



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

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Homer, Alaska 99603

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(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

Memorandum

TO: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager
DATE: September 5, 2018
SUBJECT: September 10 City Manager Report

FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS)

Thanks to the Planning Office for gaining City recertification in the Community Rating System (CRS) program. Participation in this program requires the City to maintain and improve coastal floodplain management practices and gain recertification on a biannual basis. The City's efforts result in better floodplain management as well as a 10% discount on flood insurance rates for all property owners.

Airport Upgrades

The State of Alaska, Department of Transportation has received federal grant funding, \$5,600,000 to replace the existing airport maintenance equipment storage building at the Maintenance and Operations lot (along Kachemak Drive). The new building will house firefighting and snow removal equipment with construction starting in the spring of 2019.

In addition, the Homer Airport Chemical Storage building is a contingency project that will be advertised spring 2019, at the earliest. This building is in the same general area and will house de-icing chemical and mixing equipment. Most likely, construction will not begin on this project until at least 2020.

Emergency Management Training – Mark your Calendars!

The City of Homer is hosting a Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) course this February 21, 2019 called Senior Officials Workshop for All-Hazards Preparedness (MGT312). The class is a single day presentation lasting 6 hours.

We will be inviting key stakeholders both public and private for a strategic planning and review of the City's Emergency Operations Plan with regard to a summer event on the Homer Spit that would entail an evacuation. The goals of this class will include a tabletop exercise that will ensure integration of our emergency management team, businesses and elected officials for establishing roles and implementing plans during an event such as a tsunami.

This course provides a forum to discuss strategic and executive-level issues related to all-hazard disaster preparedness, to share proven strategies and best practices, and to enhance coordination among officials responsible for emergency response and recovery from a disaster. This workshop integrates a multimedia scenario and vignettes that highlight key issues and facilitates executive-level discussion of the United

States' National Strategy for Homeland Security. Additionally, the forum provides an opportunity to apply lessons learned from past local and national all-hazards disasters.

I will keep you updated as we work on planning this exercise. Per the TEEX website, there are no prerequisites. However, they do recommend taking an online FEMA Introduction to the Incident Management System (ICS100) or the Introduction of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) 700 links below.

<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c>

<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b>

Council Retreat

I mentioned at the last City Council meeting that one of the many takeaways I had from the Alaska Municipal Manager Association Summer Meeting was the value of a Council retreat. In this instance, I use the R word cautiously as I want to make sure we size the experience right for our organization and time restraints. In that vein I would like to have a conversation with Council on the goals and objectives of a retreat (and whether or not we should do one!). In order for the time to be productive, as much planning and advance thought needs to be put in as possible. My main goal for a retreat, in addition to relationship building which is always positive, is to refine a mission statement for the City of Homer. We have a vision statement in the Comprehensive Plan, and mission statements for each of the departments, but no one overarching sentence that sums up the City of Homer that we call our mission statement. This has been brought to my attention as the Finance Department works to prepare the budget to the Government Officers Finance Association Standards, which requires a mission statement for the organization to be clearly stated in the budget document. However, I would be interested in hearing goals and objectives that you would like to see the Council come away with from some dedicated and focused time together.

Some items that to consider include:

Are we in? Is this a good use of precious Council and staff time?

Goals and Objectives: I will be happy if we walk away with a mission statement. Is that enough? Other items that have been recommended are strategic planning, prioritizing council goals for the upcoming year, and establishing what the City of Homer considers core services. Other retreat models put the emphasis on building trust and relationships.

Hire a Facilitator? Another key indicator of the success of a retreat is to have a facilitator that can ask the hard questions, help the group work through difficult situations and pay attention to group dynamics.

Who? It is crucial every member of Council is able to attend. I recommend management staff attend at least some of the meeting so they can understand the priorities and goals of Council.

Where? Off site in a neutral location that is large enough to accommodate Councilmembers, staff, and any public.

