

City of Tenakee Springs

RESOLUTION 2020-10

In the Council
December 19, 2019

Introduced by the
Council President

A RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF TENAKEE SPRINGS, ALASKA, IN SUPPORT OF MAINTAINING ADEQUATE SERVICE TO ALASKA COMMUNITIES FROM THE ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

- WHEREAS,** the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) has served Alaska's coastal communities' transportation needs since 1963 (56 years); and
- WHEREAS,** AMHS is truly a highway for communities not tied to the road system, and for which building roads would be impossible; and
- WHEREAS,** The Alaska Legislature has determined that "the Alaska Marine Highway System" is an essential part of the state transportation system, and that it warrants continued and predictable state support" AS 19.65.050 (a)(1), and
- WHEREAS,** communities tied to the AMHS have become dependent on this reliable means of transportation, and
- WHEREAS,** AMHS covers 3100 miles of coastline, has recently carried approximately 350,000 passengers and 100,000 vehicles per year; and
- WHEREAS,** AMHS consists of Southeast and Southwestern Alaska systems including 33 ports, 28 communities not tied to the road system, and has recently consisted of 11 vessels; and
- WHEREAS,** 70% of traffic and 60% of revenue on the AMHS comes from Alaskans; and
- WHEREAS,** the non-resident traffic brings many tourist dollars to the state in the summer; and
- WHEREAS,** even with reduced capacity in winter, the ferries provide many services critical to small and not-so-small coastal communities; and
- WHEREAS,** these include a reliable, mostly independent of weather means of winter travel, which is less expensive and safer for individual travel than small planes, while still providing connections to hubs for large aircraft and the highway system; and
- WHEREAS,** ferries also provide affordable means of travel for school programs such as athletics and musical collaborations; and
- WHEREAS,** ferries provide a reliable link to health services for residents of small isolated communities; and
- WHEREAS,** the ferries provide the only means for numerous small coastal communities to affordably access food and supplies; and
- WHEREAS,** when float planes are shut down by weather, the ferries provide alternative means for mail delivery which is of critical importance to individuals requiring financial paperwork and prescription medications; and

WHEREAS, small communities that are dependent on the AMHS also take pride in finding ways to be independent; and

WHEREAS, recent drastic and rapid cuts in service by the AMHS did not provide the time or opportunity to gather the wherewithal to find effective, efficient, and reliable alternate means of transit; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Statute, AS 19.65.050 (b)(4) requires that the Alaska Marine Highway System “provide for predictability and stability in the service level furnished to communities served by the system”, and

WHEREAS, federal highway funding does not currently provide for maintenance and operating costs of running the ferries, compared to both air and terrestrial highway funding; then

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Tenakee Springs requests that the State of Alaska through the State Department of Transportation reestablish sensible ferry service to local communities throughout the year; and

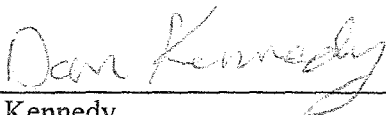
THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State of Alaska through the Department of Transportation fund the Alaska Marine Highway System to provide adequate service to the coastal communities of Alaska; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State of Alaska, and Alaskan communities, press our Federal congressional delegation to amend federal legislation to provide operational and maintenance funding for ferries in Alaska and the rest of the nation similar to highways and airports, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMHS, Department of Transportation, and community leaders work together to find sensible ways to reduce expenses to the AMHS while also providing adequate, if minimal transportation for the foreseeable future.

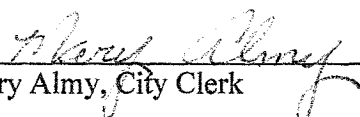
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Tenakee Springs, Alaska, supports maintaining adequate service to Alaska communities from the Alaska Marine Highway System.

ADOPTED 6 Ayes, 1 Vacant Seat **THIS 23rd DAY OF** December **2019**



Dan Kennedy
City Council President
Ex officio MAYOR

ATTEST:



Mary Almy, City Clerk