

**MANAGERS REPORT**  
**April 11, 2011**

**TO:** MAYOR HORNADAY / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** WALT WREDE

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

1. Cook Inlet Jack Up Rig: Last year the Legislature passed a bill which provides for various incentives to encourage more gas drilling in Cook Inlet. Attached is a letter from the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) describing a plan for AIDEA to become part owner in a Jack Up Rig that would operate in Cook Inlet. I am bringing this up for several reasons. First, you will see that AIDEA is asking for comments from the City regarding this plan. I have not formally responded beyond a quick e-mail stating that we would get back to them. My first thought was that the City is putting a great deal of resources into getting a gas line to Homer. Supply is one of the questions and this is an attempt to address the issue. On the other hand, we can't assume that everyone supports more drilling in Cook Inlet. So, this is a policy call and I hope Council will give me some direction. The second reason for bringing this to your attention is that a representative for the owner of the jack up rig has contacted the Port and Harbor Director about mooring the vessel at the deep water dock for three or four months next winter. The owners need a safe place to tie up and do work on the rig in preparation for its operations in the Inlet. This is potentially a good source of private sector jobs and revenue for the Port and Harbor Enterprise Fund. One thing that might get the public's attention however, is that the legs of the rig stand up straight and will be twice as high as the high mast lights. At Bryan's suggestion, the owners are consulting with the FAA. Please let us know if the Council has any questions or concerns.
2. Energy Prices and the Operating Budget: As everyone knows, the cost of energy is rising rapidly. This is having a very large impact on the budget and it is particularly worrisome as we look forward to the FY 2012 Budget. The energy efficiency measures we are taking will shield the City from even higher costs in the future because we are reducing consumption. That is good. However, the reduction in energy costs that we hoped to see in the operating budget will likely vanish due to higher costs per unit. In addition, the departments will now be expected to repay either the Revolving Energy Fund or the Depreciation Funds, increasing the operating budget expenditures / (transfers) even further. We anticipate that property tax revenues will decline again this year and sales taxes may as well. Anything that increases operating costs is not a good sign and it may be that we will have a discussion about whether we have the ability to repay some of these "loans" next year.
3. City Attorney Report: As you know, we have been looking at ways that we can increase efficiency and reduce costs in cases where the City Attorney has

determined that he has a conflict of interest. This usually occurs when there are appeals to either the Planning Commission or the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Klinkner has commented on one possible approach we have discussed in a memorandum that is included in your packet under City Attorney Report. I wanted to provide the Council with an opportunity to discuss this approach before we went too much further. This approach definitely has some advantages and disadvantages. Tom will be at the meeting and is prepared to discuss this during the City Attorney slot on the agenda. I have decided to go ahead and use this approach in the Becker remand matter because the parties are well served by a timely process. We need to keep that process moving and the new attorney would need time to review the case and get up to speed. However, it is not too late to reverse that if Council wishes.

4. Term Contracts / Engineering Services: Several years ago the Council approved issuing an RFP for a term contract for engineering services. The City uses outside engineers for a wide variety of services from designing water and sewer extensions to modifications on the Deep Water Dock. The advantage of having an engineering firm on a term contract is that we do not have to issue a separate RFP every time we need an engineer for a job; saving time and money. The current term contract has expired and we would like to issue an RFP again. This time around, Carey would like to issue three separate RFPs for specialized services; one for water and sewer, one for maritime/docks and harbors, and one for civil work. We plan to bring Council a resolution authorizing these RFPs at the next meeting.
5. Old Water Treatment Plant Demolition: The old water treatment plant is currently being demolished. Nothing will be left except the cement pad. As you know, we have discussed placing some type of structure there to house a satellite fire station. We will be developing a plan and budget to accomplish that soon for your consideration. The cost of the demolition contract (\$58,000) is significantly less than the insurance settlement (147,287.41). Unless Council has other ideas, we propose to place the remainder of the insurance settlement into the Water and Sewer Reserve Account.
6. Construction Contracts / Jobs: The Public Works Department is doing what it can to get some jobs and economic activity on the streets this summer. At the next couple of meetings, the Council will be asked to approve construction contracts for the West Homer Elementary trail, the access road project at the water treatment plant, the security gate at the Deep Water Dock, improvements at Jack Gist Park, and the Soundview / Woodard Creek bridge. If things go well, the Phase II Kachemak Water and Sewer Project could be before you in late May/early June. Other projects are in the development phase. (See next item).
7. Karen Hornaday Park Improvements: Attached is a letter from the Parks and Recreation regarding improvements at Karen Hornaday Park. We asked the Commission to give us some input on how the legislative grant the City received last year (\$250,000) and the funding the City provided (\$55,000) should be spent. The legislative grant, and the grant agreement, are focused upon implementation of Phase I of the Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan. As you might recall, Phase I was focused on the most immediate needs such as drainage and parking lot

- improvements, upgrades to the playground and day use areas, removal of the old storage shed, etc. The Commission favors doing the engineering work for the drainage and existing parking lot improvements; which we will do. However, it also appears to be more focused now upon the bridge over Woodard Creek and preparation for Phase II which includes moving the road and re-contouring the entire parking area adjacent to Woodard Creek. The argument for this is that unless we do the preliminary engineering work, we will never know if moving the road is possible or affordable. The downside of this approach is that we might spend a lot of money on engineering and not much on actual improvements. Future funding for this project is speculative at best. This approach may also require an amendment to the grant agreement since we are starting to delve into Phase II projects. Council input on this is encouraged. The bottom line is that this year, we are likely to see only some engineering and design work and improvements on the ball field playing surface. We will also see what we can accomplish in the playground and day use areas.
8. Sewer Rehab Project: This project was funded in large part by stimulus money. This project is not very sexy or visible to the public but we are excited about it because it is accomplishing major maintenance and repair tasks on the City sewer lines that would be very expensive to do later. This project will save the City and its sewer customers a great deal of money down the road. Carey attempted to give the Council an update on the project including a video taken by a small remote camera traveling through the sewer lines. That part of the presentation did not go so well you might recall! At any rate, the project was described in an article in Pacific Northwest Trenchless Review. (Yes, there is such a publication you have to be a real geek with no life whatsoever to read such a thing!). A copy of the article is attached I hope the public will find it to be informative.
  9. Change Order Notice: This agenda contains a resolution which awards a contract to HDR to perform the Sewer Treatment Plant Bio-Solids Disposal Feasibility Study and replacement of the polymer injection equipment. Carey explains in the resolution and in his back-up memo the reasons for using HDR and tacking this work onto an existing contract. HCC 3.16.100 provides that change orders which change the scope of work of a contract are not binding without prior Council approval.
  10. HERC / Old Intermediate School. The Request for Proposals to lease the building has been published and the closing date is Friday May 6. One thing Council may want to consider is what to do if the EDC does not have a quorum when it comes time to review the proposals and make a recommendation to Council. I am told that might be a possibility. Council might consider sending the proposals to the Lease Committee instead or setting up a committee made up of Council members.
  11. Bridge Creek Fire Mitigation Project: This project is well underway and so far we are pleased with the result. The only complaint we have received so far is that firewood is not being made available to the public.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Employee Anniversaries / April
2. Letter from AIDEA re: Jack Up Drill Rig
3. Letter from Parks and Recreation Commission re: Karen Hornaday Park
4. Sewer rehab Article
5. Answers to questions posed at last Council Meeting