How long? My suggestion is to start small, 4 hours on a weekend morning, for example.

When? Timing the retreat in the late fall allows for Council to coalesce after the election and still gives time to introduce budget amendments if priorities that require funding become apparent. However, it is also the busiest time of year with the budget, fall conferences and new members getting up to speed. The retreat will only be as good as the advance planning and work that goes into it. Available Saturdays include:

October 27; November 3; December 8; January 5

If Council is interested in committing to a Council retreat, I would like to schedule a worksession in the near future to make sure you have input into the planning process and we make it a productive use of your time. At this point, both worksession dates in October (the 8th and 22nd) are open.

Alaska Municipal League Summer Meeting Trip Report

I had a productive trip to Denali Borough for the Alaska Municipal League Summer meeting. Councilmember Stroozas also attended the meeting as a representative from Homer. Not only are the summer meetings an excellent way to get to know more communities in Alaska, the intimate setting lets you really get to know your colleagues, take advantage of networking events, and engage in productive dialogue on the issues facing municipalities in Alaska today. Next year it will be close by – Soldotna, so no reason not to go!

The first full day of the conference was the Alaska Municipal Manager's Association, where I sit on the Executive Board as the Secretary/ Treasurer. This means I had a role in conference planning and couldn't just zone out in the back! We had about 30 participants –mostly managers and assistant managers from around Alaska, but a number of Council or Borough Assembly members attended as well as it is an open meeting and they were able to choose between the Mayors meeting and the Managers meeting for this first day of the conference. After introductions, we conducted a short business meeting where, among other business matters, I was appointed to serve on the planning committee for the International City Manager's Association Conference in Nashville next year. This is the main event for City Manager's and brings thousands of Manager's together under one roof – if you can imagine that! The planning meeting will be held in Nashville November 16-18. It is over the weekend and the Association will cover most of my travel costs.

This year the Association has put a real emphasis on professional development. We had three sessions in that regard: Building Employee Culture, Council Manager Relations and Using Technology to Enhance Citizen Engagement. I learned a couple of concrete things that Kodiak does to build employee culture include a 2.5% annual merit increase and an employee picnic. The City of Juneau presented on an employee engagement survey as a tool to measure culture in a workplace and be able to tell if changes specifically aimed at improving workforce morale are effective. I am interested in exploring the idea of an employee survey at the City as a way to get important employee feedback and it may be something I ask the employee committee to help with. First Break all the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman is a title recommended that I will be adding to my list. Retired California City Manager and Regional Vice President for the International City Manager's Association, Bruce Channing, presented on Council Manager Relations and was a wealth of tips on how to juggle multiple bosses and the demands on time and resources that represents. I was the moderator for the panel discussion on Using Technology to Enhance Citizen Engagement, which ended up focusing on the challenges of cyber security for municipalities with multiple municipalities who have been victims to recent ransom ware attacks in the State of Alaska in the audience. I will be following up with IT on an analysis of our system and mandatory trainings for employees as email is our most vulnerable entry point.

Day 2 the managers joined the councilmembers and mayors for a full 12 hour conference day. We started with an introduction to the new Executive Director of Alaska Municipal League, Nils Andreassen who formerly served as the ED for the Institute of the North, a think tank founded by Governor Walter J. Hickel to help guide Alaska in Arctic Policy. AML Lobbyist Ray Gillespe presented on legislative challenges that

municipalities will be facing in Juneau in 2019. These included the fiscal challenges the state faces and potential broad based taxes, the impact of shifting services and costs to local municipalities and the perennial game of defense on the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). PERS and the State increasing the required contribution rate from employers looms as a very real threat for municipalities. Councilmember Stroozas has requested a worksession on this topic so Council has a better understanding of the history and vulnerabilities of PERS for our bottom line (see attached hand out for a PERS timeline). At this point, both worksession dates in October (the 8th and 22nd) are open.

