



# City of Homer

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## Office of the City Clerk

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### MEMORANDUM AGENDA CHANGES/SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

TO: MAYOR WYTHE AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK 

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2013

SUBJECT: AGENDA CHANGES AND SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Ordinance 13-44**, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Appropriating Funds for the Calendar Year 2014 for the General Fund, the Water-Sewer Fund, the Port/Harbor Fund, Debt Funds, and Capital Reserve Funds (Conditional Expenditures). City Manager.

Written public comments

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

Voice consensus to changes under Agenda Approval.

Fiscal Note: N/A



## Jo Johnson

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**From:** Jenny Martin <jenny.martin@bbbsak.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2013 5:07 PM  
**To:** Department Clerk  
**Subject:** FT Children's Librarian needed for 2015 budget

Dear Mayor Wythe,

The Language and Literacy Work group of our Best Beginnings Homer coalition has indentified the need for a Full Time Youth Services (Children's) Librarian as a main goal to support the literacy development of young children and families in our community. We are writing to request that the Homer City Council include funding for a Full Time Youth Services (Children's) Librarian in the 2015 budget.

Our work group has met with the Friends of the Library along with library staff and Ann Dixon, the director, to discuss the need for this position and how it would benefit our community.

- The position is currently funded part time at 28 hours per week, however demand in the children's library is growing at a pace that cannot be met at current staffing levels.
- Number of participants at Story Hour has increased almost 10% each year for the last two years. Frequently there are 40 to 60 participants for each Story Hour, requiring a second session however there are no staff to run the 2<sup>nd</sup> session!
- With the closure of the Boys & Girls Club and the increased traffic in the Children's Library, a Youth Services (Children's) Librarian staffing the Children's Library during peak hours would increase oversight of the materials and facility (including safety), help reduce noise level, as well as allow for a check-out desk in the enclosed space thus decreasing noise and congestion at the main check out desk. This would also allow other staff more time to devote to adult patrons and other duties sidetracked due to the youth demand.
- Literacy skills with young children evolve rapidly and a certified Youth Services (Children's) librarian is needed to help parents and care-givers foster the skills that meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. A FT position could help parents, child care providers, and professionals navigate through the resources available in the library and the various new technologic resources too!
- In a community where preschool options are limited, children's programming at the library is often the only option for some children to prepare for kindergarten. There is a direct correlation between development of early childhood literacy skills and higher test scores in school. As well, children who attend library story hours and other programming are more prepared for Kindergarten and as a result less school district money is needed for intervention services in K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- A Youth Services (Children's) Librarian provides an invaluable service in helping families choose developmentally appropriate materials for children, modeling literacy skills for parents and care-givers, assisting in brain development of children, and acting as a conduit for materials and resources for child development that the community at large has to offer.

We appreciate your consideration of our request. Below please find 3 emails from parents/grandparents who wanted to share their personal stories about the need for this position.

If you would like to discuss this project in person / hear from more parents, please attend our Family Meeting with Rep Seaton & Sen Micciche on Sat. Oct 26 11a-12p at Homer Head Start. Its open to the public, parents, professionals and kids are welcome!

Sincerely,

Jenny Martin

Best Beginnings Homer coordinator

435-7101

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Dear Homer City Council members,

I am writing in support of funding for a full time children's librarian. Having lived in Homer for 12 years now, I was a frequent visitor to the old library. I was thrilled when our new facility was built and equally delighted when I brought my then 6 month old to his first story time. I quickly learned that it was more than just stories, our children were led through active play, independent time with books and then free play afterwards. It is a great way to socialize our children, as well as, network with other families! We've graduated from the Lap-Sit to the Preschool Hour, and the addition of art time is awesome. I also enjoyed the story time that was held at the McNeil Fire Department, being in my neck of the woods, it was a wonderful outreach program that was helpful in cold winter months. I feel that there is a great need for a full-time librarian. That individual would fill a great need within our community for providing more high-quality, fun, engaging and educational activities for our children. For children under the age of 5 yrs- from what I know of- there is only the lovely Sprout play groups and library story time for children to interact with others kids. The story times are always well attended and often overflowing. If there were more activities offered as a result of a full-time librarian, they would be well attended and help ease the present crowded story hours that happen once a week.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Theriot

[rebekahas@hotmail.com](mailto:rebekahas@hotmail.com)

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Dear Homer City Council members,

Please add money to your budget in 2015 for a full time children's librarian. I grew up in Boise, ID, and trips to the Carnegie library were frequent and treasured events. When, at age 12, my family moved to Glendale, CA, the first thing we did was find the local library -- another Carnegie -- they all looked alike then. The children's librarian and the nice lady at the reference desk were my heroes. When my children (Gart Curtis and Margo Reveil) were growing up we had books everywhere AND went to the local library frequently.

One thing about the difference between an adult's and a children's s librarian is a focus on questions. An adult comes to a librarian with specific questions and needs. But a child comes to a librarian with vaguely formed curiosities. Children usually have not learned to form questions beyond, "Why! Mommy!" A children's

librarian takes the time and has expertise to understand the almost inarticulate question and to hone the questioning skill of a child and to find the book that will satisfy this week's curiosity.

I want my grandchildren in Homer to have access to the information which my librarian brought to me and which later librarians brought to my children, who are now my grandchildren's parents.

A friend of mine, who is a past children's librarian and, later, the manager of a large city library system in CA has added these technologically updated notes.

Public libraries of today are community gathering places....children's librarians are very important to make certain children are occupied and safe and secure. What better place for children to be?....Children's librarians many times are able to light the candles of children's interest in reading. After a story hour nearly ALL of the children take home a book which will spark their interest until the next library visit. We all know that children who are good readers do much better in life.

Also! children's librarians can guide children in the use of the internet, making certain the sites they visit for the information they need for school, etc. are valid sites with legitimate information. Many children who use children's libraries growing up become the community leaders of tomorrow with a good understanding of the need for community service and connection.

Sincerely,

Kay Curtis

[kayckc@copper.net](mailto:kayckc@copper.net)

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Dear Homer City Council members:

The children's library is very important to our family. We are raising our four year old nephew with special needs. When he first came to live with us he would become over stimulated and unregulated in the community. We spent most of our time in the home environment where he felt safe and comfortable. One of our goals for him was to be successful in different environments. Our older daughter received so much joy from participating in the library over the years we felt the first environment we would introduce was the children's library, with the ultimate goal of attending story time. The first day we went into the children's room he was amazed by all the books, artwork and puzzles. However, he only lasted about 5 minutes and then we had to go. We went back everyday for an entire week, spending a little more time each day. Well, then he met Claudia Haines, the children's librarian, and an instant connection was made. He was enthralled at the first story time and the focus on the books and the story helped him to overcome the stimulants of the environment. He made a friend in Claudia and looks forward to seeing her as much as he does the children's library. Some days, we are able to stay for the entire story time and sometimes not and that's okay. The thing that matters is he knows he can always go to the children's library and be welcomed with open arms. Please include a full time Youth Services librarian in the 2015 city budget to continue providing these services our family relies on!

Sincerely,

Tara Hagge

thagge@sproutalaska.org