

City Council Agrees to Borough Land Transfer

Friday, 28 August 2009

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/090828.citylandswap.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

After months of delay and debate, the Kodiak City Council last night voted to give the borough enough land on Near Island to build a new headquarters for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The resolution, which was first postponed in March, and then again in May, transfers the land to the Kodiak Island Borough, which would build the structure and lease it to the state.

There had been talk throughout the process to somehow charge for the land.

First there was talk on the council of a land swap, where the city would receive ownership of its watershed, behind Pillar Mountain. Then there was talk of charging the borough fair market value for the land, but neither of those amendments made it into the final resolution.

Councilman Tom Walters was the strongest proponent of the city being compensated for the land. He told the borough's Community Development Director Bud Cassidy that the city was hoping to take the money from the sale and put it toward the new jail:

-- (Land 1 55 sec "The point is that we ... finish this jail off.")

Cassidy was at the meeting representing the assembly, which was holding a work session downstairs. He acknowledged the city's many transfers to the borough, and reminded the council members of the give and take between the two governments:

-- (Land 2 32 sec "The borough had been equally ... no cost to the city.")

Charlie Davidson, who only returned to the city council recently, argued for a straight across transfer to the borough.

-- (Land 3 41 sec "Well, first of all I see this ...expensive jail we're building.")

Councilman Walters wound up voting WITH the majority on the no-strings-attached transfer of land to the borough. The resolution passed on 5-to-1, with Councilwoman Josie Rosales casting the lone dissenting vote.

The land in question is on Near Island, and will be the site of a new Kodiak headquarters for Fish and Game. It will be sited near the two fisheries-related structures already there.

###