



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

Office of the City Manager

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## Memorandum

TO: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council  
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager  
DATE: January 18, 2017  
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report – January 23, 2017

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### Industry Forum Travel Report

I, along with other City staff, a representative of the EDC and Mayor Zak, attended the 2017 Industry Outlook Forum on the 11<sup>th</sup> in Kenai. It was an informative update on the industries that make the Peninsula economy tick including oil and gas, tourism, health care and commercial fishing. Presentations can be found at the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District website <https://kpedd.org/>

### Seawall Report

The attached letter was sent to property owners along the Ocean Drive Seawall updating them on the maintenance procedures and finances of the seawall. As you recall, the City Council established a separate mill rate (special service area) for the purpose of funding maintenance to the seawall. The City also contributes \$10,000 a year to a seawall reserve account. It is my intention to update property owners annually with a maintenance and finance report. It is evident when researching the history of the Seawall that the property owners would benefit from a homeowner's association. This would give them more control over maintenance of the wall and how their tax dollars are spent, a unified voice when communicating with government entities and the ability to insure the infrastructure. I have also attached an impactful picture of the Seawall during a storm that highlights the power of the ocean.

### Assistant Fire Chief Update

The hiring climate proved difficult the first round in our search for an Assistant Fire Chief. The City of Homer and KESA both had jobs posted (KESA, for a Deputy Chief) during the same recruitment period. The City re-posted the Assistant Chief position after an unsuccessful search for the right candidate, and KESA fell into the same position. Our original posting was from September 29 – November 13, with 13 candidates applying for the position. The top two candidates were invited to attend in-person interviews scheduled for January. However, one candidate decided against leaving his current job, and the other was offered another position.

The position was re-advertised, and does not close until February 7. The hiring committee will meet on February 9 to go over applications, following up with essay questions for the most qualified applicants and Skype interviews. Face to face interviews, a meet and greet with the

volunteers, and an instructional component will take place in a two-day process scheduled for mid to late March.

### **Electronic Monitoring at Homer Jail**

The Alaska Department of Corrections is working with the City to install electronic monitoring capabilities at the Homer Jail. The main purpose of electronic monitoring is to reduce the number of people in our jails. Studies have shown that non-violent offenders do better in electronic monitoring programs. They are less likely to have employment related problems and are not any more likely to reoffend. Electronic monitoring will initially be offered to 1<sup>st</sup> time DUI's. The program may be extended in the future to include other pre-trial cases involving non-violent, first time offenders. Electronic monitoring is court ordered home confinement. The State will provide the required equipment and training. HPD will be able to attach ankle devices to the subjects and then monitor their location via GPS signals. The system will alarm if the subject leaves a defined area resulting in an officer responding to investigate and a possible arrest. The City will be helping the State by reducing the amount of utilized bed space, which lowers costs. At this point we do not have a timeline for implementation, but are in contact with the DOC.

### **Hickerson Cemetery Update**

Public Works is incorporating comments on this project received during Planning Commission public meetings. The final plan will be presented to the Planning Commission in February. Below is the schedule for completion of the project:

Homer Advisory Planning Commission Project Approval	February 1, 2017
Preliminary Plat Approval (Homer Advisory Planning Commission)	February 15, 2017
Construction Bid Documents Complete	March 30, 2017
Preliminary Plat Approval (KPB Platting Commission)	April 20, 2017
Construction Begins	April 28, 2017
Construction Complete	May 21, 2017
Final Plat Approval (KPB Planning Commission)	May 22, 2017
New Burial Plots Available	May 23, 2017

### **Barge Mooring Facility**

Good news: the State recently approved the City's request to transfer capital project funds originally allocated to the Sheet Pile Loading Dock to the Barge Mooring Facility. Council authorized this reallocation request as part of the 2017-2022 CIP update. The City will utilize the remaining Sheet Pile Loading Dock design funds to reach final design of the Barge Mooring Facility, a port project that will improve service to the same fleet that would have benefitted from the Sheet Pile Loading Dock had it proved feasible. We look forward to moving ahead with the Barge Mooring Facility which will provide safe moorage in the harbor's tidal zone and a haul out ramp to access an uplands repair facility, an associated project prioritized in the 2017-2022 CIP for a Legislative request. The Barge Mooring Facility and Haul Out Repair Facility will offer improved services to large vessel owners and will attract additional business to the community.

