



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

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(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: November 19, 2020
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for November 23rd Council Meeting

Melissa Jacobsen Awarded Clerk of the Year by Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks

I am very excited to extend congratulations to City Clerk Melissa Jacobsen for being recognized as Alaska's Clerk of the Year. I have been continually impressed by the high level of work that comes out of the Clerk's Office since arriving in Homer, and I'm glad to see that her peers throughout the state also recognize the value she provides to both her local community and the statewide network of city clerks. Nothing works without clerks, and I'm very happy to have such an exceptional City Clerk on our team.

Good Luck and Goodbye to Rachel Friedlander

I also want to extend congratulations to Rachel Friedlander who is preparing to transition into the position of City Manager for the City of Seldovia. Rachel has served the City of Homer as Executive Assistant to the City Manager for the last two years and has been an absolute all-star for our organization. I'm very grateful for the support she has provided me in the early days of my tenure here in Homer. I look forward to having her as a colleague and hope that our two communities will benefit from the strong working relationship we've forged here in City Hall.

Greetings from Consul Aniya

Mayor Castner received a letter dated November 3rd from Consul Aniya who was appointed as Head of the Consular Office of Japan in Anchorage May of this year. Last year, Mayor Castner convened a group of three members of the public interested in furthering the relationship Homer has with its sister city, Teshio. One of the members, Megumi, has assisted the City with translation of correspondence sent to the Mayor of Teshio and even brought gifts from Homer for his office when she traveled to Japan at the beginning of the year. The City has yet to receive a response from Teshio however Consul Aniya's engagement with Homer could be yet another way to strengthen relations with our sister city. Staff are helping the Mayor make arrangements with Consul Aniya's office to participate in the future "Japan-Alaska Sister City forum" he mentions in his letter and will provide updates to Council as this moves forward.

Intersection of Soundview and Sterling Highway

Prior to the pandemic, there had been some outreach by community members and local schools to improve safety conditions at the intersection of Soundview and Sterling Highway. Councilmembers Lord and Venuti revived this issue with my office and I did some outreach to AKDOT. I have sent them a letter indicating the existence of a safety concern. The letter also requests a safety assessment and recommendations for improvements from their team. After the review and recommendations are complete, I will assess the path forward and inform Council of the outcome.

De-escalation Training

As a follow up to my last report, arrangements are being made through AMLJIA to provide de-escalation training to staff later this month. We'll be digitally hosting three 90-minute sessions to try and capture as many participants as possible.

Virtual Conferences

The Alaska Municipal League and Alaska Municipal Management Association held virtual conferences which spanned the last two weeks. I participated in select sessions from both conferences.

COVID-Related Updates

COVID Framework Reviews

I continue to meet with staff to review our risk status according to the framework. I have a review scheduled for the afternoon of the 19th (after I submit this report for publication). If any changes in risk level are determined through that process I will communicate that to Council.

Council Chambers COVID Remodel

The Council Chambers remodel is well underway. Much of the new dais has been constructed and the old dais will be removed from Chambers the week of the 23rd. Work will begin shortly on the clerk's desk and podium. IT is wrapping up the details for the tech upgrades.

Enclosures:

1. Employee Anniversaries
2. AAMC Clerk of the Year – Melissa Jacobsen
3. Letter from Consul Aniya and Mayor Castner's response
4. Letter to AKDOT regarding intersection of Soundview and Sterling Highway



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: November 23, 2020
SUBJECT: November 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.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| Dave Shealy, | Police | 23 | Years |
| Lisa Ellington, | Port | 14 | Years |
| Jenna deLumeau, | Finance | 11 | Years |
| Ian Overson, | Police | 9 | Years |
| Rachel Friedlander, | Admin | 2 | Years |



Clerk of the Year Award

2020 Clerk of the Year Melissa Jacobsen, MMC

Homer City Clerk Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, received the prestigious Clerk of the Year Award on November 17, 2020, at the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks (AAMC) Business Meeting held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This award was established in 2000 to recognize Alaska municipal clerks who have made significant contributions toward furthering the municipal clerk profession, improving municipal government, continuing professional development through education, demonstrating leadership, and making significant contributions to the quality of life in their community.