The National League of Cities presented on federal legislative issues that affect cities across the nation. These include expanding broad band internet, the infrastructure bill many have been waiting for, the challenges of regulating drones for municipalities (do we want to allow 'hive' package delivery, for example) and the opioid epidemic. Office of Management and Budget Director Pat Pitney and Commerce Commissioner Mike Navarre gave an update on the State of Alaska budget, what has been done to fill the gap and what remains unfinished. After facilitated group discussions on a number of topics (I choose PERS), Senator John Coghill and cosponsor of Senate Bill 91 addressed the group regarding the goals and priorities of this legislation to reduce costs in our prison systems and address some grievous crimes with stricter penalties. Governor Walker joined Senator Coghill, Representative Grenn and the Alaska Fire Chief Association President Styers to sign SB 215 which provides a mechanism to identify exact location and charge a 911 surcharge for voice over IP (internet based) phone systems, which is primarily handled by the Kenai Peninsula Borough in our jurisdiction. The day ended with a lively and well run gubernatorial debate between Governor Walker and U.S. Senator Begich. Unfortunately the third candidate, State Senator Mike Dunlevy did not make the event.

As promised, wildlife sighting report: 7 brown bears, as many caribou, a wolf far off in the distance, a spruce hen and one angry moose outside the conference location. A tour of Denali National Park was donated for all conference attendees and I took an extra personal day to take advantage of the opportunity. It poured the whole time we were there and one thing we did not see was the Great One!

Alaska Municipal League is a great opportunity to share with and learn from other public officials. The next conference is November 14-16 in Anchorage (see conference registration flyer attached). Please let Melissa or I know if you are interested in attending so we can put you on the list for travel authorization.

Water and Sewer Sales Tax Billing Error

Water and sewer customers received a small gift from the City of Homer on their bill last month: sales tax was only calculated on the base meter fee instead of the entire bill. The error happened because the original file was uploaded incorrectly. When that mistake was caught and the file reloaded, the sales tax failed to recalculate. If you recall a similar error occurring over a year ago, you are correct. However, in that instance the mistake was due to a software glitch and our financial reporting software provided us with in person on-site training to compensate for the error. This one is on us and exposes human vulnerabilities in the system. I am working with the Finance Department to ensure standard operating procedures are in place to double check billing. Mistakes are human, but we can put in extra steps and procedures to find them whenever possible. Most importantly, I want to make sure employees feel comfortable coming to their supervisor as soon as they notice a mistake so we can problem solve as a team. It is far worse for you, as City Council to get blindsided by something you knew nothing about.

Money saved in homeland Security grant going to more radios.

The City of Homer received funding for a backup generator for the Port and Harbor Building. With that project complete and under budget, we have applied for and received the additional \$23,000 to purchase radios for the Homer Police Department. As you recall, radio replacement is a CIP priority that we keep chipping away at, mostly through FEMA Homeland Security grants. We had an application in for the radios that did not get fully funded this round, which made applying the excess in the generator grant easy and hassle free.

Tidal Monitoring Improvements by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Homer will be seeing the scientific benefits of two tidal monitoring projects being installed this fall. One will provide updated baseline data for our tidal adjustment published in the tide books and the second will provide real time water level monitoring. I break the two projects out below, as it is hard to keep two such similar projects separate.

Tide Book Baseline Data

The NOAA National Water Level Observing Network (NWLON) system is the program that provides the information published in the tide books. Currently in Kachemak bay, Seldovia is the local reporting station and was established way back when it was the only city in the bay. The NWLON stations are expensive to own and maintain and NOAA considers Kachemak Bay covered with the one site. If the City of Homer wants our own station there will be local costs to get it established and probably some sort of annual cost as well. A NOAA contractor installed a temporary system on the Pioneer dock that will gather data for the next 90 days that will be used to verify our adjustment that gets published in the actual tide book. The published correction has not been ground truth verified since 1979. There is no local cost for this effort.

