



Seldovia Gazette

Serving Seldovia, Alaska and Kachemak Bay southeast

Seldovia, AK

64 °F / 18 °C

Clear

at 7:53 PM



[Click for Forecast](#)

Thursday, July 7, 2005

Just another day in paradise

Vol. 1, No. 5, July 7, 2005

[Local News](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Opinions](#)

[Spotlight](#)

[School](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Archives](#)

[Seldovia.com](#)

[Gazette Services](#)

[Top Stories](#) | [City Managers Corner](#) | [Police Report](#) | [Repeats & Notices](#) |

Headlines

- ▶ [Labor layoffs loom for city employees](#)
- ▶ [Harbormaster building to receive renovations, fish cleaning table gets go-ahead](#)
- ▶ [Chamber of Commerce News Release](#)
- ▶ [City Council Workshop starts harbor renovation plans](#)
- ▶ [Tidbits . . .](#)
- ▶ [City Manager's Corner](#)
- ▶ [Police Report](#)

Opinions



2 Cents Worth

- ▶ [Letters to the Editor - none this week](#)

Spotlight

- ▶ [July 4, 2005 Festival](#)

Repeats & Notices

- ▶ [DOT Releases Seldovia Airport Master Plan Environmental Assessment](#)

Marketplace

[>> Summer Special <<](#)



2 nights at Seaport Cottages + Round trip on Smokey Bay!
Only \$275. Call for details 907-234-7483

Support the Seldovia Sea Otter Booster Club
Help keep sports and academic travel programs alive for our school!



Seldovia Boat Slips for Rent
The Seldovia harbor has 32 foot and 42 foot slips for rent. Call for details:
Harbor Master (907) 234-7886
City Office (907) 234-7643

Top Stories

Labor layoffs loom for city employees

Union refuses city's health care offers by Damará Burnett

Following an executive session at Wednesday night's city council meeting, official remarks were made by the council in regard to recent negotiations between the City of Seldovia and employees of the city who are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Worker's Union.

According to the official record, as reported by Councilman Steve Lewis:

- A. Bargaining unit employees have enjoyed a free health care program that is probably unparalleled among employees of small municipal corporations in Alaska.
- B. Given the projected revenues for the city and announced premium increases for the health care plan, the city informed the union and the bargaining unit that every employee of the city, including the bargaining unit employees, would have to move to a less expensive plan, that would fit within the city's budget and ability to pay.
- C. Rather than force a solution to the problem, the city offered the bargaining unit seven different options, involving various combinations of plan reductions, plan coverage, premium sharing and modifications of wage increases, to help solve the financial problems.
- D. After being informed that a refusal by the bargaining unit to select one of the options by June 30th, would cause the city to incur the expense of the increased premium for the health care plans for one year on top of a wage increase computed at 100% of the CPI-U, the bargaining unit rejected all seven options and voted to force the city to continue to pay 100% of the increased premium for the plan and pay 100% of the wage increase. It could be said that the bargaining unit refused to participate in any way in allowing the city to live within its means. The primary response from the bargaining unit was

▶ [NOAA representatives to visit Seldovia and the Kasitsna Bay Lab](#)

▶ [Boys and Girls Club Newsletter April-May](#)

▶ [Harbor Survey Priority Results \(you need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view this document\)](#)



PDF files require a special "Reader" in order to view pdf files. Click the Adobe button above to get a **FREE pdf reader!**

that the city should raise taxes and fees to pay for their health care plan and wage increase.

E. Given these factors, the city intends to continue bargaining with the unit, and will earnestly seek an agreement, but in the meantime it is the recommendation of the labor committee and the City Manager that the council now direct the City Manager to proceed with a reduction in employee hours up to and including layoffs of some employees and potentially other cost saving measures that must be taken in order to allow the city to live within its currently passed budget. This is necessary in order to find the money necessary to pay for the increased costs of the contract that we are faced with for the next year due to the bargaining units decision.

In a brief interview following the meeting, Reynertson said he was disappointed he had to enact the council's directions to layoff some city employees and reduce the hours of all city employees, whether or not they are union members.

"This is not what I want to do," Reynertson said, "but my hands are tied."

City employees who will be affected by the recent bargaining unit decisions include: Andy Anderson, Chief of Police; Susan Carlough, Harbormaster; Rance Zeien, Public Works; John Gruber, Public Works; Ronda Haynes, City Clerk/Treasurer; Mavis Owens, Deputy City Clerk/Treasurer; Mary Klinger, Fire & EMS Administrator; Doug Perrin, Custodian; and Leny Buchman, Administrative Assistant.