Below are remarks prepared by the 2018 Clerk of the Year Award recipient Nova Javier when presenting the award to Melissa:

"This year's awardee was nominated by elected officials, manager, co-workers, and community members based on her leadership, ethics, professionalism, and excellence. She is described as a leader during one of the most challenging and muddled times in modern history.



The awardee furthered the municipal clerk profession by remaining positive and steadfast working on behalf of AAMC to ensure the spirit of our association remained strong during this pandemic.

This year's recipient is praised for her dedication in improving individual access and participation to the democratic process. She has made strategic and systemic changes and introduced new technology. She has lead in moving her City's "paper catacombs" into the digital age. She is a person who strives every day to be the change she wants to see in the world as she CONTRIBUTES greatly to her community. Council members and community members alike commend her positive attitude and calm demeanor. Watching her run an election during a pandemic has highlighted the hard work she puts into ensuring every member of the public has access to the polls while encouraging best practices and up to date safety measures.

This year's recipient started her service as a Deputy Clerk in 2004 and became the Clerk in 2017. She is a Master Municipal Clerk and she exemplifies one deserving of the AAMC Clerk of the Year award for her interest in lifelong learning, her knowledge, and her enthusiasm.

This year's 2020 Clerk of the Year award goes to our current AAMC President, Melissa Jacobsen. Congratulations Melissa!"

About the Award

The purpose of the Clerk of the Year (COTY) Committee is to select a clerk who has been nominated to be recognized for their outstanding achievements and contributions to their community. This award is presented to the selected clerk, during the annual AAMC banquet. The tradition of selecting a Clerk of the Year began in 2000 and carries on to this day.

Award Recipients

2020: Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City of Homer
 2019: Kacie Paxton, MMC, Ketchikan Gateway Borough
 2018: Nova Javier, MMC, Kodiak Island Borough
 2017: Jamie Newman, MMC, City of Wasilla
 2016: Johni Blankenship, MMC, Kenai Peninsula Borough
 2015: Debra Marlar, MMC, City of Kodiak
 2014: Jo Johnson, MMC, City of Homer
 2013: Katy Suiter, MMC, City of Ketchikan
 2012: Janey Hovenden, MMC, City of Fairbanks
 2011: Laurie Sica, MMC, City & Borough of Juneau
 2010: Jean Lewis, CMC, City of Seward
 2009: Sheri Pierce, MMC, City of Valdez
 2008: Colleen Ingman, MMC, City and Borough of Sitka
 2007: Marjorie Harris, CMC, Municipality of Skagway
 2006: Kristie Smithers, MMC, City of Wasilla
 2005: No Recipient Awarded
 2004: Bertha Panigeo, CMC, North Slope Borough
 2003: Sandra Dillon, CMC, Matanuska-Susitna Borough
 2002: Linda Murphy, MMC, Kenai Peninsula Borough
 2001: Mary Calhoun, CMC, City of Homer
 2000: Mona Lisa Drexler, CMC, Fairbanks North Star Borough

Consular Office of Japan

3601 C Street, Suite 1300
Anchorage, AK 99503
PHONE: (907) 562-8424
FAX: (907) 562-8434

Dear Mr. Ken Castner, Mayor of Homer,

November 3, 2020

My name is Masaru Aniya, and I was appointed as the Director of the Consular Office of Anchorage in June this year. I will do my best to promote friendship between Japan and Alaska with my wife, Yukiko. Thank you for your cooperation.

I understand that Homer City and Teshio Cho have promoted friendly relations between citizens through the exchanges. Citizen exchange plays a very important role in bilateral relations. It transcends political and economic relationships, which are sometimes influenced by changing times, and plays a major role in the field of education, which focuses the eyes of young people on international relations.