Real Time Water Level Monitoring

This NOAA project is explained in greater detail in the attachment, but essentially it will provide a low cost way to inform tidal projections and engineering projects in the future. The exact location for the permanent installation is yet to be determined but it will be in the small boat harbor where there is access to electricity and connectivity for internet (possibly the Fish dock or ramp seven by the harbor office).

The main benefit of real time monitoring for Homer will be that overall accuracy of tidal predictions will improve over time due to the fact that we won't have to wait 39 years for the NOAA to update their baseline data. That information will be available in real time, managed and coordinated through AOOS, as public information. Anyone planning a project along in or around the bay will be able to plug in real up to date numbers to their engineering. Also the tidal corrections in the published tide books can be updated annually. Things are changing with water levels due to the rise in sea level and it is imperative to remove the guess work from just how much water levels are changing by using the latest in technology.

In the future, Port and Harbor Director Hawkins envisions the City installing this technology permanently at the Port and sharing the information will be public. Once the hardware is in place the data will be used for all the ongoing science and engineering projects. This will benefit the Large Vessel Port Expansion project and provide necessary information without the Army Corps having to set up their own system.

Enc:

September Employee Anniversaries

Letter of support for China Poot Trail grant

Conference Registration Packet for AML Annual Local Government Conference

PERS Timeline from AML titled "Attachment B"



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR ZAK AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Katie Koester
DATE: September 10, 2018
SUBJECT: September Employee Anniversaries

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

Aaron Glidden,	Port	14	Years
Holly Brennan,	Library	10	Years
Ryan Browning,	Police	8	Years
Mike Lowe,	Port	7	Years
Nick Poolos,	Admin	7	Years
Tracie Whitaker,	Police	4	Years
Lisa Linegar,	Police	3	Years
Mia Solomon,	Public Works	3	Years
Tamara Fletcher,	Port	2	Years
Terry Kadel,	Fire	1	Year



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Darcy Harris
Alaska State Trail Program
550 W. 7th Ave. Suite 380
Anchorage AK 99501

September 11, 2018

Re: Support for the China Poot Lake Trail

Ms. Harris,

I am writing to express the City of Homer's support for the Alaska State Trail Program proposal/application submitted by The Homer Office, Kenai Area of Alaska State Parks for Kachemak Bay State Park.

The trails in Kachemak Bay State Park are highly valued by the people of Homer. In particular, the China Poot Lake Trail is very popular and helps to connect visitors and residents to the Public Use Cabins at China Poot Lake and Moose Valley. The goal for the 2019 project is to removed large tree stumps from beetle kill trees, repair or replace bridges, and brush along the trail corridor to improve drainage. These improvements will also improve access to the fishing opportunities in China Poot Lake and hiking adventures to China Poot Peak.

I encourage the approval of this application which will increase access to Kachemak Bay State Park. The Park draws visitors from across the state, country and world and facilitating access to the park is an important part of Homer's economy. Thank you for taking the time to consider this important project.

Sincerely,

Katie Koester
City Manager
907-435-3102

Conference Registration



ALASKA ★ MUNICIPAL ★ LEAGUE

**Annual Local Government Conference
November 12-16, 2018 | Anchorage**

The Hotel Captain Cook ~ Anchorage, AK

#AML2018

Hotel & Travel Information

Hotel

The Hotel Captain Cook
939 W. 5th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 276-6000
Toll Free: 1-800-843-1950



RATE:** Single/Dbl: **\$105/night**

***does not include 12% occupancy tax*

To receive the conference rates above you must mention **AML2018** when registering.
Rates guaranteed until October 13, 2018.

Rental Cars

Hertz Rental Car is offering AML discounted rates during the Annual Conference. Call: **1-800-654-2240** or book online at Hertz.com Code: **CV# 022Q9166**
Please visit www.akml.org for a complete list of rates.

Airlines

Alaska Airlines: A 7% discount is available on all regular Alaska Airlines fares to Anchorage.

