From: Karen Nemecek
To: Commission, Boundary (CED sponsored)
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Local Boundary Commission,
Elfin Cove, Alaska is a special place. Community of Elfin Cove Nonprofit Corporation (CECNPC) is a nonprofit community corporation. Started in 1981 specifically to obtain grants from the State of Alaska and the Federal government, it is not an incorporated 1st or 2nd class city like it's neighbors Pelican, Gustavus and Tenakee. CECNPC Vice-president Jim Wild says in his comments as do others that the Nonprofit "was very successful in establishing, developing, and maintaining services" in Elfin Cove. This was through grants and loans not from Elfin Cove's coffers and many of the grants were written by Jim Wild himself. The early grants were small no more than $25,000 but this changed in 1998 after CECNPC bought the local fuel (dock) business from Pelican Cold Storage. The fuel storage tanks were shot and CECNPC obtained a $500,000 PPF loan from the State of Alaska to replace the tanks. The project ran short and CECNPC tried to borrow another $300,000 to complete the work. The State determined CECNPC had not been eligible for the original loan because they were a nonprofit community corporation and suggested it change itself to a nonprofit fuel cooperative. Instead CECNPC's Board of Directors- Jim Benton, Jim Wild , Mary Jo Lord-Wild, Shirley Perkins and Debbie Hemenway started the Elfin Cove Fuel Cooperative (ECFC) and installed themselves as the BOD of the new company. They told the State that they owned the business and the property where the fuel tanks were located. Elfin Cove Fuel Cooperative assumed the original loan of $500,000 and the new loan for $300,000. Jim Wild became the manager and Mary Jo Lord-Wild became the bookkeeper. They ran the fuel dock and CECNPC as separate companies for the next decade. Pressure from community members and pressure on the State of Alaska to resolve the ownership of the fuel dock led to the BOD all resigning from ECFC and they stopped making the required filing to the State. The Cooperative was involuntarily dissolved and CECNPC took over payments of the PPF loan again. Today Jim Wild is the current Vice-president of CECNPC, his wife Mary Jo Lord-Wild is a Director, Shirley Perkins and her daughter Mercedes Phillips are also Directors and Jim Benton's nephew- Hayden Meier is the current President of CECNPC. This is how an unincorporated community run by a nonprofit community corporation can evolve without legitimate oversight from a higher form of government.
The bylaws of CECNPC requires a person to have a Alaska Voter Card to be a member and to be able to hold a seat on the BOD. During the second half of the 2000's Gordy Wrobel (The Cove Lodge), Joe Kulavik (Eagle Charters) and Dennis Meier (Tanaku Lodge) all got their Alaska Voter cards and served on the CECNPC Board. Dennis Meier is the father of the current CECNPC President Hayden Meier and the co-owner of Tanaku Lodge with Jim Benton.
During this time the community's old Caterpillar generators started wearing out. CECNPC secured a $3.2 million Denali grant for an electrical system upgrade that included new power lines, power boxes, three new generators and an expansion to the community's power house. The smallest of these generators was all that was needed to supply electricity to the 20 people the lived in Elfin Cove through the winter at that time. Today there are half that many people living here through the winter. The new system was designed for the electricity needed by the lodges for their crews and clients during the four months of summer. (Note: At the community meeting in December 2023 Kelly Crump announced that the power system was at maximum capacity and anyone wanting to install a new freezer or such needed to talk to the power company (him).
Let us continue to look closer at the way Elfin Cove looks out for itself. We used the $250,000 boardwalk grant up- new boardwalks all around even if some of them still had a little life left. That's alright the treated planks got disposed of down in the front beach fire pit (on the clock). I find it interesting that Elfin Cove commenters saying that Hoonah didn't provide any services. Every spring when the absentee citizens show up to Elfin Cove there is the community cleanup- all that stuff that doesn't burn (or sink) gets piled

on the first beach and gets hauled off by the landing craft to the Hoonah dump. Surely you knew that. There was the $78,000 sewer study that purposed hauling out a vacuum truck and emptying the all the tanks. But there is the new septic tank under the community building. Kelly Crump's workers were clearing out under the community building and pouring a slab. After the slab set they rolled in the septic tank and started hooking up pipes. It was piped to one of Kelly Crump's lodges, one of the three he has in Elfin Cove. I was told they were also going to hook this tank up to the two flush toilets in the community building. Now there's a win/win. The community gets a septic tank with ample capacity and Kelly gets a place to store a couple thousand gallons of sewage on the community's property. These two heated bathrooms in the community building are locked up all winter and are only accessible to the public while Mary Jo Lord-Wild has her museum open.

Dennis Meier administered the grant that paid for the new $2.6 million floatplane dock. This was done from his home in Sammamish, Washington during one of his terms serving as CECNPC's President. One of the features of the dock was an enlarged floatplane loading area with enough floatation to support the departing lodge guests and their stacks of fish boxes. The latest big infrastructure project for CECNPC is a hydroelectric system. This project has completed the studies stage and is in the licensing stage with the CECNPC looking for grant funding. During this process Jane Button the CECNPC Secretary at the time gave the community back the $8000 it had put in as matching funds however, she kept the $17,000 from the State grant. The grant administrators get a percentage of the grant monies for their service.

All these grant funds come out of the statewide funding systems. But unlike the incorporated cities and boroughs across the state that have taxes and fees to help capture some of the benefits of the economic stimulation, in Elfin Cove it's all free. This is one of the reasons we support the proposed Xunaa Borough.

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