

City of Edna Bay - Special Meeting

1 — Meeting Date, Place and Call to order:

This Special meeting was held on Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at Edna Bay School.
Mayor Richter called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

2 — Roll Call:

Heather Richter	- Mayor / Presiding Officer	(Present)
Karen Williams	- Vice Mayor / City Council	(Present)
Tyler Poelstra	- Clerk / City Council	(Present)
Myla Poelstra	- Treasurer / City Council	(Present)
Carleigh Fairchild	- City Council	(Present)
Paul Haag	- City Council	(Present)
Doris Greif	- City Council	(Absent)

2.1 — Public Participants:

Fran Wright Pat Richter Clarence Clark Jim Schwarber

3 — Consent Agenda:

A: Approval of Meeting Agenda:

The current agenda was read by Mr. Poelstra.

Consensus of the public attendants was taken in favor, and no objections were noted.

Motion:

Mayor Richter moved to approve the Consent Agenda as read.

- *Seconded by Councilor (Mr.) Poelstra*
- **Approved by unanimous vote of the council**

3.1 — Business:

Special Business:

- a: *Meeting with Division of Forestry regarding Southeast State Forest Management Plan.*

4 — **Special Business**

Item A – Meeting with Division of Forestry regarding Southeast State Forest Management....:

Mayor Richter introduced Mr. Clarence Clark and Mr. Jim Schwarber to the Council and public in attendance to discuss the contents of the Division of Forestry State Forest Management Plan and conduct the public hearing for the plan.

Mr. Schwarber introduced himself to the attendance and described that the hearing is to provide for an opportunity for the City Council and general Public to comment on the draft plan. Both written and verbal testimony can be taken at this hearing, with each verbal testimony being taken for up to 3 minutes of time.

The basic “Theme” of the plan is the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act. The State Forests were established in 2010 and 2011, and the hearings not being held because the Division wants to hold them, but because the agency is required to hold them. The land transferred to State Forest was previously “General Use” land in the Prince of Wales Island Plan, and has now been transferred as an LDA, or Legislatively Designated Area and will no longer appear in future Prince of Wales Area Plans.

Mr. Schwarber noted that under AS 41.17.200 the primary purpose of State Forest is for forest management.

Questions were now taken from the public and council. A question was raised on if there is anything the City has been discussing about overlapping interests that should be included in testimony? Mr. Clark suggested that Chapter 2 of the plan should be evaluated to see if anything is missing and that the City could suggest including the term “easement” and “Municipal / Public” land instead of “Private” lands in relation to access provisions.

Mr. Clark explained that Chapter 3 is about capturing local knowledge and storing it in order to carry it forward to future forest management personnel. If the community is interested in seeing Forestry have a longer term sustainable yield and timber sales that residents may want to include that in their comments. He noted that the existing sustainable yield schedule is based on 3 entrances over a 30 year span each. He further explained that if the community wants to see that changed that they could request it in their letters and testimony and the Division of Forestry could begin looking into the prospect and feasibility of a change.

Mr. Clark noted that the community could also suggest that in order to make road access easements easier to maintain and simpler to implement, that they are interested in seeing one land owner, which would mean a land transfer from University of Alaska to the Division of Forestry. He noted that as public land, all residents would have access to the lands the University currently owns, when currently they do not. According to Mr. Clark, the University is open to an exchange. Mr. Clark suggested that the community could comment to protect road access to the entitlement lands.

Mr. Clark stated that in regards to fish stream buffers on public lands, that the regulations that the Division of Forestry must operate under are "More stringent than anybody else".

Mr. Schwarber then opened the public testimony phase of the hearing. There was no verbal testimony offered by the public or council at this time. Some attendants noted that they would like to take more time to look into the plan and form credible responses to the information presented at the hearing and in the document in writing.

Councilor (Mr.) Poelstra if there is a mechanism in the State Forest for "Micro Sales" or "Personal Use / Free Use" to a small private purchaser to build a home with, for example, and emphasized the importance of access to local timber and materials to offset cost of living due to Edna Bay's isolated location. Mr. Clark said "Yes and No". Statute includes support for this type of system, but it is not currently implemented. He stated that if the community is interested in seeing this type of program implemented, to include that request in comment letters.

Councilor Fairchild asked if there is a schedule for amendment to the Forest Management Land Plan. Mr. Clark said that there is not currently a standard time frame, and that the schedule is open ended. The intent is that the plan is "Reviewed and revised when necessary".

Mr. Clark shared that the Division of Forestry can sell timber to the City at low or no cost for use on projects for the public interest, with the stipulation that the timber cannot be sold by the City. The breakwater / stiff leg was cited as an example of the type of project this would apply to.

Councilor (Mr. Poelstra) asked if rock and other mineral resources can be purchased from Division of Forestry if needed by the City of Public in the future. Mr. Clark referenced the Sub Surface Resources section of the plan, which emphasizes that the user seek materials from outside of the State Forest lands first before any materials can be considered within this. He noted that the plan does not preclude this type of interaction.

Councilor (Mr.) Poelstra asked if there was a mechanism in place for any State Forest land boundaries to be changed, should the City need areas to develop in the future. Mr. Clark said that since it was designated by the State Legislature, that it would take legislative action to change them. He noted that the Division can offer land use permits which could meet the needs of the City in the future.

Scenery Concerns were discussed. Mr. Clark noted that if there are any concerns of this nature that the community be specific about what and where they are in their comment letters.

5 – Persons to be Heard:

None.

Adjournment

Mayor Richter moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion seconded by Councilor (Mrs.) Poelstra

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.