

Session 18-01 a Regular Meeting of the Homer Education and Recreation Complex Task Force was called to order by Acting Chair Slone at at 3:00 p.m. on June 12, 2018 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: Task Force Members Derry, Haines, Knight Marks, Matthews, Reiss, Slone,

STAFF: Deputy City Planner Engebretsen  
City Clerk Jacobsen Jacobsen

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Task Force agreed to amend the agenda to move election of Chair and Vice Chair to the end of New Business.

The agenda was approved as amended by consensus of the Task Force.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

*The Audience may comment on matters on the agenda not scheduled for public hearing 3 minute time limit*

Mike Illg, City of Homer Recreation Manager introduced himself to the group. He commented he's been involved with usage at the HERC for quite a long time and is available to answer questions from the group.

Robert Archibald, city resident and Parks Art Recreation and Culture Commissioner, commented he's been an advocate for the HERC since the college moved out of the building. He commented the building is valuable to the community and thanked the members for stepping up to work on this.

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **SYNOPSIS APPROVAL**

### **VISITORS**

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen introduce herself and noted typically she will have written report under staff report. She explained this is a time members when can ask questions about something not on the agenda. Moving forward when there are certain topics, a speaker, or field trip, they will be scheduled and posted on the City's website. Meetings will be an hour and a half, and the agenda deadline is the Wednesday before the meeting with meeting packets prepared on the following day.

She noted Mrs. Matthews had requested the Community Recreation budget information and that budget information will be provided at the next meeting.

During brief discussion there was a request to include current operating budget information broken down between the old high school building and HERC building.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### A. HERC Task Force Member and Staff Introductions

Mr. Slone is a retired airplane pilot. He attends city meetings and feels he has a certain obligation to participate in the process.

Mrs. Matthews is a Real Estate Broker, serves on the Chamber Board and the Fireweed Academy Advisory Board. She felt this was a good place to get in on the conversation about the future of the building, because it's viable and has potential. She is a business owner and her children are in school here.

Mr. Knight is a retired Borough Appraiser and has lived in Homer about 4 years. He uses the building and is interested in seeing it stay viable and put to its best use.

Mr. Derry is a semi-retired Real Estate Appraiser, doing commercial, industrial, and land appraisal work. He has heard about different opportunities for the building and thinks it can be a valuable asset for the community.

Mrs. Marks is a commercial property and business owner. In the last few years she's participated on the Economic Development Commission and Pioneer Avenue Revitalization Task Force. She'd like to see Homer continue to be an economically developed area. She hasn't used the HERC building but thinks it has great potential, and also thinks we need to look at the idea of what to do with now, rather than what's been done in the past.

Mr. Haines has a consulting business on economic development and business issues, focusing on entrepreneurial endeavors, and is an adjunct lecturer at the college on business administration issues. He has also served with the Soccer Association of Homer. He has an interest where the economy meets recreation.

Mr. Reiss was a Principal Project Manager for the State and assists people with construction claims. He can assist in the areas of engineering, construction, estimating, and things of that

nature. He noted that he wrote an editorial that was published in a local papers two years ago on his thoughts about the police station at the HERC location. He was critical of the location and some of the site specific issue he felt needed to be addressed.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen has worked for the City for about 16 years. She looks forward to working with the group and thinks they will have a productive outcome.

City Clerk Jacobsen has worked for the City for 14 years. She here to assist with meeting process and packet information. She looks forward to working with the group.

## B. Task Force Scope of Work

Acting Chair Slone requested they go around the table and each member share what they think the scope of work entails. Comments included:

- The information on Resolution 18-036(A) lines 58 – 76.
- Considering of community benefits as a whole, not just the structure.
- The scope needs to be expanded from what's in the resolution.
- The need to understand the liability of the task force regarding their recommendation to council; the concept of sovereign immunity and if it extends to this group.
- Resolution 18-036(A) lines 42 is the scope of the work and the rest are tasks within that scope.
- Gaining an understanding what the requirements are of the building to be able to identify what can be done with it, then we can work through the four items in Resolution 18-036(A).
- Coming up with the highest and best use with the different goals in mind for the use so the Fire Marshall or consultant can give us feedback on specific to the use, as there are different code requirements based on the use of the building.
- Answering the four questions in Resolution 18-036(A) are the minimum, and the back up and take a broader approach to look at highest and best use. From there look at the site, building design, and consider alternatives.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen referenced her memorandum in the packet and explained Council has outlined the four items in Resolution 18-036(A). If there are questions that come up and the group feels the scope of work should be expanded there will be opportunities to works with council through this process. In considering lines 42-44, the information and community process, it's not just about the technical aspects of the building, it's the community desire to see change or help pay for change in the structure. She'll talk more about community process at a future meeting when the website is up and running and the group is little further along in their work.

She reviewed the analysis in her memo, the three scenarios to be considered and the matrix included to use and refine as they work through the scenarios. It's important to know the occupancy before bringing questions to the consultant.

Acting Chair Slone shared that he doesn't see how the group can start reviewing various items until they know what our scope of work is going to be and until they've legally stated they agree to comply with Resolution 18-036(A) presented by the Council. This is a formative document and his opinion is they've asked them to agree to it. These questions give the group a good place to start and give a good opportunity to expand out from there.

