at the Library or Community Garden. Results continue to detect some PFAS compounds in water wells at City Hall and the Firehall, but the levels are just barely above the detection limit and are far below the current and proposed, stricter, EPA standards for drinking water supplies. Because the PFAS concentrations are barely detectable it is hard to draw conclusions about the relative effectiveness of the carbon filtration at our sites, but in both the May and July sampling at City Hall, water from the

reverse osmosis tap at the sink has never had detectable PFAS concentrations. It may be that RO is more effective than the basic carbon filtration cartridges at removing PFAS compounds. One more round of sampling will occur in Fall to characterize seasonal variability.

Cul-de-Sac Turnaround and improvement Projects Completed for Four Roads

Glacier Bay Construction has constructed improved cul-de-sac turnarounds at Porcupine Rd, Meadow Ln, and Mary's Rd, and they improved the length of Glen's Ditch Road from the Same Old Road intersection to the end at the Nagoonberry Trail. The new gravel is still soft but will pack down with additional traffic and the contractor will re-grade these roads as needed in coming weeks. These improvements will enable more effective snow plowing and emergency responses to the neighborhoods served by the roads. Thanks to Glacier Bay Construction for great work with these improvements.

Please Respect Neighborhoods When Driving in Gustavus

Most gravel roads in Gustavus are narrow and sometimes dusty. They pass through residential neighborhoods and visitor facilities. People and pets are out in yards and children may be playing or riding bikes in the road. Let's all *please be respectful and considerate* of the properties and residents we pass, as we want others to do for us. Some roads, like the City-maintained Glen's Ditch Road and the AP&T-maintained Hydro Road, are narrow and get extra traffic because they lead to popular hiking or recreational sites. Please drive extra slowly and quietly, minimizing the effect of your passage. Think of it as respectful "Leave No Trace" driving!

Mike Taylor
Mayor, City of Gustavus