



City of Homer

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MANAGER'S REPORT

December 8, 2014

TO: MAYOR WYTHE / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WALT WREDE

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

NOTE: Some of these items appeared in the last report. I have updated them and brought them back in case the Council wanted to discuss.

Skyline Fire Station: This building is nearing completion. Several Council members and members of the public have asked if there would be some kind of ribbon cutting ceremony. Although we are all excited about bringing this facility in-line, Chief Painter has concerns that a grand opening might give people a false sense of security and an expectation that the facility is operational. The truth is that because we secured a legislative grant to refurbish two important pieces of equipment, (Engine 4 is being refurbished right now), the building won't have apparatus staged there until next fall. The Chief would also like to increase efforts to recruit and train volunteers who live up in that area and can respond directly to that station. A Memorandum from Chief Painter is attached which goes into more detail.

Marijuana Legalization: As you know, the initiative to legalize marijuana in Alaska passed. Many municipalities are already discussing this with respect to things like community attitudes, regulation and taxation. Interest in starting the public discussion has been expressed by Council members and the staff has been talking about it as well. Cities and Boroughs may be somewhat limited in what they can enact until the state drafts its new regulations but it will be good to be prepared in advance. The law contains some big gaps with respect to municipalities. So, it will be very important that municipal interests and concerns are represented when the state is drafting the regulations. Fortunately, Homer will be well represented at the table. The Association of Police Chiefs has formed a working group and engaged an attorney that will assist them in working with the State Department of Law. Chief Robl has been asked to participate. There is also a group of municipal attorneys who have formed to represent broader municipal interests including taxation and regulation. The City's law firm, Birch, Horton, Bittner, and Cherot has two attorneys in this working group, Holly Wells and Cortney Kitchen. There is talk about adding some municipal managers to the working group also. Holly and Cortney are currently working on a white paper on this topic which will be available to you in January. It will be important for the Council to stay engaged

with Holly and with Chief Robl on this topic so they are aware of your concerns and interest areas.

Islands and Ocean Roof: The City played a role in securing funding and finding a new State partner for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve during the last legislative session and over the summer months. We are pleased that the University of Alaska Anchorage will likely be the new state partner. One of the issues that has arisen during the negotiations is that the University is leery of possible capital costs that they might be responsible for at the Islands and Ocean Center. It is possible that the University might reduce its footprint there or even move out completely, leaving USFWS without a tenant and possibly placing the entire facility in jeopardy. A specific concern is the roof. Apparently, as a cost cutting measure, a thin membrane roof with a ten year warranty was installed instead of a thicker, 30 year roof. This roof now needs to be replaced. The Research Reserve has inquired about whether the City would consider adding this project to its CIP list, either in 2015 or 2016. I bring this up here to get the subject out on the table and solicit some initial reactions. If Council is interested, Katie will draft up a project description and/or a resolution for your consideration.

Hertz Lease: Several months ago, the Council approved a new lease at the airport terminal for Pioneer Car Rental / Hertz. Since that time, the owner of Pioneer Car Rental has informed us that he no longer has an affiliation with Hertz. We are not overly concerned about that because the Lease Committee reviewed the lease proposal based upon the viability of Pioneer Car Rental and its owner. In other words, the financial information and experience of the owner/operator presented in the application were for Pioneer Car Rental as a stand-alone operation. The affiliation with Hertz was a bonus but approval of the proposal was not contingent upon that. So, we have made the adjustments to the lease. We believe Pioneer will still be a good tenant at the airport. There is a possibility that the City could lose some revenue related to volume of sales because of the detachment from Hertz.

Transition: During the remaining weeks in December I will be focused upon the transition and getting the office ready for a new occupant. I have asked the department heads to prepare transition reports for their departments by December 15 for use by the interim manager and the permanent manager when one is hired. I expect that the interim manager will be here for at least several days in December for an orientation and I will do as much as I can to prepare him to hit the ground running. I will be spending a fair amount of time cleaning up and organizing my electronic and paper files. I will also be working on a number of personnel issues including a new employment agreement for Chief Robl and overdue performance evaluations for all department heads and other staff members who report directly to me. I will also be working to tie up some loose ends regarding leases and property management.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Skyline Fire Station Memorandum: Chief Painter
2. Community Recreation Weekly Schedule