



City of Homer

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: August 23, 2017
SUBJECT: August 28 City Manager's Report

Emergency Repair at the Library

The City discovered an issue with our fire alarm system at the Library recently when we contracted with Taylor Fire to look into why alarm tests were failing. Public works was hoping that the analysis would provide a repair option that might extend the life of the unit. However, while waiting for their arrival, the unit had a major and final irreparable failure. Apparently there has been a history of failure with the system, and Taylor Fire has been replacing them on a regular basis. The Library system has been limping along with this panel for over a year and parts are no longer available. The sprinkler system itself is still functional, so fire protection is operable. However, there is no notification to emergency personnel or building maintenance of an event. Additionally, there is no early warning/notification to anyone inside the building that a fire could be occurring in a back room, etc. The alarm control panel system is a code requirement. The fire alarm system should be up and running by the time of the Council meeting. The contractor estimated the work would cost \$7,300 which I will be requesting from Library depreciation reserves during the midyear budget amendments.

Staff Participation at Committee of the Whole

I have asked all Department Heads to participate at the Committee of the Whole. This helps management understand Council's decisions and priorities and provides you an opportunity to ask detailed questions about pending legislation or other City issues while the experts are in the room. Please help me use staff time wisely and ask questions that require specific expertise during the committee of the whole if at all possible. Unless there is unusually complex legislation specific to a department on the agenda, department heads are free to go after Committee of the Whole. This will help control our level of effort so department heads can spend more time in the trenches. Thank you for your help in getting the most out of City staff.

Backup Generator and Harbormaster's Office

At the August 14 meeting City Council approved a Homeland Security grant to purchase an emergency backup generator at for the Harbormaster's office. The question of alternate fuel sources came up after the meeting and I wanted to take a moment to explain why diesel was chosen as the preferred alternative.

The biggest threat for an extended power outage on the Spit comes from a significant earthquake. A fault line runs across the Spit around the hockey rink, which is about where the road sank in 1964. In any major earthquake event there is a risk that the natural gas supply would be shut down until such a time that the Enstar utilities can be tested and returned to service. How long something like that would take depends on

the severity of the event. It is likely that during a significant earthquake event there would be a long period of aftershocks that could continue for days and prolong response.

Staff also talked about Propane as an option mostly because it is easy to store long-term and there are no real spill risk. However, propane is problematic because of supply. There are no large propane storage tanks in Homer. All propane comes down the highway which adds another layer of vulnerability. Who knows what Spit Road will look like when the big one hits? It may be useable, or the end of the Spit maybe an island for a while.

Diesel is prevalent on the Spit. Petro Marine's tank farm is located at the end of the Spit. If push came to shove, there are literally tens of thousands of gallons of diesel in the boats in the harbor. In the end, the most important variable is not efficiency but reliability. The generator will likely get minimal use; short-term power outages and monthly testing. A back up generator is about keeping the lights, phones, computers, radios, and heating up and running without fail 24-7 during an emergency. For that we need the most reliable source of fuel that is readily available on the end of the Spit when the chips are down.

Alaska Municipal League Summer Meeting Travel Report

I attended the Alaska Municipal Management (AMMA) and Alaska Municipal League (AML) meeting the week of August 14 with Mayor Zak and Councilmember Smith. The weather was terrible, but the company was outstanding. In addition to municipal leaders from around the state, the Governor and his staff spent most of Thursday with the group. At the manager's meeting, I had the opportunity to ask my colleagues advice on issues ranging from staff development to building a new harbor. I am always impressed at how helpful and free with information Alaskan Managers are. They embody the help your neighbor spirit that makes Alaska such a great place to live. I had the privilege of facilitating a dialogue with this group of professionals on building communication skills. The room shared great tangible advice on effective communication with Council, relationship building with staff, and struggles with navigating the changes from traditional media to social media. The Haines City Manager organized an impromptu meeting with their newly formed Economic Development Board and we shared economic development struggles and success in our similar small commercial fishing and tourism towns. These trips are always a great opportunity to get out of our silos and learn, network and share with other Alaskan communities. The next AML meeting is November 13-17 and I encourage Councilmembers who are able to attend.

