

Briefing for PWSRCAC Board of Directors – September 2020

ACTION ITEM

Sponsor: Donna Schantz and Administration
Project number and name or topic: Scheduling for PWSRCAC December 2020 Events: Science Night, Volunteer Workshop and Party

1. **Description of agenda item:** Based on the most recent guidelines set forth in state directives regarding COVID-19, and continued advisories and prevention directives from the CDC, staff is seeking Board direction on how to proceed with the upcoming December 2020 events. The events in question are Science Night, the Volunteer Workshop, and the Volunteer Party, which are scheduled to take place December 3-4 at the Anchorage Embassy Suites.

Staff recommendation is to host the Volunteer Workshop online via Zoom due to the above-mentioned COVID-19 concerns. This workshop is viewed as an important part of the Long Range Planning process. Holding the meeting via Zoom will still give each committee a chance to present their potential FY2022 projects to the Board and staff before being ranked.

Regarding Science Night and the Volunteer Party, staff recommends cancelling these events for 2020. The Scientific Advisory Committee will be discussing the possibility of hosting a virtual Science Night via Zoom if the in-person event is cancelled.

2. **Why is this item important to PWSRCAC:** The health and safety of PWSRCAC staff and volunteers is a top priority. Of particular concern is the ability to adequately satisfy recommendations including staying a minimum of six feet apart from non-household members, wearing a face covering when in public, adequately sanitizing and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces, as well as being mindful and respectful to those that are most vulnerable to the virus, including Alaska's senior population and those with existing health conditions. An additional concern that factored into the staff recommendation is the rate at which the positive cases of COVID-19 are currently rising in Alaska, especially in Anchorage.

3. **Previous actions taken by the Board on this item:**

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
XCOM	3/30/20	Authorized a deviation from Board Resolution 03-05 by holding the May 7-8, 2020 PWSRCAC Board meeting remotely through video and teleconference.
XCOM	7/2/20	Authorized a deviation from Board Resolution 03-05 by holding the September 17-18, 2020 PWSRCAC Board meeting remotely through video and teleconference, and to shift the rotation of the annual community meeting so that the September 2021 meeting is held in Seward.

4. **Summary of policy, issues, support or opposition:** Council funded travel restrictions have been in place since March 2020, as approved by the Executive Committee. See the attached document outlining the minimum conditions that must be present before these restrictions can be lifted.

5. **Committee Recommendation:** Not applicable.

6. **Relationship to LRP and Budget:** Costs associated with these three events are largely attributed to meeting space, meals, and travel for the staff and volunteers. Cancelling these events or holding them virtually via Zoom would be a cost savings of approximately \$63,000 to the organization.
7. **Action Requested of the Board of Directors:** Direct staff on how to proceed with the December 2020 events, specifically Science Night, the annual Volunteer Workshop, and the Volunteer Party.
8. **Alternatives:** The Board could choose to hold these events in person at the Anchorage Embassy Suites as scheduled. However, many volunteers and staff, especially those considered high risk for COVID-19 complications, have indicated that they will not attend if the events take place.
9. **Attachments:** Temporary travel restrictions approved by the Council Executive Committee on April 30, 2020.

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND REGIONAL CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

TEMPORARY TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

Approved by Executive Committee, April 30, 2020

Background

The COVID-19 Pandemic has presented the Council with a unique set of challenges as it tries to find the proper balance between conducting business and protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the staff and volunteers. The health and safety of staff and volunteers will always be the top priority. As an organization, the Council strives to be responsible citizens and takes its civic responsibility to help slow the spread of the virus very seriously.

It is well known and accepted that travel can be a significant contributor to the spread of this virus. In recognition of this fact, Governor Mike Dunleavy has issued Health Mandates under his Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration which include severe restrictions on international, interstate, and intrastate travel. The restrictions on travel between communities in the state may have the most direct impact on Council operations. The Board of Directors has determined that the May 2020 Board meeting will be conducted by video conference, staff travel has been restricted by the Executive Director, and all committee meetings have been conducted by video conference since the beginning of March.