- Go online to www.alaskaair.com and use the discount code ECMZ882 when searching for flights or
- Call the Alaska Airlines Group Reservation Desk: **1-800-445-4435** and use the same code ECMZ882. A \$15.00 ticketing fee will apply for bookings made by calling Group Reservation Desk. Visit www.akml.org for details.



Alaska Municipal League

Newly Elected Officials

Building a solid leadership foundation begins with AML's Newly Elected Officials (NEO) Seminar. It is one of Alaska's most highly regarded training programs for local leaders. Officials who would like a refresher course and those who are newly elected to office are invited to attend.

The NEO Seminar takes place on Monday & Tuesday, November 12 & 13, starting at 9:00 a.m. A separate registration fee is required. A \$50 discount is offered for NEO participants who also attend the Local Government Conference.

Monday & Tuesday, Nov. 12 & 13, 2018

Newly Elected Officials (NEO) Training

- Roles and Responsibilities of Municipal Officials
- Budget and Governmental Accounting
- Lobbying
- Local Tax Policy in Alaska
- Open Meetings Act
- Quasi-Judicial Role and Ex Parte Contact
- Ethics and Conflicts of Interest
- Parliamentary Procedures and Conducting Effective Meetings

Annual Conference

This annual convening brings refreshing insight and perspectives, and helps AML develop priorities for the coming year that reflect the public interest.

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2018

- All Day - Registration & Exhibits
- Opening Session
- Opening Day Luncheon & Keynote
- Day One Workshops I, II
- Welcome Reception

Thursday, Nov. 15 2018

- All Day - Registration & Exhibits
- Day Two Workshops III, IV, V, VI
- Day Two Luncheon
- AML President's Reception, ACoM Silent Auction & Presentations of Awards

Friday, Nov. 16, 2018

- Board of Directors Elections
- Annual Business Meeting
Adoption of Resolutions, Priorities & Position Statements

Renew - Refresh

2018 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Conference Fees

\$50.00 discount with joint Conference & NEO registration.

AML Member*

AML Conference ___\$300

Newly Elected

Officials (NEO) ___\$250

AML Conference &

NEO _____\$500

One Day Attendance:

Wednesday _____\$150

Thursday _____\$150

Friday _____\$100

After 10/12/18 _____\$50

TOTAL \$_____

AML Non-Member*

AML Conference ___\$400

Newly Elected

Officials (NEO) ___\$325

AML Conference &

NEO _____\$675

One Day Attendance:

Wednesday _____\$200

Thursday _____\$200

Friday _____\$150

After 10/12/18 _____\$50

TOTAL \$_____

ANY SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS?

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations or changes must be made in writing and received by mail, email or fax no later than **Friday, October 26, 2018**. No refunds will be made for "no-shows" or cancellations after this date. "No-shows" will be billed for the full amount. AML cannot be responsible for cancellations due to weather. If you have any questions, please contact Betty Svensson at (907) 586-1325 or betty@akml.org.

**Member Rates apply to employees and local officials of member municipalities, and to AML Affiliate and Associate organizations including AMLIP members.*

Visit: WWW.AKML.ORG

To Register & Pay Online By Credit Card

Return Registration Form To:

MAIL: Alaska Municipal League
One Sealaska Plaza., Ste. 200,
Juneau, AK 99801

or FAX: (907) 463-5480

Delegate Information

(Please Copy and Attach Additional Forms for Multiple Attendees)

Delegate Name

Name to Appear on Badge

Municipality/Organization

Title

Preferred E-mail Address (contact reasons only)

