

## Mayor's Report

### General Meeting for September 11, 2023

**It's been a busy month again at City Hall and we are pleased to report progress on several fronts.**

**We are delighted to welcome our new City Clerk, Leisl Barker, to the City team!**

Leisl and her family have moved to Gustavus from back east. Her husband Leland joins the ranger team at Glacier Bay National Park. We were lucky to recruit Leisl to our Clerk position as she brings a wealth of administrative and management experience. She and her three children got off the ferry on Tuesday and the kids went directly to their new Gustavus School classes. Leisl came to our work session Tuesday night Sept. 5, and worked with former Clerk Karen Platt to get oriented to our meeting processes. It's wonderful to have Leisl on board now and *we continue to be very grateful for the continuing support from previous clerk Karen Platt* during the transition. We look forward to getting back to a steady productive schedule with full staffing at City Hall, the election coming up soon, and returning to our previous longer open hours for the public.

**Library Bike Shelter is complete.**



*Thanks to contractor Matt Davis of Terra Construction for the nice job building our new Library bike shelter, completed over the Labor Day Holiday weekend. The shelter, designed by PND Engineers, is sturdy and attractive. It should serve us for many decades. There is plenty of room for to park bikes out of the rain and snow and for laptop users to connect to the library's WiFi service. We may add a narrow, wall-mounted worktable and bench for WiFi users along the left side near where you see the bike in the photo. Until then the picnic table will serve for that purpose. So*

please ride your bikes to the library and park them out of the rain for your convenience. And we invite you also to make use of the free Wi-Fi service complements of the City of Gustavus!

**Road turnarounds and Glen's Ditch Road improvements completed.**

*Thanks to Glacier Bay Construction for fine work to complete turnarounds at Porcupine St., Meadow Ln, Mary's Rd, and for the nice rebuild of Glen's Ditch Rd from Same Old Road to the Nagoonberry Trail parking area. These turnaround and road improvements will enable more effective snow plowing service and improve the appearance and serviceability of the roads for these neighborhoods. Work continues in September to complete the last turnaround in this project at Extratuff Rd.*



Mary's Road Turnaround



Glen's Ditch Road Improvement



**Beach Park Developments**

Last month we reported on our efforts to prevent off road motorized travel on Beach Park lands in accordance with the development plan in the Cooperative Resource Management Agreement with the State of Alaska. The logs we placed along the edges of Dock Road to delineate the motor vehicle boundary have effectively prevented further vehicle damage to the fireweed meadows on the west side. Thanks to everyone for conforming to these protective measures for the beauty of the meadows and the trails thereon.

At the suggestion of several residents we have not replaced the "No motor vehicles" signs that were stolen in July. The idea has been that people already know that the beach lands are off limits to motorized vehicles (although we allow bikes and even e-bikes beyond the vehicle barriers), and that signs are not needed. We will continue to monitor the situation and hope to minimize signs. However, on Sunday, September 10, after the Demolition Derby several ATV riders who came over for the day for the event drove around barriers on the east side of the dock entrance and tore up vegetation and tracked up the beach strand. Perhaps without the signs to tell them otherwise they felt it was OK to race around there. We may need to place a couple discrete signs in that area to make it clear that ATVs are not allowed beyond the lob limits. We will take a new look at what is needed in the Fall.

DNR representatives are planning to come out some time this month to visit DNR lands, including the beach park and we will ask their ideas for protecting the resources there while providing for enjoyment of them by the public.

**Heat Pump shelter completed at City Hall.**

*Thanks to Zach Williams for a very nice job building a weather shelter for the heat pump outdoor compressor unit for the MRCOOL heat pump system at City Hall. The shelter completes the heat pump installation project. We invite anyone interested in heat pumps and particularly those with do-it-yourself installations to stop by City Hall for a tour of our new system.*



**AP&T rate case filed.**

AP&T, our electric power service provider, has filed a new rate case as required periodically by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska. Rate cases set the base electric rate for about three-year periods. Our current rates are based on costs from the Utility's 2019 year. A regulated electric utility cannot raise rates continuously as other private enterprises do to reflect inflation, so it must wait until the next opportunity for a rate case. Since the 2020 rate-setting exercise, there has been substantial inflation, as we all know, so the utility has some catching up to do to adjust rates to reflect their current costs and achieve the legally-allowable and reasonable return on their investment. Details of the rate proposal were summarized by Jason Custer, AP&T VP for regulatory affairs in the one-page document I have attached to this report. While a substantial base rate increase is proposed, some of it will be offset by power cost equalization credits for qualified ratepayers. Also, all power sales to the National Park Service facilities at Bartlett Cove will be credited back to rate payers to reduce the base rate. AP&T also will for the first time propose optional time of use rates so that users who can shift some of their electrical load (such as for charging electric cars or using heat pumps) to the hours of 7:00 pm to 7:00 am, will have reduced rates for those hours. The benefit will be to reduce the need to supplement hydropower with expensive diesel generation during times of marginal flow. The more we can keep the diesels off, the lower will be the Cost of Power Adjustment (COPA) portion of our bill. I don't intend to propose the City take a position on the Rate Case and rather to trust the Regulatory Commission of Alaska to assure that the costs documentation by the utility properly supports the utility request and that ratepayers are being treated fairly. However, local ratepayers are urged to review the summary I have attached and seek any more information from the RCA web page.

*Mike*

Mike Taylor  
Mayor, City of Gustavus