



# City of Homer

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

## Office of the City Manager

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### Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council  
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager  
DATE: December 5, 2018  
SUBJECT: December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 City Manager Report

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#### Earthquake and Tsunami Warning

As you are all well aware, on Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, a 7.2 magnitude Earthquake shook Southcentral Alaska at 8:29am, triggering a tsunami warning at 8:35am. At that time, I reported to the Fire Hall and stood up the Emergency Operation Center (EOC). Representatives from the Hospital and Public Health came, as did City staff assigned to different positions within the EOC and HVFD volunteers. HPD went door to door until the warning was called off at 10:03am. HPD reported a 99% self-evacuation rate as they went door to door and people maintained a calm and orderly demeanor.

The EOC was in contact with our local radios stations with regular updates, both the KWAVE/KPEN and KBBI. We contacted Glacier View Baptist Church and Homer Methodist Church to serve as alternate evacuation points to the high school for residents as area schools were also being evacuated to the High School. Public Health contacted their list of vulnerable populations who might need help evacuating with volunteers standing by to assist. Public Works evacuated all heavy equipment to the parking lot of the high school, per the Emergency Operations Plan (<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/fire/emergency-operations-plan>).

When the “all clear” was given at 10:03am, we communicated this to the media but were unable to issue an all clear over the warning system (an issue we are following up with the Borough about). HPD had to manually trigger the warning sirens at dispatch. Other issues that we will be following up with include: GCI phone lines going down at the EOC as well as the HPD admin line shortly after the evacuation commenced. Lines were back up by the afternoon and at no time was 911 down. I am conducting a Lessons Learned After Action report with local staff and responders and also participating in a borough-wide hotwash between the writing of this report and the Council meeting and will be able to answer more questions then.

After the event, City staff assessed all city facilities and declared them safe shortly after the all clear was given. Port facilities were also inspected and no damage was reported. As of today, there are no leaks detected in the water and sewer treatment systems, however we will be monitoring them closely over the next week or two.

Councilmembers have asked what their role is in an emergency event. Getting accurate information out to the public is the most important piece in the evacuation phase. Thank you for your help spreading the word. Roles of elected officials are included in our Emergency Operations Plan and are specific to the

declaration of a disaster. Having an efficient procedure to make funds available for disaster response is another role of the council and an item the Mayor is committed to looking at. Currently, the City Manager has authority to spend up to \$25,000 but is required to notify Council within 24 hours. Council or the Mayor can call an emergency meeting and an emergency ordinance requires only one reading, nevertheless timing could easily be an issue in an emergency situation. I look forward to working on these ways to improve code for readiness. I am highly motivated with 2 evacuations in less than a 12 month period and will continue to report to you with updates on how we are improving our emergency preparedness and public education.

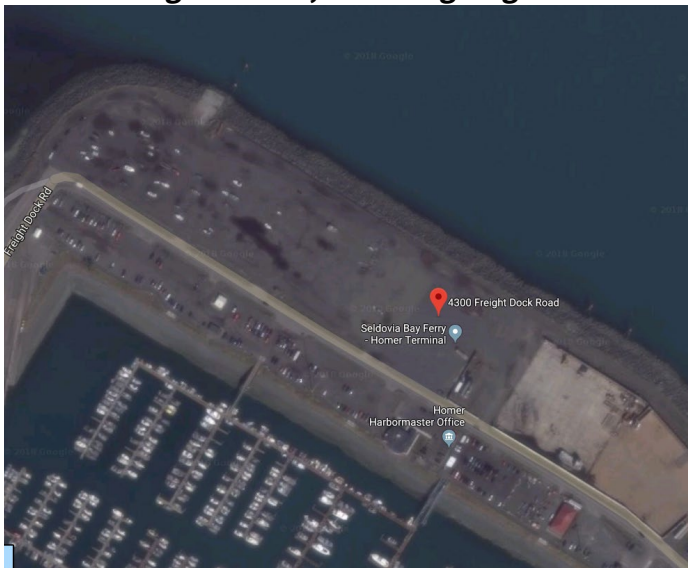
### **2019 Industry Outlook Forum January 9<sup>th</sup> in Homer**

The Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) is holding its annual Industry Outlook Forum in Homer this year, January 9<sup>th</sup> at the Christian Community Church from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The Outlook Forum brings business professionals and industry leaders together from around the Kenai Peninsula and the state to discuss key economic factors and industry trends. Topics range widely to give a broad overview, including workforce development, reports from major industries like tourism, health, oil & gas, agriculture and mining, an economic update from the State of Alaska and Borough, and insights from local entrepreneurs among others. The Forum is free and open to the public, but KPEDD does require attendees to RSVP in advance. This is a great opportunity for you to assess conditions and learn about opportunities and challenges to strengthen our economy. I have attached the agenda – please let Melissa know if you plan on coming to all or some of the event. One of the featured speakers in our very own Councilmember Lord on agriculture. I look forward to seeing you there.