Discussion ensued reiterating previous comments on scope of work and expressing the need to walk through the building together to understand the spaces and what they will be working with in reference to the four items called out in the resolution.

Acting Chair Slone asked for a motion to establish line 58 through 76 of Resolution 18-036(A) as the scope of work for this task force.

MATTHEWS/HAINES SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES: MARKS, DERRY, HAINES, REISS, SLONE, MATTHEWS, KNIGHT

Motion carried.

Acting Chair Slone asked where they'd like to go at this point as far as the details.

In summary, comments in response included-

- Start by looking a minimum requirements and build from there.
- Look at previous reports done on the building to get a good snapshot of items referenced in the reports.
- Confirm whether it includes both buildings and the occupancy status.
- Provide the 2007 report referenced in the packet information.
- Collate information in chronological order.
- Defining possible uses first, then address construction perspective.
- Walk through the building to answer basic question to go forward.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen said she'd provide information from the City's Recreational Needs Assessment. At a future meeting she'd like to invite Mike Illg, Recreation Manager, to speak to them about the Community Recreation program and use of the building. She'll work with the Chair to establish a schedule to present information to work through.

C. Next Steps

There was brief discussion clarifying on June 26<sup>th</sup> there will be a worksession walk-through of the HERC site and buildings. It was requested a floor plan be provided.

D. Elect Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Reiss and Mr. Derry were nominated as Chair, but both declined the nomination. Mr. Reiss said he'd be more comfortable serving as Vice Chair.

Acting Chair Slone shared his willingness to serve as Chair.

The group agreed by consensus that Mr. Slone serve as Chair and Mr. Reiss as Vice Chair.

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. 2018-2023 Capital Improvement Plan – Multi-Use Community Center, Phase 1
- B. Community Recreation Schedule
- C. HERC Worksession Packet from January 9, 2018
- D. General Meeting Rules and Process for Advisory Bodies

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

*The Audience may comment on any topic. 3 minute time limit*

Recreation Manager Illg, commented briefly on the various current uses of the gym including Pickle Ball, Zumba, activities moved to the HERC gym when the high school gym is closed for five weeks this summer. The City uses the upstairs area for storage, also Public Works and the Police and Fire Departments use the upstairs for training. Historically the college used leased the upstairs and Boys and Girls Club used the downstairs.

Ron Keffer, city resident, commented over time the City has made decisions about doing or not doing things in the building to improve it. In creating this task force, the City is expressing more intentionality than we've seen for a while. If the group produces a product the community can get behind and finance, the intentionality becomes a reality and we'll see a lot of impetus behind it. One of the biggest needs is some kind of after school program for kids and getting some type of program in place is something a City ought to move forward on.

Jack Cushing, city resident, commented the Fire Marshall with review engineering and architectural plans, make recommendations and approval based on those plans. The building is one of the most bomb proof in Homer made with post WWII concrete, loaded with rebar and cement. The gym has the best floor in town and many users like that. A lot of

things don't pay, like sidewalks, but we still build them. Keep that in mind with the general discussion of the building's value.

Janie Leask, city resident, is a HERC user. She agreed the building has the preferred gym floor, and SPARC is not big enough to provide for recreation in the community and can't be the end all. She encouraged looking at the whole site, the buildings and ground around them, because yards are used for a variety of purposes also. She thanked the group for their service.

Robert Archibald, city resident and Parks Art Recreation and Culture Commissioner, commented when the Commission recommended the Task Force they wanted to see some answers. He hopes they can get some tangible answers to make this thing work. He doesn't want to see this become a derelict building, so it's time to make a decision and do something with it. He hopes they come up with some good ideas we can work with as a City.

Deb Lowney, city resident and Parks Art Recreation and Culture Commissioner, provided brief history on the building was obtained and use restrictions that came with the site. There's a consequence to lifting the restriction and doing something different and encouraged taking that into consideration. It's 4.3 acres and agrees the whole site needs to be addressed. The working spaces inside are nice and the yards and outer spaces like the Skate Board Park and basketball court are used constantly. She reviewed the Commission's recommendation on representatives and noted the absence of the recreational voice and a health care community, noted they look at the MAPP information and studies.

### **COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF**

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen commented that she's invited Derotha Ferraro, Director of Public Relations & Marketing for South Peninsula Hospital, to speak to the group about the community health document. She said there is a lot of information regarding the HERC and she will continue to provide it to the task force in segments that are cohesive and easy to digest.

### **COMMENTS OF THE TASK FORCE**

Mr. Derry and Mrs. Marks had no comments.

Mr. Haines commented it was a productive first meeting and appreciated the audience comments.

Mr. Reiss Barry concurs with Mr. Haines.

Mrs. Matthews noted the Capital Improvement Plan information provided under informational item and asked if that's a goal of the City. Deputy City Planner Engebretsen

noted that's related to going through a scoping project to see if it's something the City can pay for and want to do.

Mr. Knight commented he's looking forward to this process and the information that's going to come out of it.

Chair Slone said he appreciates everyone's efforts. We've only just scratched the surface of the information on the building, but we're off to a good start.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Task Force the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. at the City Hall Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_