### **Legislative Worksessions**

The 30<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature gaveled in on January 17<sup>th</sup> marking the beginning of a fast paced legislative session with many weighty issues facing the State. The Homer City Council has decided to take a more personal and proactive role in interacting with Juneau. Many members of the Council expressed an interest in closely following Juneau when I asked about it at the November 21, 2016 meeting. The best way I can come up with for all members to participate and provide timely input to the legislature would be to form a weekly standing worksession that can easily be cancelled when things are slow in Juneau. A standing worksession would be open to the public and advertised as "Issues before the Alaska Legislature including:"

- Revenue Sharing
- PERS/TRS and the Unfunded Liability
- Fiscal Policy
- Revenue measures new taxes (sales tax, income tax, etc.)
- State of Alaska Operating Budget
- Transportation
- Public Safety

Items can be added to the list as appropriate. Members would update each other on the issues they have been following, delegate tasks such as testifying before the legislature and decide on which issues need to come before City Council at a regular meeting for a position statement of the City. A worksession would be a transparent way to quickly confer and organize next steps. I propose meeting at 4 pm on Tuesday so items can be added to the next council agenda if needed. Using the conference room and encouraging telephonic participation by members will help keep things moving quickly, allow for the group to reach a quorum, and hopefully not interfere too much with your busy schedules. I propose the first meeting February 7 at 4 pm. This meeting will be used to plan for the trip to Juneau on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Customer Feedback Postcard**

At the direction of Mayor Zak, staff has come up with the attached customer feedback postcard that will be available at the front desk of city facilities. The purpose of the postcard is to encourage suggestions and ideas on how we can improve customer service – and hopefully positive feedback when we get things right! A similar online form will be available. Comments provided will be summarized and provided in the Manager's report on a periodic basis.

### **Employee Anniversaries (January)**

I would like to thank the following employees for the dedication, commitment and service they have provided the City and taxpayers of Homer.

Richard Gibson,	Public Works	17	Years
Jo Johnson,	Clerks	13	Years
Teresa Sundmark,	Library	10	Years
Amy Gordon,	Library	10	Years

Tomasz Sulczynski,	IT	9	Years
Larry Baxter,	Police	8	Years
Andrea Browning	Admin	5	Years
Paul McBride	Public Works	5	Years

Enc:

Letter to property owners along Ocean Drive Seawall, maintenance report, and image of Seawall during a storm

Customer feedback postcard



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January 6, 2017

### Ocean Drive Loop Special Service District (SSD) Status Report/Update

Dear Property Owners,

I am writing to provide you with an update on seawall maintenance and finances.

#### Funding for maintenance

The City tracks 2 accounts dedicated to seawall maintenance: 1) the seawall reserve account which is general fund (city) money including a transfer of \$60,000 in 2012 and \$10,000 annually and 2) the Ocean Drive Loop Special Assessment which is where your 9.962541 mill rate is deposited. To date, the City has only charged maintenance to the general fund seawall reserve account; however Ordinance 12-03 authorizes the Ocean Drive Special Assessment account to credit the general fund seawall reserve account for repairs to the seawall. Based on linear feet the property owners are responsible for 82% of the wall and the City is responsible for 18%. This is consistent with how the special assessment district to construct the wall was established. Under this formula, the city seawall reserve account is eligible to be reimbursed \$58,175 for 82% of maintenance performed since 2012.

#### Seawall Reserve Account (City) – 5 year history

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
General Fund transfer	\$70,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$110,000
Maintenance expenditures	(\$38,292)	\$0	\$0	(\$2,933)	(\$30,328)	(\$71,553)

#### Ocean Drive Loop Special Assessment (Property Owners) – 5 year history

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Mill Rate Transfer	\$19,167	\$22,078	\$35,176	\$24,802	\$24,759	\$125,982

## Procedure for Maintenance

The City facilitates maintenance, though most of the seawall is on private land and the seawall is not a public improvement. Alternatively, a homeowner's association could coordinate maintenance and repairs. The attached maintenance summary provides an overview of maintenance activities to date.

