

**CITY OF SELDOVIA  
RESOLUTION 21-13**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA, ALASKA  
URGING GOVERNOR DUNLEAVY AND THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO ESTABLISH AN  
ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM GOVERNING BOARD; TO SUPPORT THE  
REPLACEMENT OF MV TUSTUMENA; AND TO CONTINUE PROVIDING THIS VITAL  
AND CRITICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE TO SMALL ALASKAN COASTAL  
COMMUNITIES**

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is a critical and essential method of transportation for residents of the State of Alaska and Alaska coastal communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Dunleavy, through Administrative Order No. 313, established the Alaska Marine Highway Reshaping Work Group on January 17, 2020 with the purpose of making recommendations on the future finances and service levels of the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS); and

**WHEREAS**, it was the duty of the Work Group to consider the analysis and data in the Alaska Marine Highway System Economic Reshaping Report (January 15, 2020) and to define the future needs and purpose of the AMHS, with the goal to ensure residents have access to essential transportation services among Alaskan coastal communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the final report was presented to Governor Dunleavy from the Work Group on October 2, 2020, and included findings and recommendations for the purpose of supporting the Alaska Marine Highway System service provided; and

**WHEREAS**, the report recommended that the Governor establish and appoint, by administrative order, a new nine member "operations" board, with members having skills and experience a Ferry Commission or Marine Business Board of Directors would bring to bear; and

**WHEREAS**, an "operations" board would help eliminate the continuing challenge for the AMHS of frequent changes in policy direction coupled with insufficient appreciation of the long-term implications of such changes; and

**WHEREAS**, the report found that the AMHS fleet was aged and subject to challenging Alaska marine operating conditions, and despite best efforts of ships' crews and AMHS staff, the ferry system was not reliable; and

**WHEREAS**, the report speaks to the focus beginning in 2014 on the importance of building an ocean capable "replacement" vessel for the MV Tustumena, which has had a 50-year plus service life; and

**WHEREAS**, the Statewide Transportation Improvements Program (STIP) covering all system improvements for which partial or full federal funding is approved and expected to take place during four-year durations, published amendments in October 2020 proposing that FY2020 funding previously budgeted to construct the replacement vessel MV Tustumena to service Southcentral and Southwest Alaska coastal communities be moved to the FY2023 budget; and

**WHEREAS**, the postponement of funding for the MV Tustumena replacement vessel further perpetuates the unpredictable and unreliable service currently provided from use of the aged fleet that is in need of constant repair and maintenance, and does not promote the provision of long-term sustainable service to Alaskan residents and their small Alaskan communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the MV Tustumena is and continues to be an important asset for AMHS as one of only two vessels in the AMHS fleet that is ocean-capable and can provide service as a highway and lifeline connecting remote communities in Southcentral and Southwest Alaska to the rest of the great State of Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the replacement of the MV Tustumena would be a beneficial long-term investment for the State of Alaska in supporting the continuation of that critical and essential transportation service to small Alaska communities and could provide reliable, sustainable service to other coastal areas of the state as needed; and

**WHEREAS**, the final report from the Work Group found that reliability was a key concern of every group with which they interacted, some commentors offering that they were willing to accept less frequent ferry service if it was more predictable and reliable; and

**WHEREAS**, the report states that “It is understood that serving very small communities with the ferry system model will never be cost efficient. It is also understood and appreciated that affordable transportation options are important to them. Ideally, if the overall Alaska Marine Highway System could be made revenue/cost positive, it could absorb losses on these runs”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Marine Highway System provides an essential transportation service to the City of Seldovia and other small Alaskan communities and it is vital that these services continue, as the AMHS is the only highway connection provided to these communities for access to the rest of the State of Alaska for employment, transportation, groceries, supplies, and general livelihood that cannot be reached without the assistance of boats or planes; and

**WHEREAS**, long-term sustainable access to essential transportation services that is reliable and predictable could be ensured for all Alaska residents with the establishment of an AMHS Governing Board, with a forward funding plan, and with the continuation of the project to replace the MV Tustumena in the very near future;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA:**

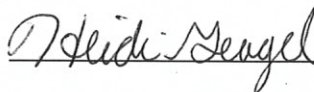
Section 1. That the City of Seldovia urges Governor Dunleavy and the Alaska Legislature to establish an Alaska Marine Highway System Governing Board; to support the replacement of MV Tustumena; and to continue providing this vital and critical transportation service to small Alaskan coastal communities.

Section 2. A copy of this resolution will be sent to Governor Dunleavy and members of the Alaska State Legislature.

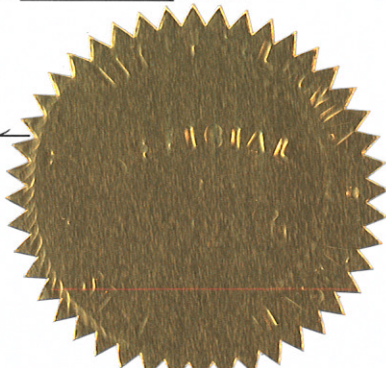
Section 3. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Seldovia on this 09 day of November, 2020.

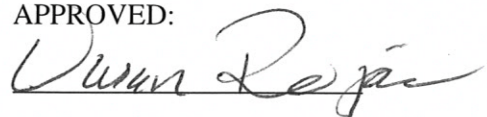
ATTEST:



Heidi Geagel, City Clerk



APPROVED:



Vivian Rojas, Acting Mayor