### **Meeting with Set Free Alaska Opioid**

Set Free Alaska is an outpatient substance abuse treatment center in Palmer. Located in the Mat-Su Valley, the organization spent time in Homer meeting with the Opioid Task force to share their experiences treating the epidemic in the Mat-Su. While here, Mayor Castner set up a meeting with Set Free Alaska. It was great to hear from an organization that is on the front lines of treatment and providing people in Alaska with hope.

### **Wireless Edge Towers, LLC Assigning Lease to Wireless Edge II**



Wireless Edge Towers, LLC entered into a ground lease agreement with the City of Homer in March of 2017 to use 4300 Freight Dock Road for a cell tower. In section 19 of the current lease, the City of Homer agreed that Wireless Edge Towers, LLC could assign this lease agreement to an affiliate, with an affiliate defined as any person or entity that (directly or indirectly) controls, is controlled by, or under common control with Wireless Edge Towers, LLC.

Under new City code 18.08, the current lease agreement controls in matters of assignment so if it mandates assignment/transfer, Council approval is not required. Staff had Cityscape Consultants, a contractor hired by the City of Homer to review cell

tower company arrangements, review the request for Wireless Ede Towers, LLC to assign their City lease to Wireless Edge II and they saw no issues with this re-assignment request.

## Opening up the Slough Adjacent to Mariner Park



In the last couple of weeks, water is standing in the slough adjacent to Mariner Park because the outlet to Kachemak Bay has been closed off by storms and tidal action. This can cause erosion when water ponds in the slough. There is also concern the wildlife habitat in the slough could be damaged if ponding continued over a long period of time.

Public Works has received several calls from adjacent property owners asking when the opening would be re-established. The City has re-

established the outlet at least twice in the last 20 years. The slough and the outlet are located on property owned by the City.

Since this work will require excavation and fill in the tidal area, an Army Corps permit is required. Public Works has obtained the necessary permit and quotes from several local Contractors. The good news is the lowest quote is \$3,400. Nevertheless, this expenditure will run the Parks Department Professional Services line item in the operating budget over since it an infrequent occurrence and there is not enough cushion in that line item to absorb such expenses. Nevertheless, for truth in reporting it is important to code it to the appropriate Division. Although this will result in Parks professional services going over budget, I anticipate that the overall expenses of the Parks Department will remain within budget.

## Moving forward at HVFD/ Meeting with Volunteers

Fire Chief Terry Kadel is no longer with the Homer Volunteer Fire Department. In the meantime, Dan Miotke, a seventeen-year veteran within the Department will be the Acting Assistant Chief and will be in charge of operations until an interim Chief is in place to help during the transition. I want to thank Chief Kadel for his service to Homer and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

I met Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, with the Fire Department volunteers to solicit feedback on the department's leadership needs and discuss the plan for moving forward. It was a productive conversation and I am grateful for the many members who shared their time and attention.

After gathering feedback from volunteers and staff, the immediate next step will be filling a permanent Assistant Chief position. The City had already been actively recruiting, with the current application period closing December 15<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime I am soliciting an interim Fire Chief that can work for a temporary time frame to help during the transition period while the City launches a robust national search for a permanent Fire Chief. I am prioritizing casting a wide net and recruiting aggressively for a permanent Chief position that fits the needs of the department and maintains the high level of safety services that our dedicated staff and volunteer corps provides. The volunteers are the heart of the department and this community depends on them for a wide variety of life and property saving services, from emergency medical attention during transport to the hospital at 2:00 am, to putting out a brush fire gone awry. I would like to thank them for their dedication to Homer.

### **Visit with State Delegation**

Senator Gary Stevens will be in Homer Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> and has requested an audience with City Council to discuss the upcoming legislative session and City of Homer priorities, 4pm in the conference room. This is, of course, an open meeting and the public is welcome to attend. It will be great to be able to give him an update on Police Station and progress on the Large Vessel Harbor Project. I will be working on arranging a similar meeting with Representative-elect Vance to provide an opportunity to share City of Homer priorities, including our Capital Improvement Plan. Please let me know if there are any dates that don't work for you as I try to work around scheduling for the holidays and what I am sure is her busy schedule as she prepares to travel to Juneau.

Senator Gary and Representative-elect Vance will also be jointly meeting Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Homer Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center to discuss the legislative priorities for the upcoming session.

