

Delegation Gets Blunt with Assembly Over CIP List

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

The Kodiak Island Borough Assembly will take a closer look at its capitol improvements project priority list for the 2013 legislative session in the days and weeks to come. The assembly invited Representative Alan Austerman and Senator Gary Stevens to review the borough's CIP list during last Thursday's work session and received some critical feedback.

Both Austerman and Stevens questioned a number of items on the assembly's list, some for the project as a whole or concerning the amount of money the assembly was requesting for it. Number two funding priority for the assembly is \$8.5 million for Kodiak High School Voc-Ed renovations, a project that Stevens said received funding last year and keeps coming back for more.

-- (CIP Confusion 1 :25 "Getting that \$7 million...to get money to our local communities.")

Austerman echoed Steven's predictions about a tight budget year and expressed his frustration with the assembly seeking the legislator's input this close to the session.

-- (CIP Confusion 2 :36 "And I'm going to say this...to have to come up here and tell you no.")

Austerman added that as financial times get even harder the community needs to really think creatively about ways to accomplish these projects without relying on the state for high dollar amounts.

-- (CIP Confusion 3 :18 "I think there's ways that we as a...our belt and do our own thing.")

Another concern Stevens had with the CIP list was the lack of village projects. The assembly submits a village CIP list separate from the road system's list, but Stevens recommended combining them in the future.

-- (CIP Confusion 4 :12 "I know it's not easy but I'd like to see a...not, I don't know.")

The assembly has 14 projects on the CIP list that requests funds ranging from \$90,000 to \$12 million. Acting Borough Manger Bud Cassidy said the list is a wish list of sorts, and said he and the assembly realize not all the projects will be funded, but wanted to be ready in case funding does become available.

-- (CIP Confusion 5 :32 “And I also think one of the value of …to something that’s reasonable.”)

In general, assembly members were grateful for the legislators’ honesty and realistic input on the list. They agreed that a shifting of projects and priorities needs to take place before the legislative session gets too far underway and closer collaboration between legislators and assembly members should be done earlier each fall. The legislative session begins on January 15 in Juneau.