MINUTES

CBJ Review Task Force
Basing NOAA Fisheries & Oceanographic Functions in Alaska
Fourth Meeting
Monday, November 17 2014; 12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.
Rm. 224 Municipal Bldg., 155 S. Seward Street

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM by co-chair Greg Fisk

Other Members present were co-chair Assemblywoman Troll, Jim Becker and Randy. Wanamaker. Absent due to family concerns was member Jeep Rice.

The agenda was adopted as presented by unanimous consent, as were the minutes from the previous meeting on May 12th. There were no members of the public present.

Discussion ensued on the daft Task Force report for the Assembly presented by co-chair Fisk. The following are the principal points raised.

1. Fisk reviewed contacts made since last meeting including:
   i) Several discussions with AFSC leadership to iron out employment and budget numbers, noting that Director DeMaster and Deputy Director Ignell had been quite forthcoming and helpful. Discussions with Marine Operations Center – Pacific NOAA vessels had been less fruitful. Additional contacts expected.
   ii) Excellent discussions with Director of the Port of Newport on how they competed for, funded & leased back their $30 million+ MOP facility to NOAA.
   iii) Recent meeting / briefing with JEDC’s Juneau Research cluster group, and chair Shannon Atkinson & their enthusiastic support for Task Force efforts;
   iv) Provision of information to Barb Sheinberg for inclusion in upcoming Juneau Economic Plan

2. Wanamaker noted that language used throughout the report should be carefully chosen to avoid unnecessarily provoking negative reaction, as the subject of moving federal jobs will doubtless be highly charged in Washington. We should also carefully couch references to past inaction by State or local government in Alaska. Some discussion ensued about the need nonetheless make clear what is at stake and how the situation became what it is today.

3. Becker thought historical references to Statehood issues and development of fishery management over the years was good, and necessary to bring Assembly and legislative delegation up to speed.

4. Co-Chair Troll raised the issue of incremental versus moving functional units approach, and language on that section was reviewed. She noted that while she had supported incremental efforts, she acknowledged Director DeMaster’s suggestion as to the importance of moving functional units as “a bolus” of jobs. Task Force will not take an either / or approach on this, but will emphasize the need to stop further job losses, support Alaska positioning of new hires along with outlining “big picture” need to move large blocks of positions out of Seattle to Alaska.
5. Fisk discussed the Newport example of local government taking the lead by providing “build to suit” project development and bond funding backed by a firm lease agreement with NOAA / GSA, noting that Alaska has all the capabilities in place to follow this strategic approach.

6. Fisk suggested that given Juneau’s position and relative chances for success in the foreseeable future, Task Force should recommend focus on AFSC, with work on ships coming later as the situation develops. AFSC has a build out plan that could be a blueprint for action. Completing the facility as originally conceived could accommodate 140 additional positions, plus existing 20 vacant places at TSMRI at Lena Point. (Also ten vacant offices at downtown subport facility)

7. The functional units of AFSC mostly in Seattle were discussed:
   i) RACE, REFML, NMML, FMA and support staff;
   ii) If TSMRI was built out it could accommodate all of RACE, REFML, FMA and support staff, which are groups most critical to Alaska fisheries management and with most synergies in Juneau;
   iii) Rough estimate to build facilities and move these units is $150 million.

8. Troll suggested that using “functional unit” approach, we should look at FMA division as best immediate opportunity as this smaller unit can be accommodated now, without new facilities, and had been suggested as a possibility by DeMaster. It also is a high priority for Senator Murkowski.

9. Troll, Wanamaker and Becker suggest review of draft to develop a section on Opportunities as well as Impediments, emphasizing:
   i) positive synergies with other research orgs, and federal functions;
   ii) positive benefits for better science;
   iii) Juneau livability benefits.

10. Wanamaker suggested looking at report formatting to get essentials up front in Exec. Summary, and perhaps move some historical info to appendices.

A next meeting date to review a revised draft was discussed, but Co-Chair Troll suggested that we are close enough that review could be accomplished by email. She also pointed out the timeliness of this, and her desire to get our report to the Assembly ASAP, with a view to scheduling an Assembly COW meeting before Christmas. This approach was agreed. Fisk to send out a revised version as soon as possible.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 PM