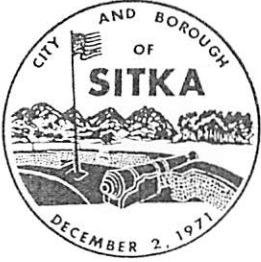


**Discussion/Direction/Decision** on the future direction of the Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau (*possible executive session*)

Executive Session

**I MOVE TO** go into Executive Session under the statutory categories of discussing subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person and to discuss matters, the immediate knowledge of which would adversely affect the finances of the City and Borough of Sitka and invite Tonia Rioux, Director of the Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau, in when ready.

**I MOVE TO** reconvene as the Assembly in regular session.



# City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street Sitka, Alaska 99835

*Coast Guard City, USA*

## City and Borough of Sitka Sitka Convention & Visitors Services (SCVS)

- 1.0 Executive Summary:** The following summary outlines the SCVS scope of services to be provided by the Harrigan Centennial Hall (HCH) Department of the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS). All direct visitor services and contacts will be handled through the City Staff at HCH Office. An office on Lincoln Street will be leased for the duration of the closure of HCH during construction. A full time Visitors Services Director will be hired. A RFP will be issued to provide comprehensive marketing and promotional services effort for the SCVS including the development and distribution of the Visitor Planner. Contract oversight of the marketing and promotional efforts will be handled by the Visitors Services Director and HCH Manager. The current Assembly appointed board of directors will transition into a CBS Commission. CBS is not a membership organization: SCVS services will be provided to all locals and businesses.
- 2.0 Scope of Work:** The CBS / SCVS will be responsible for providing the following services either through direct operations or contract:

**Marketing and Promotion:** Develop and implement a marketing plan and associated budget to effectively increase the number of revenue generating functions, increase the number of independent travelers visiting and support the growth of the cruise industry in Sitka. The plan will be continually evaluated for success and strategized for updates and revisions to keep up with the quickly evolving technological world. Collaborate with local tourism related groups, committees, and commissions. Design and publish annual visitors guide, place ads online and in print media, maintain social media pages, create and distribute promotional videos, promote Sitka through trade shows, develop and maintain a promotional website, host media members and group tour operators, cruise line visits and public relations.

**Visitor Services:** The HCH Staff office will:

- Serve as the Visitor Service office.
- Provide timely and accessible visitor services which address the informational needs of visitors via first person assistance, telephone, internet access, and direct mail response.
- Respond to visitor inquiries in a variety of mediums, staff visitor information desks at both lightering facilities, mail requested information to visitors for trip-planning purposes, create and distribute printed information pieces for use by visitors while in Sitka.
- Provide information and/or brochures about lodging, restaurants, and excursions, tours, fishing charters, wildlife tours, trips and other attractions in the Sitka area.
- Provide knowledgeable information about local goods and services, as well as cultural and historical information about Sitka.

## **Convention Sales and Services:**

### **SCVS will:**

- Market Sitka as a year round meeting, conference, and convention destination in collaboration with venue managers and the business and nonprofit entities.
- Solicit conventions and meetings to be held in Sitka through a variety of mediums.
- Assist groups with conference planning (securing locales and assist with contracts, bids, printed collateral, etc.).
- Create and distribute convention delegate welcome folders and welcome signs in downtown businesses.
- Follow up with groups, and venue and service providers to ensure customer satisfaction.
- Promote Sitka venues and services.
- Provide information on all support services offered in the community.

**Other Services:** Regularly update a marketing and promotional website, the annual visitor guide, and brochure displays. Staff will develop and regularly email newsletters to visitor industry businesses and providers in Sitka, email and provide the summer cruise ship calendar and any updates. Staff will manage additional contracts for the CBS as assigned.

### **3.0 Pros and Cons:**

#### **Pros**

- Fiscal oversight and responsibility within the City Government structure.
- Represent entire community and all businesses.
- Consistent hours of operation and staff availability.
- Increased staff efficiency and effectiveness through HCH and SCVS staff collaboration and coverage.
- Located in remodeled HCH – central location / reduce lease costs.

#### **Cons**

- No membership fee revenue.
- Increase city government (1 FTE).

**4.0 Budget:                    \$300,000**

**CBS:                            \$150,000**  
Visitor Service Director  
Seasonal Staff  
Travel and training  
Dues - ATIA, SATC and publications  
Supplies, equipment, lease (18 months), utilities

**Contracted Services: \$170,000 (\$20,000 generated by Vacation Planner advertisements)**  
Marketing and promotional services  
Vacation planner and distribution