Harbormaster building to receive renovations, fish cleaning table gets go-ahead

Council awards bids despite budget shortfalls and talk of extravagance

by **Damara Burnett**

On Wednesday, July 6th, the city council debated whether or not to award two separate bids to improve structures adjacent to the Seldovia Small Boat Harbor. One award was for repairs to the Harbormaster Building; the other award was for manufacturing a new fishing cleaning station in the harbor.

The first contract appropriated \$25,538 to Hugh Q. Smith for continued renovation of the Harbormaster Building. Repairs will include building a handicapped accessible restroom, re-shingling the roof, replacing the floors and windows, painting the inside and outside of the building, and replacing the heating system. Money for the repairs is anticipated to come from excess balances in the Small Boat Harbor Fund and the Boat Haul Out Fund; there is currently not enough money allocated in the FY05 Budget to pay for the repairs.

City Manager Kurt Reynertson said that despite fiscal concerns, repair of the

building is a necessary expenditure.

"It's a focal point of the community," Reynertson said. "We have to invest in ourselves before we can expect others to invest in us."

Members of the community who spoke at the meeting agreed with him. One 18-year resident, Paulie Carluccio, noted that the current bathrooms are in dire need of renovation.

"You practically have to stand on the toilet to close the bathroom door," Carluccio said. "Speaking for all the women, please, fix the bathrooms."

Hugh Smith - the contractor who was awarded the repair bid - noted that the city currently spends \$1,800 a year to heat the 29-year old building and should be able to decrease that cost substantially once a more efficient heating system has been installed.

Councilman Tom Glover also pointed out that the fuel cost savings at today's prices would payback renovation expenditures for the entire building over the next 20 years.

But for Councilman Steve Lewis, financial concerns - particularly the FY05 Budget shortfall - outweighed any convenience a renovated harbormaster building might bring.

"We're \$90,000 in the hole, folks," Lewis said, "we're spending more money than we got."

Council member Keith Gain agreed. He questioned whether all the repairs slotted for the building - such as re-shingling the roof and replacing the underground fuel tank - were necessary at this time.

"This particular item is not going to break us," Councilman Walter McInnes countered. "I've seen so many things not get done . . . and I think we're going about [the repairs] in a very economical way."

The second award the council discussed at the meeting was for a new fish cleaning station in the harbor. The city received two bids for the project - one from General Mechanical, Inc., out of Anchorage, and the other from Delta Industrial Services, Inc., located in Delta Junction, Alaska. Delta Industrial Services is the company who built a fish cleaning table in Valdez, Alaska; it inspired the City of Seldovia's plans for its fish cleaning station.



Delta Industrial Services' bid for manufacturing one fish cleaning table was \$52,400, excluding transportation costs. The money for the table would come from the City of Seldovia's Small Boat Harbor Improvement Project, which has a total useable budget of 2.4 million dollars.

Councilman Lewis, again citing monetary concerns, said spending \$52,400 for a piece of equipment used only seasonally was a "totally ridiculous expenditure of funds."

"It is an extravagance," Councilman Mark Massion agreed, "and it is expensive. I'm hesitant, but I vote to support it."

Council member Tom Glover voiced his support for the Delta bid. He noted the table's function, portability, and the fact it could be immediately built and useable by next spring.

In the end, the council awarded the contracts for both projects by a vote of 5-1. Lewis was the only dissenting vote in each case.

In other council news:

- The city council adopted Ordinance 05-07, which amended the FY05 budget. ([Click here for budget](#))
- The council agreed to a policy change for annual slip fees in the harbor. Annual slip owners will now have to pay their yearly bill by February 28th, instead of on their "anniversary day" – or the date they first began moorage in the harbor.
- The council listened to two public presentations regarding the Seldovia Volunteer Fire Department. The first presentation was by Alix Chartier in response to former Fire Chief Jim Owens' resignation letter. His letter was made public at the last council meeting; Chartier presented her own letter to the council to "clarify the misinformation and address the unsubstantiated negative comment" of Owens' letter.

PDF of Chartier letter of July 3, 2005: [Page 1](#), [Page 2](#)

The second presentation was made by Mike Webber, coordinator of the annual SVF&EMS Pancake Breakfast. Webber offered thanks to all the volunteers who made the 4th of July fundraising event possible, but conceded he no longer wanted to organize the breakfast.