The most effective oversight is for land owners to call when they witness the need for a repair (235-3170). Thank you to those who have called to alert the City to maintenance needs. These observations are invaluable. Due to the unpredictability and the immediate need to do repair; the City hires local contractors to do the repairs.

Fortunately, there has not been a catastrophic failure since 2008. As the wall gets older the maintenance needs will likely increase. A text book maintenance formula is typically 2-3% of the project value. The original cost of the seawall was 1.014 million, however replacement cost is estimated at 3 million.

## Insurance and replacement

The City cannot insure the seawall and there are no funds available for replacement. The seawall coverage was deleted in 2010 after the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association realized that the seawall was not publicly owned. Purchasing insurance as a group, as in a Homeowner's Association, maybe available through commercial independent insurance brokers.

## Homeowner's Association (HOA)

A legal entity such as a non-profit Homeowner's Association (HOA) is needed to organize the property owners in the SSD. A HOA would show its independence from the City while providing a united voice. This would streamline the process when the City needs quick concurrence from a majority of the property owners for decisions related to maintenance and future mill rates etc. An organized HOA can leverage funds from grants and the legislature for repairs and upgrades. In 2010 articles of incorporation and bylaws were drafted for a nonprofit organization, I encourage you to resume that conversation.

It is reasonable for you to expect an accounting of maintenance of the seawall and how your special assessment dollars are used. It is my intention to provide property owners with an annual update on the status of the repairs and finances surrounding the seawall. I hope you find this report useful.

Sincerely,



Katie Koester  
City Manager  
907-235-8121

Att: Maintenance Overview

# Ocean Drive Loop Seawall Maintenance Activities Overview

December 2016

Prepared by Homer Public Works Department

**Background:** The Seawall was constructed in 2002. For the first 5 years it was the Contractor's responsibility to maintain and repair the wall. Since 2008, Public Works has facilitated the maintenance initially using funds provided by the Council – more recently using monies from the Special Service District.

All maintenance work is completed by East Road Services (Troy Jones) under the direction and supervision of the City Engineer (Carey Meyer). Property owners provide valuable eyes on the wall and call Public Works if repairs are needed.

For the most part (after significant upgrades/repairs completed by the Contractor), the wall has performed reasonably well. Most repairs are completed along the eastern half of the wall (where storm wave forces are greatest), but repairs have been necessary over much of the wall length. Most damage is seen in the bottom third of the wall, little damage has been seen in the upper third of the wall.

The key to prolonging the life of the wall is protecting the fiberglass sheet pile from wave/sand abrasion and making sure that the tie rods/concrete blocks buried behind the wall remain buried. The timber face protects the sheet pile from wave action. When this wood face is damaged or erosion at the toe of the wall exposes the sheet pile, the wall is in jeopardy. Of equal concern, the sheet pile is held in place by the tie rod system; erosion of material behind the wall exposing the anchored blocks would lead to catastrophic failure.



**Sand/gravel build up protects toe of wall from erosion**



Examples of Damage and Maintenance Activities To Date:



Typical maintenance issue - erosion at toe of wall



Timber face damage - repaired in 2016



Repair made to panel section



Lower wall repair - 2011







# Tell Us What You Think

The City of Homer welcomes your feedback.

### Suggestion?

Let us know your idea on how we can improve the service we provide.

### Compliment?

Everyone likes to know when they've done a good job. We'll share your comment with the right people.

### Concern?

You may wish to tell us to look at something to help avoid a problem.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Direct My Comment To \_\_\_\_\_  
(Department)

### Let us follow up with you

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

The City of Homer



appreciates  
your feedback.

You may mail this card  
to City Hall or  
hand deliver your  
comment card

Please  
place your  
stamp  
here.

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