

Memorandum 12-072 Future of Community Recreation Program and HERC Building

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TO: Mayor Hornaday and Homer City Council

FROM: Walt Wrede

DATE: April 30, 2012

SUBJECT: Workshop / Future of Community Recreation Program and HERC Building

This workshop was scheduled so that the Council could receive a briefing on and discuss the future of the City's Community Recreation Program and its potential connection to the future of the Homer Education and Recreation Complex, also known as the HERC Building. (The old school).

There are two reasons for discussing this topic now. First, the City's contract with the School District for the use of its facilities is about to expire on June 30. We need to get a new contract in place by July 1, 2012 if the City is going to continue to operate the Recreation Program in School District facilities. As we have reported to you recently, the \$6,000 fee the City pays to the District for use of the facilities is likely to increase and to date, that fee has been covered by a legislative grant. That money is gone now and next year fees will have to come directly from the GF budget. Second, school sports, afterschool activities, and numbers of participants are on the rise. Since school activities have priority, this puts serious pressure on the Recreation Program's ability to raise money and deliver programs Homer residents want. So, we have some decisions to make.

Second, the HERC building is unoccupied with the exception of the Boys and Girls Club. Their lease expires on May 31 and then the building will be completely empty. There are no solid plans for future use at this point. The Boys and Girls Club would like to stay and enter into a long term contract. I met with the new executive director last week and she plans to submit a proposal that will include rent and the potential for capital funding (more on that later). As you know, Community Mental Health has expressed interest and the Fireweed Academy is still in the picture. Other ideas for reuse are floating around.

One idea that seems to have broad support is moving Community Recreation into the building. This would have the potential to allow for more revenue generation to pay for utilities and building maintenance and operation and more programs that the community desires. Mike Illg has prepared a written report on that subject which is attached. This is a lot to discuss in one hours but I hope we can do it. My plan would be to make some general opening comments and then turn it over to Mike for a Q&A with Council.

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