There is a famous Beethoven saying, from when he wrote the 9th Symphony and released it to the world, in which he expressed, "From the Heart - May it go back to the Heart".

I think that particles of joyful emotion are scattered in the hearts of everybody in the world. I think we can share those particles of joyful emotion within the group of sister cities. It is like if someone says, "I was moved by the film about Fred Rogers," and someone who heard that saw the film, and was moved again. Though it is a small matter, this is a very important moment which could change the direction of someone's life.

Sister city relations will continue to be developed by the independent initiatives of both cities. As sister city relations are being promoted between Japanese municipalities and Alaska, the Consular Office of Japan in Anchorage would also like to start activities to promote this important bond as a whole. Our Office has decided to launch the "Japan-Alaska Sister City Forum" to promote bilateral exchanges while casually discussing and sharing wisdom, so that exchanges can continue despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In the near future, we would like to hold an online meeting (using an app such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom) with persons in charge of each sister city relationship. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate it if you would let us know the name and contact information (email address) of the person who manages your sister city relationship.

Although it is the last note but not the least, I pray for your good health and further achievements in the future.



Masaru Aniya

Consular Office of Anchorage



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Office of the Mayor

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November 12, 2020

Honorable Masaru Aniya, Director
Consular Office of Japan
3601 C Street, Suite 1300
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Mr. Aniya:

How delightful to receive your letter, and congratulations on your appointment. The pandemic of the novel virus has placed many unwelcomed restraints on our lives and activities, and the mandates of distancing have strained relationships we took for granted.

Your idea of a forum is a good one. Shortly before the onset of the viral spread, we delivered a New Year's greeting to our Sister City of Teshio. We hoped that 2020 would bring us back together in Japan for a personal exchange of peace and goodwill and the continued commitment to achieve the goals you so elegantly speak of in your letter.

Meetings over the internet (Zoom) have become our "new normal" and we would be delighted to introduce our Sister City Committee to you and have a discussion about planning a wider-attended forum.

Should the occasion arise that you think you could safely travel, we would welcome a visit in Homer with you and your wife. We would very much like to meet you.

Rachel Friedlander is employed by the City of Homer, and she would be the one to handle the arrangements. I will ask her to make acquaintance with Mr. Hughes of your office.

With very best wishes and prayers for good health,

Ken Castner, Mayor
City of Homer

cc: Sister City Committee
cc: Mr. Michael Hughes, via email



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November 13, 2020

Joselyn Biloon

Kenai Area Planner, AKDOT&PF

PO Box 196900

Anchorage, AK 99519

Electronically submitted: joselyn.biloon@alaska.gov

Ms. Biloon,

The City of Homer has a safety concern regarding the intersection of Soundview Avenue and the Sterling Highway. This intersection is used by many drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Schools including West Homer Elementary and Fireweed Academy are located nearby and there is a significant amount of activity at this intersection while parents are picking up or dropping off their children. The Homer Police Department has received several complaints over the past five years about this intersection, almost all from the school district. The main complaint is very slow moving traffic when students are either showing up or leaving. As the vehicles leave the school, most go to the intersection and turn left to come back into town.

I would like to request assistance from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in the form of a safety assessment, including traffic counts of all types of road users, and recommendations for safety improvements regarding the intersection of the Sterling Highway and Soundview Avenue.

If I can be of any assistance in providing additional information, please let my office know.