Proposition 1 – Be Smart with the Hart - Education Campaign

Staff in my office is gearing up for a voter education campaign on the Proposition 1, the ballot initiative that allows trail and road maintenance costs to be charged to the HART fund in addition to new road and trails. Council asked to see materials before they are published (attached in draft form). As you know, changes to HART combined with conservative budgeting are essential to being able to keep City services without imposing new taxes. Please feel free to email me with any feedback on the materials or to volunteer to do some voter outreach. The campaign will include:

- postcard mailing (draft is page 1 & 2 of attachment)
- web banner advertisements (draft is page 3 & 4 of attachment)
- Newspaper ads. These can be sized for FB posts or ads as well.
- FB posts/ads - sample one with Smart with Hart branding is included on page 6 of the attachment.
- Radio PSAs
- Press Release
- Opinion pieces/ letter to the editor
- Direct outreach/presentations

Alaskans of the Week

Two Alaskans have been honored by Senator Dan Sullivan recently for their dedication to this great state by being named the 'Alaskan of the Week' on the Senator Floor. In May long time operator of the Homer Animal Shelter, Sherry Bess was recognized for her commitment to taking care of stray and lost animals in Homer. Homer Electric employee Kathy Heindl was recognized just last week for her commitment to preserving a sustainable salmon fishery, among a long list of other accomplishments. The national recognition is a reminder of everything our friends and neighbors do to make this a great place to live and how fortunate we are to live somewhere with such a strong spirit of community service.

Enc:

Be Smart with the Hart Voter Education Materials

Press Release: Alaskan of the Week Sherry Bess

Press Release: Alaskan of the Week Kathy Heindl

Thank you note to Homer EMS

Vote
Yes

PROP 1

Be smart
with the
HART



Vote Oct 3

HART Funds can

- **build new roads and trails,**
- **help maintain the ones we have, and**
- **help balance the budget while maintaining City services with no new taxes.**

*Polls open
7 am - 8 pm*

Vote YES on Prop 1 to use our revenues wisely on public goods we all use and need both now and for the future. More info: www.cityofhomer-ak.gov.

Yes
PROP 1 **Be smart with the HART**

*Paid for by City of Homer
491 E Pioneer Ave.
Homer AK 99603*

*Mayor Bryan Zak
approves this message.*

HART is a fund dedicated to building new and upgrading substandard roads and trails in Homer. It is supported by a small percentage of City sales tax.

For 30 years, the City has used HART funds to upgrade or build new roads like Grubstake and Snowbird near the post office. Yet annually only about half of the funds are utilized. HART can do more to benefit Homer residents.

Prop 1, if passed, adds road and trail maintenance as an eligible HART expense.

Prop 1 allows HART funds to help maintain our roads and trails -- a growing system we depend upon daily for work, school and play -- while still contributing funds to build the new roads and trails we will need.

Combined with cost cutting measures, Prop 1 is a big step toward balancing the City's budget (hard hit by State revenue declines) without new taxes or essential service reductions.

Be smart with HART! Vote yes Oct 3.



Vote
Yes

PROP 1

Be Smart with HART

- HART funds can build new roads & trails
- maintain the ones we have
- and balance the budget while maintaining City services with no new taxes



VOTE OCT 3

Polls Open
7 AM - 8 PM

Paid for by the City of Homer 491 E Pioneer Ave., Homer AK
Mayor Bryan Zak approves this message.

Vote Yes

PROP 1

Be Smart with HART

- HART funds can build new roads & trails

- maintain the ones we have

- and balance the budget while maintaining City services with no new taxes

Paid for by the City of Homer
491 E Pioneer Ave., Homer AK
Mayor Bryan Zak approves this message.



Vote absentee beginning Sept 18 at City Hall

Vote at the Polls Oct 3, 7 am - 8 pm



YES on Prop 1 Supports Winter Road Maintenance

Six Public Works Dept employees operate plow trucks, snow blowers, graders, dump trucks and sanders

to clear snow and ice from 98 lane miles of City streets and another 2.5 lane miles of State roads.

That's the distance from Clam Gulch and back!

Public Works also clears snow and ice from 11 City sidewalks and trails and spreads 2,500 tons of sand per year.

That's the weight of ~5,555 moose!

Put HART Funds to Work

0.75% of Homer sales tax currently goes to the HART fund to build new and upgrade substandard roads and trails. If passed, Prop 1 allows using a portion of HART funds to maintain the roads and trails we have already built.

Be smart with HART! Vote YES on PROP 1.

- Maintenance extends the useful life of a road for the lowest cost.
- Sufficient funds will remain in HART to build new roads and trails.
- Combined with cost cutting measures, HART can help balance the City's budget without new taxes or essential service reductions.

Vote October 3. Polls open 7 am to 8 pm. Learn more at www.cityofhomer-ak.gov.

Paid for by the City of Homer, 491 E Pioneer Ave, Homer AK. Mayor Bryan Zak approves this message.



*Vote
Yes* **PROP 1** **Be smart with the HART**

HART is a fund dedicated to upgrading and building new roads & trails in Homer

Prop 1, if passed, adds road and trail maintenance as an eligible HART expense.

HART is funded with three-quarters of 1% of City sales tax. For 30 years, the City of Homer has used HART funds to upgrade and build new roads like Grubstake and Snowbird near the post office. Yet annually, only about half the HART funds are utilized.



