

MANAGERS REPORT

FEBRUARY 8, 2010

TO: MAYOR HORNADAY / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WALT WREDE

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

1. Climate Action Plan: There is very encouraging news to report regarding energy consumption in City buildings. Energy consumption data for 2009 has now been compiled. This information was compared to data from previous years (the average of those years). In 9 out of 12 City buildings, electrical consumption was down by an average of 10.7%. The biggest decrease in electric consumption was the Harbormaster's Office (17.26%), followed by the College/Boys and Girls Club Building (16.31%), the Public Works Shop (15.81%), the Animal Shelter (14.93%), City Hall (12.6%), and the Library (8.37%). Electric consumption also went down at the Sewer Treatment Plant, the main Public Works Building, and the Fire Hall. Fuel oil consumption went down in 5 out of ten City buildings. The leader was the Library (14.63%) followed by the Animal Shelter (10.27 %), the main Public Works Building (9.95%) and the PW Shop (6.15%). Based upon the average cost of energy in 2009, these reductions in energy consumption likely saved the taxpayers approximately \$27,300 in electricity and \$7,600 in heating fuel. Some of this decrease in consumption can be explained by weather, capital improvements or other fixes. But most of it I believe is attributable to changes in employee behavior. The employees are taking this seriously and consciously looking for ways to operate more efficiently and save money. The Money, Energy, and Sustainability Handbook has been effective and we look forward to finding ways to reduce consumption even more.
2. Library Landscaping: Good news here also. Council will recall that Public Works and the LAB have been working hard trying to find ways to complete the proposed landscaping at the library. Maintaining that landscaping after it is installed is also a recurring problem due to inherent limitations associated with relying on volunteer labor and the frugal PW parks budget. A solution is on the horizon! Brenda Adams (Gardens by Design), a well known local landscaper, has offered to design and plant the raised flower bed in the Library Plaza and maintain all of the gardens around the Library this year for less than \$4,000. The Friends of the Homer Public Library has decided that it would like to get involved and use its own money to pay for this. The LAB thinks this is a great idea and it will relieve some pressure on Public Works Parks staff. The "Friends" are willing to do this for a one year trial basis to see how it goes. A big thanks to the Friends of the Homer Public Library for their willingness to help.

TRIP REPORT

On Friday, January 29, Bryan Hawkins and I traveled to Anchorage to meet with DOT/PF and the Army Corps of Engineers about a variety of City projects and concerns. Following is a summary of what we discussed.

DOT/PF: There is a new Regional Director at DOT/PF (Lance Wilber) who has been on the job for a little more than one month. We took the opportunity to meet him and to bring him up to speed on City projects that we are currently working on with his staff. He spent over one hour with us which was greatly appreciated. There were several projects we focused on. The first was the Deep Water Dock expansion. We hope to get the feasibility study off the ground (finally) within the next few months. The Director seemed enthusiastic about it. We need to finalize an MOU transferring responsibility for the project to the City. We talked about the need to finalize the MOU regarding the Spit Trail completion project so that Public Works can get moving on that. We also talked about the Spit Comprehensive Plan, the City taking responsibility for parking on the Spit along the Sterling Highway, Main Street upgrades, and the Main St. / Sterling Highway intersection. Please let me know if you want to talk about any of these in detail.

Corps of Engineers: We spent the early afternoon meeting with the project development staff who have been working on the East Boat Harbor Feasibility study. The benefit / cost ratio for this project is not favorable at this time. We discussed how to proceed and looked at many alternatives and approaches. We would be happy to discuss this in detail. We asked the Corps to provide us with an estimate on what it would cost to do the remaining work (mostly environmental analysis and comparison of alternatives) and what it would cost to simply take all of the work we already have and place it into a Technical Report. Technical Reports are valuable even if the full study was not completed. We also told them that we wanted them to come to Homer and make a presentation to the Council (agreed to but a date needs to be set) and that we would likely recommend to Council that the project remain open but placed on hold for now (as opposed to terminating it) to keep options open if future conditions change. We have not paid the Corps for any of the money budgeted for 2009 and neither has the State. We wanted to get a good handle on where we were before spending any more money. So, if any money is needed to complete the Technical Report, it could come from money already approved last year. No new funding would be requested. In the late afternoon we met with the project maintenance folks to talk about the 20 year dredging plan. Council may recall that we had a long term dredging plan that was developed and approved which was scheduled to go into effect this year. We encouraged the Corps to drop that plan (and they agreed) because of concerns over safety, long term costs, and the best use of land on the Spit. We came up with a new agreement to de-water and store materials at the same sites we do now for a two year period. It is now incumbent upon us to come up with a new 20 year plan within the next two years. We spent most of our time talking about potential beneficial uses of dredged materials including the creation of new uplands, and replenishing beaches.

ATTACHMENTS

1. February Employee Anniversaries
2. Letter of Commendation / Harbor Officer II John Bacher