Best regards,

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager

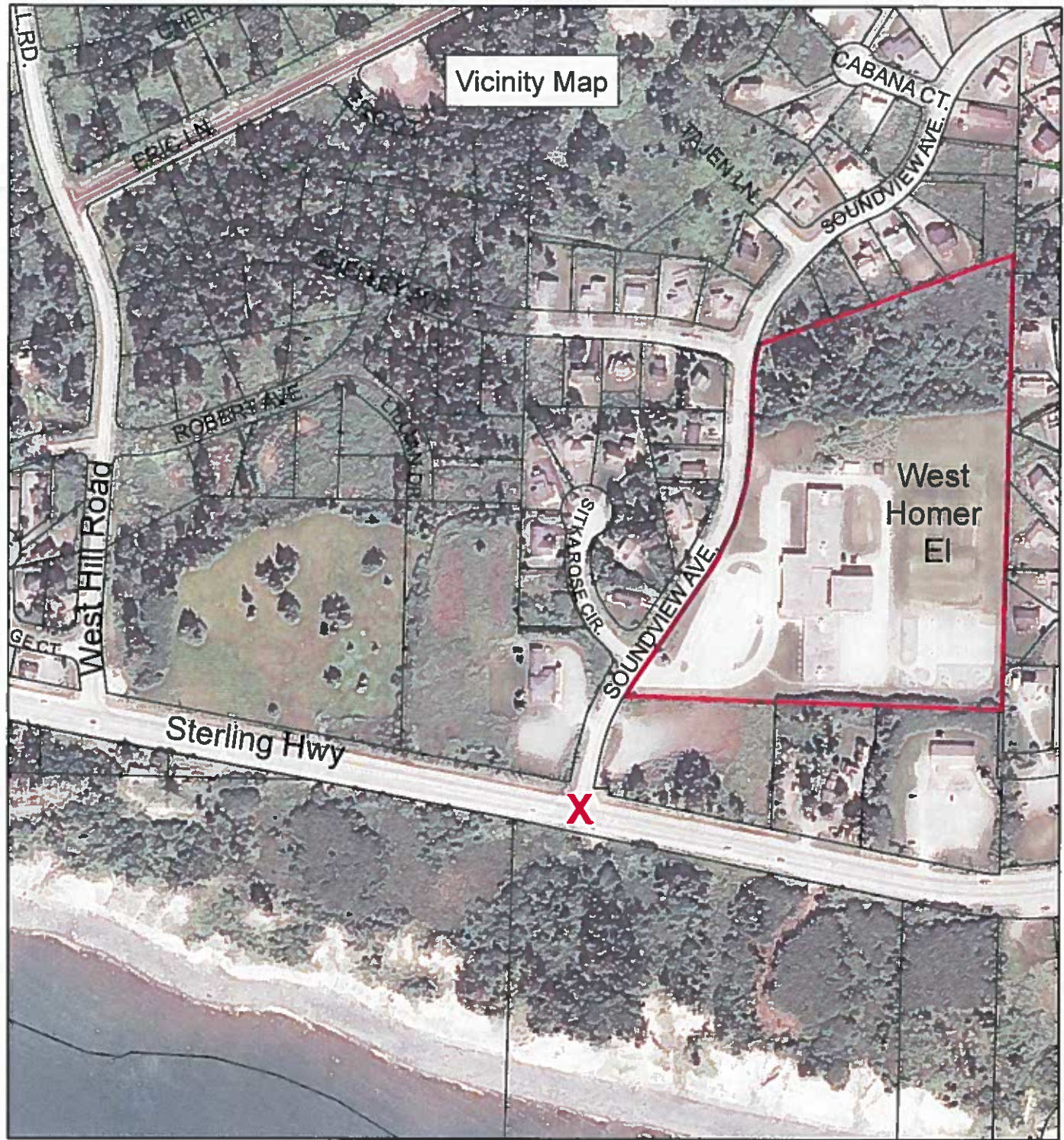
CC:

Chief Robl, Homer Police Department

Jan Keiser, Homer Public Works Director

Eric Waltenbaugh, Principal of West Homer Elementary

Todd Hindman, Principal of Fireweed Academy



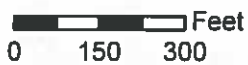
Vicinity Map



City of Homer
Planning and Zoning Department

11/9/2020

Soundview Ave and Sterling Hwy Intersection 2018



*Disclaimer:
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Homer, its council, board,
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or conclusions drawn therefrom.*