Vote absentee beginning Sept 18 at City Hall

Vote at the Polls Oct 3 7 am - 8 pm

Be smart with HART! Vote YES on PROP 1.

- Maintenance extends the useful life of a road for the lowest cost.**
- Sufficient funds will remain in HART to build new roads and trails.**
- Combined with cost cutting measures, HART can help balance the City's budget (hard hit by State revenue declines) without new taxes or essential service reductions.**

05.15.17

SULLIVAN HONORS ALASKAN OF THE WEEK: SHERRY BESS

WASHINGTON, DC — U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) spoke last week on the Senate floor in recognition of Sherry Bess, of Homer, who has spent nearly three decades caring for the community's homeless and abandoned animals as manager of the Homer Animal Shelter. Bess was recognized as part of Senator Sullivan's series, "Alaskan of the Week."

Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK) presents the Alaskan of the Week - May 9,...



The following is the statement submitted to the Congressional Record:

TRIBUTE TO SHERRY BESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week I have been coming to the floor to recognize someone in my State who has made a difference, someone who has devoted time and energy to making my State a better place to live for others. We call these individuals our Alaskan of the Week.

As I have said repeatedly, I believe my State is the most beautiful State in the country. We have visitors. We want to welcome more and more visitors. Come on up. I guarantee it will be the trip of a lifetime.

When you go to Alaska, one town that nobody should miss is Homer, AK. It is surrounded by the glistening waters of Kachemak Bay, jagged mountains, glaciers, and snowcapped volcanoes. Some people call it the Halibut Fishing Capital of the World. Others call it the Cosmic Hamlet by the Sea. Some, like me, call it a slice of Heaven.

I was there a few weeks ago holding a community meeting. I thanked them then, and I want to thank them all today for the very warm welcome I received.

I also wish to thank Homer for the very warm welcome they gave to Navy destroyer USS Hopper, which spent a few days in Homer before participating in a joint naval exercise with the Army in the Gulf of Alaska. The 300-member crew of the USS Hopper was greeted by hundreds of cheering, flag-waving Homer residents. The commander of the Hopper, J.D. Gainey, wrote that in his 24 years of naval service, "I have never seen as much patriotism as we enjoyed in Homer." Thank you, Homer, from all of us. Alaskans love Homer.

They see it for the landscape but also for the people. It is a tight-knit community. They might not always agree with one another, particularly with regard to politics, but they look out for each other. Like any community with a heart, they look out for their animals.

This week I want to recognize a special person as our Alaskan of the week, Sherry Bess, who spent nearly 30 years--three decades--taking care of Homer's animals as the manager of the Homer Animal Shelter. In 1989, when Sherry began to volunteer at the pet shelter in Homer, there was one building, no phone, and only four cages to hold cats. "It was basically a shack," she said. The snow would come in through the dog door. The drains in the water bowls would freeze. Sherry's hands and feet were always cold, and it was infested with mice. There was no

bathroom. Oftentimes, when the shelter was too busy and when the animals needed extra care, Sherry would take them to her home, where she would care for them.

Sherry and a handful of residents cared for over 1,200 animals each year in that little shelter.

Along the way, she gathered both happy stories and heartbreaking stories about the animals she found that were abused and the ones she found homes for. In fact, one of the members of my team in Alaska took a puppy that had been abandoned in a crate in the woods near Homer, took him home, fed him, and Mick Fleagle on my staff now has a dog. His dog Sookie, 8 years old, has the full reign of the house. He is loved.

Thanks to Sherry, stories like that abound throughout Homer. For 26 years, she has worked night and day, 7 days a week, for the pets in that community. She recently stepped down from that job. She is taking care of her own pets, lots of them--her family she calls them--but she will always be known to so many people in Homer for what she has done for their pets and their animals.

“Over the years, those animals that came to me,” she said, “...unwanted and sad and depressed, and then you help them and you love them and they go to a home and they're loved. That's the most rewarding thing about what I did.”

Sherry said over the years she has noticed that the residents of Homer and throughout the country have been kinder to their pets. Part of that is the result of what Sherry and others like her across the country do to educate the public on taking care of animals through vaccinations, neutering. Some of it is more and more because people like Sherry are considering pets as their families.

So I want to thank Sherry, as our Alaskan of the Week, for all she has done and for all she has done for pets in our great State. Great job.

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Nice job!
Great job!

August 14, 2017

Homer EMS Team!

Great job!
Love you

Your AMAZING skill and training are directly represented by your example with Excellence today. You raced to the

Excellent job
Guys -
Michael
(read)

SPIT and brought back a man from a deadly rhythm; you stuck with us in the hospital and to your credit the man was talking when flown out for Cardiac Cath for his STENT! "ACLS you Rock" as an EMS Team!

Thank you, Dr. Geary
-Cher 100 - Braudy, RN

Thank you, Dr. Geary