



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: September 24, 2020
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for September 28th Council Meeting

RAVN Update

Immediately after Council approved an emergency ordinance allowing the City Manager's office to pursue a lease agreement with the "new" RAVN, we began to move that process forward. Rachel Friedlander has been working diligently with the future tenant to get a lease drafted and required paperwork in order. The lease is contingent upon the approval of the State of Alaska and the official rejection of the lease held by the "old" RAVN. At the time of this report, a draft lease has been sent to the State of Alaska for approval and bankruptcy attorney, Gary Sleeper from JDO, has also been assisting our efforts as they relate to the lease held by the "old" RAVN. I expect we will be able to complete this process in very short order.

Flying Whale Update

Flying Whale lease was terminated at the special meeting on September 14th. Staff is coordinating with the tenants to vacate their space at the airport. We anticipate that they will complete their exit by the end of September. Staff will begin to consider options to remarket that space shortly thereafter.

CARES Act Funds Dashboard

With help from Finance Director Walton, we have been creating some basic data visualizations of the City's CARES Act funding. We're still dialing in the format and the types of graphs involved. The goal is to have information available in a format that allows Councilmembers and the public to see at a glance what funds have been granted to the city, what appropriations have been made, and how much has actually been spent. We are also collaborating with Engineering/GIS Technician Aaron Yeaton to see if we can develop useful visualization tools using ArcGIS StoryMaps. I will provide updates as this experiment continues. If we find a format that really works for the Council and the public we will attempt to replicate the effort with other funds.

HERG Program

The Household Economic Relief Grant (HERG) program is important to helping Homer residents who are experiencing economic hardship due to lost wages and extra expenses from COVID-19. It will help pay for essentials goods and services to stabilize families in their homes. We anticipate this program will launch September 28th with an application deadline of Friday, October 16th. This opportunity will be widely advertised through radio PSA, press releases, Facebook, and newspaper ads. Applications can be submitted online with paper copies available at the City Clerk's office.

Food for Kids and Teens

The Food for Kids and Teens program at the Library will continue through the winter. Free bags of food are available Monday through Friday, 10am-6pm. Anyone in need is welcome to collect a bag from the plastic tote outside the library, near the book drop. Thank you to the Homer Food Pantry for their generous support of the community!

Vehicles in the Right-of-Way

With winter almost upon us, staff is ramping up efforts to discourage parking vehicles and storing personal property in the City's rights of way. This will be particularly important when snow begins to fall and our plows hit the streets. Staff from my office, Public Works, and Homer Police Department have been discussing ways to increase public awareness of this issue, how we can change behaviors, and how to enforce regulations when all other avenues have failed.

Water Level Sensor at the Harbor

Earlier in the summer, the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Coastal Hazards program installed a water level sensor in the Harbor. The sensor measures how high the water is every hours and sends the data to a website for public viewing: <https://stilltek.com/stlwtr/iGage7/>. Some of the benefits of this program include: knowing the height and timing of the tide within one hour of the time it is checked; identifying whether the predicted high and low tides of the day are correct or not; measuring the height of storm surges and other high water events; updating models of tides, surges, and other water levels to improve predictions. More information about the Alaska Water Level Watch program can be found here: <https://aoot.org/alaska-water-level-watch/>.

Halloween

Halloween is fast approaching and COVID-19 is still here. This is uncharted territory for everybody. In past years we have received special permit applications for Halloween events from the community. I don't know if we will this year or not. Prior event organizers have reached out to staff to ask questions while they consider their options. Staff has also received general questions from the public regarding the holiday and trick or treating. We're watching what innovations are being proposed in other communities and reaching out to local partners to see if any of them are working on COVID-safe events.

Homer Recreation Manager to be President of Alaska Recreation and Parks Association

Mike Illg, Recreation Manager, is president-elect to the [Alaska Recreation and Parks Association \(ARPA\)](#). ARPA's mission is to provide a forum for interchange of ideas and information among parks, recreation and wildland professionals and supporters; promote the personal, environmental, social and economic benefits of parks, recreation and wildlands; coordinate, organize and promote quality educational opportunities; and prepare and provide educational information relating to parks, recreation and wildlands. Mike's term as president begins in October.

Analysis of 2nd Quarter Sales Tax

In a previous manager's report it was stated that staff would bring forth an analysis of the 2nd quarter sales tax for discussion with Council. I would like to make this the topic of an October 12th work session if the Council is amenable to that suggestion.

Plastic Bag Ban Update

At the previous Council meeting there was discussion revolving around the suspension of the plastic bag ban which was tied to the COVID disaster declaration. After the meeting I reached out to Public Health and have

done some research into the use of plastic bags in the context of the current pandemic. I expect that staff will be able to prepare materials in order to discuss this issue in October.

Enclosures:

1. Food for Kids & Teens Program Instagram Flyer



Food for Kids & Teens

Are you hungry?

Free
grab & go bags

of non-perishable food for
hungry and/or homeless
kids & teens

are available!



@ Homer Public Library
(near the bookdrop, on side of building)

Mondays - Fridays
10am - 6pm

Food DONATIONS should be taken to the
Homer Food Pantry

Homer Public Library 907-235-3180

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library || 500 Hazel Ave.