Billing/Credit Card Information

Name & Title

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone

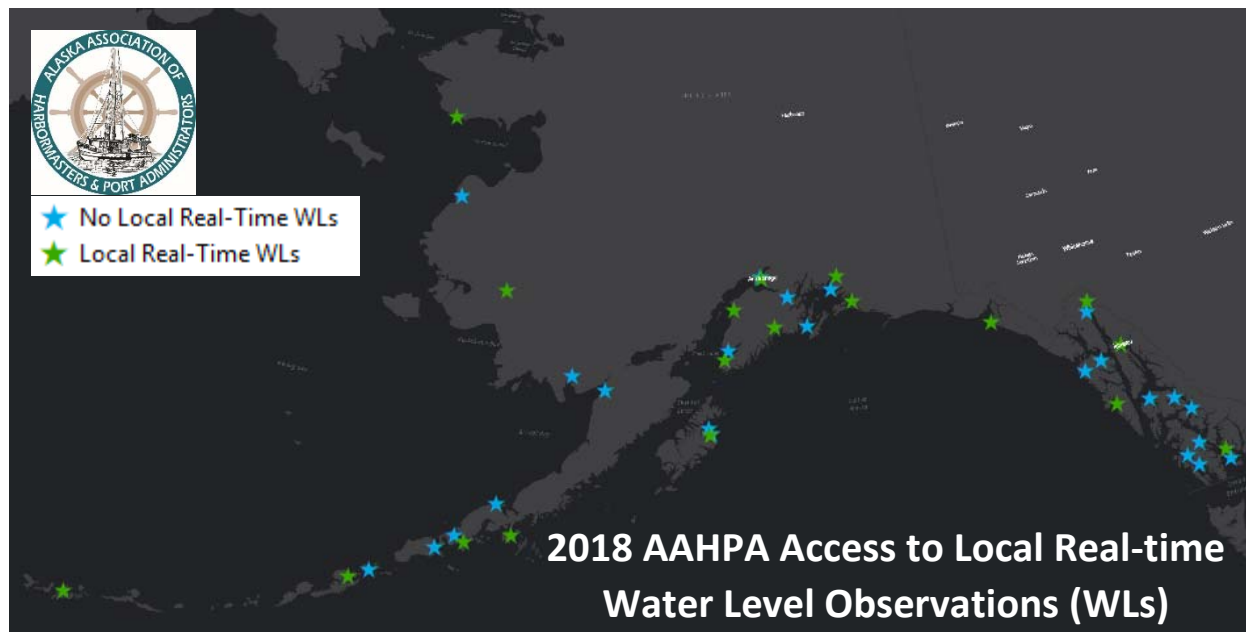
Card Number

Exp. Date: _____ CVC# _____

Proposed AAHPA Participation in Alaska Water Level Partnership

Statement of Need

Alaska’s ports and harbors are of significant economic importance to the State, with 90% of all goods entering the state via maritime transportation. However, less than half of the municipal ports and harbors that are part of the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators (AAHPA) have access to real-time water level observations within their boundaries through the existing National Water Level Observation Network (NWLON). These observational gaps limit public access to local water levels for planning and storm surge model verification, prevent real-time monitoring during tsunami warnings, and lead to increased costs associated with facility maintenance, engineering design and construction.



Alaska Water Level Partnership

The Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS) is working with NOAA’s Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) to augment the existing NWLON through partnership installations of low-cost sensors. By using the NWLON data model as an authoritative observational backbone, AOOS is able to provide comprehensive access to water level data from these partner owned and operated stations through a statewide data management system that parallels the CO-OPS website (tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov); is consistent and compatible with downstream tools, such as local tide tables; and serves as a pilot project for advancing nationwide CO-OPS coordination with the US Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS; ioos.noaa.gov) on external source data.

AAHPA Benefits

Additional coastal water level observations in Alaska will support improved tide predictions statewide and enhanced water level forecasting. Flexible instrumentation options allow for local requirements to drive sensor placement and operation. Participation in a statewide network will make observations accessible to everyone in a consistent format, and AOOS management of the data relieves extra data management at the local level. This novel collaborative approach illustrates the proactive nature of Alaska’s maritime community, serves as a model for similar efforts nationwide, and helps to educate the public about AAHPA through outreach associated with this expanded network.