We are now approaching the summer travel and the fall meeting seasons. Several committees normally hold in-person meetings in the summer and fall. There are a number of conferences that are scheduled later in the year that volunteers would normally attend. Questions have arisen about scheduling in-person committee meetings in the current environment with so much uncertainty still present. Scheduling travel and registering for conferences later this summer or fall generate difficult planning and budgeting questions.

The Executive Committee finds that it is in the best interest of the organization to establish a temporary travel restriction procedure that can be applied to all volunteers uniformly and organization wide. The Executive Committee finds further that setting out some guidelines and standards under which the travel restrictions may be eased, modified, or rescinded would be beneficial.

Temporary Travel Restrictions

Temporary Council-funded travel restrictions are hereby established for volunteer travel until conditions improve and travel is determined to be safe. These restrictions apply to Board meetings, committee in-person meetings, travel to conferences or business meetings, or other Council related business. The relevant Board Travel Policies (the 700 Series) are temporarily suspended. In particular, Policy 700.06 (VMT Familiarization), Policy 721.02 (Board Travel Under Own Authority), and Policy 721.03 (Volunteer Travel Under Own Authority) are suspended until further notice. Policy 700.09 (Emergency Travel) and Policy 700.11 (Exceptions to Policy) remain in effect and the procedures contained therein should be followed. During the period these restrictions are in effect, staff travel remains under the authority of the Executive Director pursuant to Policy 700.09.

The Executive Committee is taking this action pursuant to the Authority granted by Board Policy 104 and Section 3.18.2.1 of the Board By Laws. These temporary travel restrictions may be eased, modified, or rescinded by the Executive Committee or the full Board as conditions warrant and upon receiving a report and recommendation from the Executive Director.

Modifications to Travel Restrictions

Before travel restrictions can be eased, modified, or rescinded, the following **minimal** conditions must be present:

- The Governor revises or revokes relevant Health Mandates issued under his Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration. In particular, the mandates on international and interstate travel, on travel between Alaska communities, on personal travel, on social distancing, and on gatherings in public places. Or, we reach a phase in a statewide strategic plan to re-open the economy that would permit these activities.
- The Mayor of Anchorage revises or revokes relevant Emergency Orders issued under his Emergency Declaration. In particular, his Emergency Orders on “hunkering down,” social distancing, the closure of public spaces, and limits on the number of people that can gather in one space. Or we reach a phase in the Mayor’s Roadmap to Reopening the Municipality of Anchorage that would permit these activities.
- Member communities ease their own travel and health restrictions that would limit the travel of volunteers
- The Executive Director reopens the Valdez and Anchorage offices to the public.

Other Considerations

There are other standards and associated questions that should be considered and used as appropriate when evaluating whether to ease travel restrictions. The Roadmap to Reopening the Municipality of Anchorage contains a phased approach and a set of specific risk metrics for each phase. The broad standards below are provided by the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization and should be applied with Alaska in mind. For example:

- Is disease transmission determined to be under control?
- Are health systems able and equipped to detect, test, isolate, and treat every case?
- Are infection tracing systems sufficient?
- Are hot spot risks minimized in vulnerable places like nursing homes?
- Have schools, workplaces, and other essential public gathering places established prevention measures? (Important for PWSRCAC)
- Can the risk of importing new cases be managed?
- Are communities fully educated, engaged, and empowered to adhere to current state or federal health recommendations and strategies for gradually reopening the economy?
- Has there been improved, enhanced and readily available testing, including qualitative and quantitative serologic testing (antibody) and molecular tests?
- Has a vaccine been developed?
- Have existing treatments been improved and new treatments proven, such as plasma transfer?

As always, Council related business travel is voluntary and all meetings will have a teleconference or audio conference option. Each volunteer should decide for themselves what is in their own personal best interest.

This page intentionally left blank.