

Resolution 14-030 Expressing Support for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve and Requesting Continued Financial and Administrative Support from the State of Alaska

Resolution ID: 14-030

Resolution Status: Adopted

Resolution Effective Date: Mon Feb 10th, 2014

Resolution Summary:

A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Expressing Support for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve and Requesting Continued Financial and Administrative Support from the State of Alaska. Lewis.

CITY OF HOMER

HOMER, ALASKA

Lewis

RESOLUTION 14-030

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE AND REQUESTING CONTINUED FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FROM THE STATE OF ALASKA.

WHEREAS, The Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (KBNERR), also known locally as the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR), or "Reserve" , is a federal-state collaborative partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Office and the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Sport Fish; and

WHEREAS, KBRR was established in 1999 with strong support from the community; and

WHEREAS, The mission of KBRR is to enhance the understanding of the Kachemak Bay estuary and adjacent waters to ensure that these ecosystems remain healthy and productive; and

WHEREAS, KBRR has a local advisory council which stimulates a dialogue about local coastal issues of concern and provides a voice for the community on coastal matters; and

WHEREAS, The "Reserve" has an annual operating budget of approximately \$2 Million, is a significant local employer, and attracts visiting professionals, grants, and related revenues and expenditures which circulate through the local economy; and

WHEREAS, KBRR "partners" with local NGOs, universities, and state and federal agencies and these partnerships bring highly skilled professionals and cutting edge research to the community; and

WHEREAS, KBRR has provided relevant research which has applied applications to the City of Homer including studies on coastal bluff erosion, sea level rise, and coastal uplift; and

WHEREAS, KBRR is well positioned and has the resources to be a leader in climate change research; and

WHEREAS, The "Reserve" has an education program which reaches 3,500 people per year through public and K-13 programming and needs based training for decision makers; and

WHEREAS, ADF&G is experiencing a period of sustained budget constraints associated with General Fund cuts, declining license revenues, and decreased federal grant funding at a time when operating costs continue to rise; and

WHEREAS, ADF&G contributes 40% of the cost of the "Reserve", a non-federal match is required, and anticipated shortfalls in state funding will necessitate a reduction in the KBNERR budget; and

WHEREAS, The state rental agreement and associated funding was a key component in securing the funding for construction of the Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center and continued state funding is crucial for continued operation of a facility that hosts 75,000 visitors each year; and

WHEREAS, The KBRR mission is much broader than the Division of Sport Fish's mission which is to "protect and improve the state's recreational fisheries resources"; and

WHEREAS, For the reasons stated above, it is ADF&G's intent to seek a new state partner for the "Reserve" with a mission more closely related to coastal and estuarine stewardship.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Homer City Council finds that the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve is an important component of the local economy and that it provides research and educational programs that are important to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska proceed with its stated intent to find a new state partner for KBRR and further, that it provide adequate and stable funding necessary to sustain the operations of the "Reserve" so that it can continue to carry out its mission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this 10th day of February, 2014.

CITY OF HOMER

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MARY E. WYTHE, MAYOR

ATTEST:

JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Fiscal Note: N/A

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