“Our fire department is one of the best equipped for a community of this size,” Webber said. “We don’t need to continue to raise money for equipment, we need to look at personnel . . . we need to encourage young people to participate and put the personal bickering behind us.” Steve Lewis, City Councilman and Assistant Fire Chief for the department, expressed gratitude towards Mike and Mary Webber for their years of service organizing the annual fundraising event. He echoed Webber’s remarks that young, trained volunteers were needed on the department.

Chamber of Commerce - News Release

July 7, 2005 - Monthly Meeting Seldovia Chamber of Commerce

by Mary Glover

One of the topics of discussion for this month’s meeting was a recap of the 4th of July. The members at the meeting were in agreement that it was a very successful day and the events were well organized and overall it was well organized. Everyone agreed it was a great day in Seldovia. The winners of the Rubber Duckie Race were announced and two of the persons collected the checks for the second place winner and the last place winner.

The winners of the race were:

- 1 st Place: \$1500 Robert M. Rafferty, Duck No. 172
- 2 nd Place: \$700 Henry Sandland, Duck No. 191 (Henry is 7 years old and his grandparents are Hazel and Bud Brown)
- 3 rd Place: \$250 Mary Michalek of Pittsburg, Duck No. 57
- Last Place: \$50 Robert Purpura, Duck No. 27

Hazel Brown accepted the check for grandson, Henry Sandland, and Renee Purpura accepted the check for Robert Purpura.

The Chamber of Commerce unanimously voted to amend its Bylaws to read: “The Chamber takes the position that the Chamber’s deliberations and business at its meetings are for members only until final resolutions have been reached. The press will be provided with a News Release which will be posted on the Chamber’s web site within a reasonable time period following the meeting. The Chamber makes note of the fact that this is a member’s meeting and attendance is restricted to members and invited guests only. If a member of the press joins the Chamber and subsequently attends meetings, that member must agree only to report the News Release. No other written reporting about the Chamber’s deliberations will be permitted.”

Mark Walker from Eagle Enterprises, Inc., introduced this Homer based business to the members at hand. Mark gave a description of the services Eagle Enterprises, Inc. offers and said that he would be scheduling a time to service and inspect local fire extinguishers. He stated that he was coordinating

his visits with the Volunteer Fire Department. Mark also stated that Eagle Enterprises sells many products for rescue, fire prevention, fire protection, survival, and marine uses. Both business and individual fire extinguishers will be able to be inspected at a time that is to be posted on www.seldovia.com and other local postings within the city.

Sunni Hilts made an announcement at the meeting that daughter Laurel Hilts was offered and will be accepting a teaching position at SBE School for the school year 2005-2006.

Elaine and Toby Craft then approached the Chamber Meeting with a new idea for sponsorship: A Carving Contest with approximately 7 carvers. This contest would span about 4 days and the membership decided this event would probably be held on Memorial Day weekend. A motion was made to have a committee look into this matter and revisit the Chamber at its next monthly meeting. The volunteers on this committee were: Toby and Elaine Craft, Mike Driscoll, Tom Glover, Mike Webber and Mark Massion.

The Chamber had a drawing at the end of the meeting with two donations that were remaining for different reasons after the 4th of July: A beautiful crab bread loaf donated by Chris Wheeler and a \$50 gift certificate from Fred Meyers. Both donations were not available on the 4th of July to be presented. Because each have an expiration date, they were used for a drawing for the members present. Hazel Brown received the Fred Mayers gift certificate and Walter McInnes received the bread crab.

City Council Workshop starts harbor renovation plans

Thursday nights City Council Workshop marked the beginning of a series of workshops in which the harbor renovation plans will be formalized. A brief discussion, examination of some of the harbor survey results and the set of cost estimate documents from the MLF Engineers resulted in the decision to keep the meeting short and to take the following steps before the next workshop:

- A complete set of the MLF cost estimate documents will be obtained for each of the council members so that they can be carefully studied and related to the harbor survey line items.
- Councilman Mark Massion volunteered to start the process of collecting current harbor usage information and statistics, which will be necessary in order to define the type and limits of some of the proposed refit items.

Tidbits . . .

3/4 inch water line break on Main Street was repaired



City Manager's Corner

by Kurt Reynertson

The following items were reported by City Manager Kurt Reynertson at the City Council meeting on Wednesday, July 6th.