### **Forbes Calls Attention to Homer**

A quick mention that Forbes has listed Homer at the "Best Place to Retire in Alaska." Here are the profile highlights they wrote up about our community:

*"Beachfront city of 6,000 on the Kenai Peninsula along Alaska's southern coast. Median home price \$280,000. Cost of living 14% above national average. PROS: Surprisingly mild climate, good air quality. High number of physicians per capita. No state income tax, no state estate/inheritance tax. Low serious crime rate. CONS: Tsunami potential, not very walkable. NOTED: Elevation 100 feet. TRIVIA: Named for a gold-mining promoter."*  
<https://www.forbes.com/places/ak/homer/>

### **4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Customer Comment Card Report**

We received only five comments this last quarter. They are attached in the following spreadsheet. I want to commend the Departments for their responsiveness to citizen suggestions and concerns.

Enc:

December Employee Anniversaries

Industry Outlook Forum Agenda

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Customer Feedback Quarterly Report



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## Memorandum

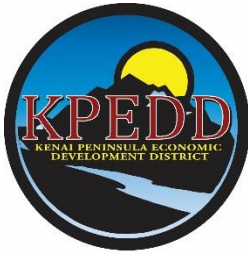
TO: Mayor Castner and City Council  
FROM: Katie Koester  
DATE: December 10, 2018  
SUBJECT: December Employee Anniversaries

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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.

<b>Mark Robl,</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Bryan Hawkins,</b>	<b>Port</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Todd Cook,</b>	<b>Public Works</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Chris Cushman,</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Katie Koester,</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Sean Perry,</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Mike Zelinski,</b>	<b>Public Works</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Peter Alfiche</b>	<b>Port</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Years</b>





## INDUSTRY OUTLOOK FORUM

HOSTED BY

**Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District**

**And Supported By**

**Cities and Chambers of Commerce of:  
Homer, Seward, Kenai, and Soldotna**

Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – Christian Community Church in Homer, Alaska

<b>8:15</b>	<b>Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</b>	45 min
<b>8:45 - 9:00</b>	<b>Welcome – Tim Dillon</b> Pledge of Allegiance	15 min
<b>9:00 – 9:15</b>	<b>Alaska Salt Company</b> <i>Casey &amp; Britni Siekaniec</i>	15 min
<b>9:15 – 9:45</b>	<b>Alaska Travel Industry Association</b> <i>Sarah Leonard, President &amp; CEO</i>	30 min
<b>9:45 – 10:00</b>	<b>KPEDD – Workforce Development Plan</b> <i>Tim Dillon, Executive Director &amp; Caitlin Coreson, Programs Manager</i>	15 min
<b>10:00 – 10:05</b>	<b>Break – Networking Opportunity</b>	5 min
<b>10:05 -10:30</b>	<b>Blue Pipeline</b> <i>Justin Sternberg, Executive Director</i>	15 min
<b>10:30 - 11:00</b>	<b>Hilcorp Alaska</b> <i>Dave Wilkins, Senior Vice President</i>	30 min
<b>11:30 - 11:55</b>	<b>Alaska Stems Farm</b> <i>Rachel Lord</i>	25 min
<b>12:00 – 1:00</b>	<b>Lunch – Featured Speaker: Bay Weld Boats</b> <i>Eric Engebretsen, General Manager</i>	1 hr



<b>1:10 – 1:30</b>	<b>KPEDD Board of Directors</b> <i>Disaster Planning</i>	20 min
<b>1:30 - 2:00</b>	<b>UAA Center for Economic Development</b> <i>Nolan Klouda</i>	30 min
<b>2:00 – 2:20</b>	<b>South Peninsula Hospital</b> <i>Joseph Woodin, CEO</i>	20 min
<b>2:20 – 2:40</b>	<b>Alaska Oil &amp; Gas Association</b> <i>Kara Moriarty, CEO</i>	20 min
<b>2:40 – 2:50</b>	<b>Break – Networking Opportunity</b>	10 min
<b>2:50 – 3:10</b>	<b>Tyonek Native Corporation</b> <i>Leo Barlow, CEO</i>	20 min
<b>3:10 – 3:30</b>	<b>Alaska Gasline Development Corporation</b> <i>Frank Richards, Senior Vice President</i>	20 min
<b>3:30 – 4:00</b>	<b>Alaska Dept. Commerce, Community &amp; Economic Development</b> <i>Alyssa Rodrigues, Development Manager</i>	30 min
<b>4:00 – 4:20</b>	<b>The Pebble Partnership</b> <i>Mark Hamilton, Vice President of External Affairs</i>	20 min
<b>4:20 – 4:30</b>	<b>Wrap – Up</b> <b>Kenai Peninsula Borough</b> <i>Mayor Charlie Pierce</i>	10 min





DATE	TYPE	CUST COMMENT	Response