- The first in a series of public workshops on the Small Boat Harbor Renovation Project was held Thursday, July 7th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Building.
- A Public Hearing for the Airport Draft Environmental Assessment will be held Wednesday, July 13th, at 7:00 p.m. All are welcomed and invited to attend.
- David Lockheart with the Alaska Industrial Development & Export Authority will be in town on Monday, July 11th, to discuss the Seldovia Fuel & Lube tank farm. He will be visiting the city offices at 1:00 p.m. Any one interested may attend the meeting.

Police Report

by Damara Burnett

Car accident near Barabara Creek Bridge

A 1987 Chevy Cavalier station wagon went off Jakalof Bay Road near mile 4.5 late Tuesday evening. The woman driving the vehicle - a visitor from Anchorage - was medivaced to South Peninsula Hospital in Homer. She was released from the hospital on Wednesday with no reported injuries.

Deputy Keith Baker said he initially responded to a concerned citizen's call regarding a domestic violence dispute between a man and a woman camping at Outside Beach. After arriving on scene, Baker learned the woman had already fled in the vehicle. He found the woman and the crashed station wagon down an embankment on the north side of the road near Barabara Creek Bridge. Seldovia Volunteer EMS personnel arrived on scene shortly thereafter. Deputy Baker said the vehicle sustained extensive damage and alcohol was a major factor in the accident.

Another car accident occurred in the early morning hours of July 5th near

the intersection of Jakalof Bay Road and the Outside Beach turn-off. According to Deputy Baker, a vehicle failed to negotiate the turn from Jakalof Bay onto the Outside Beach turn-off and crashed into the “Narrow Road” sign posted there. Evidence of the crash was found by a DOT maintenance employee later that morning. According to Deputy Baker, speed and alcohol were probably contributing factors in the crash. The accident is still under investigation.

In other police news:

The Police Department received three separate calls on Wednesday, July 6th, regarding a possible “human foot” found at Outside Beach. Upon investigation, it was determined the “foot” was in fact a bear paw. According to Deputy Keith Baker, the paw had the bone structure of a black bear. It was removed and disposed of properly.

Repeat Stories and Notices

DOT Releases Seldovia Airport Master Plan Environmental Assessment - Project 54748 *(repeat story)*

by Mark Mayo, Project Manager, DOT&PF

The Alaska DOT and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has completed, and the Federal Aviation Administration has approved for public distribution, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for several near-term (0-5 year) improvements at the Seldovia Airport. The proposed improvements would expand Runway 16-34 Safety Area, construct snow removal equipment building and utilities, pave Runway 16-34, pave Alpha apron, remove selected airspace penetrations, and reconstruct the primary airport access road.

A copy of the draft EA is available on the web at:

http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdav/Seldovia_Airport_EA.shtml

Please provide your comments by August 1, 2005 to the following address:

Mark Mayo, Project Manager, AK DOT&PF, PO Box 196900

Anchorage, AK 99519-6900 Fax: 907-269-0521

email: mark_mayo@dot.state.ak.us

Official Public Hearing Announcement - PDF format

A public hearing for the draft EA will be held in Seldovia on July 13 at 7:00pm in the Community Building Multipurpose Room at 260 Seldovia Street. If you have any questions about the project, please contact Mary Mayo at 907-269-0519 or Terri Mitchel of Hattenburg, Dilley & Linnell, at 907-564-2120.

NOAA Representatives to Visit Seldovia and

the Kasitsna Bay Lab (*repeat story*)

Letter from Gordon Thayer

Dr. Jean Snider, Deputy of the NOAA, National Ocean Service's (NOS) National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) in Silver Spring, Maryland; Dr. David Johnson, Director of the NCCOS Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research in Beaufort, NC; Adm. (ret) Nick Prah from NCCOS; and Dr. Gordon Thayer, a contractor with NOAA residing in Homer, will visit Seldovia on July 12th and 13th. NCCOS is responsible for the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory and has been overseeing the redevelopment of the Laboratory that has been going on the past several years. These visitors will talk about the development program progress at the Laboratory, future science directions at the Laboratory, and increasing communications with the communities of Seldovia and Homer. Join us at 7:00 pm in the Seldovia Multipurpose Room on July 12th, 2005.

Copyright © 2005 Seldovia.com, Inc. and Seldovia Gazette. All rights reserved. The Seldovia Gazette is published weekly by Seldovia.com, Inc. Contents of this publication may not be used or reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form or manner without the express written permission of Seldovia.com, Inc. [Click here for additional details.](#)