



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

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Homer, Alaska 99603

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: October 21, 2021
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for October 25, 2021 Council Meeting

Homer Wins Big at Alaska Recreation & Parks Conference

This year's Alaska Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA) conference was held in Soldotna. Parks Superintendent Matt Steffy won the ARPA Professional Award which is the highest recognition that ARPA awards each year. Matt is the second City of Homer employee to win this award, joining 2014 award winner and Community Recreation Manager Mike Illg. Parks, Arts, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission (PARCAC) commissioner Deb Lowney was awarded the Distinguished Service Award. This award is given to a deserving individual whose voluntary contribution of time and effort over the years has improved the quality and quantity of leisure opportunities through park, recreation, and conservation projects on the local, state, regional, or national levels.



Matt Steffy and Deb Lowney

Council Meeting Radio Broadcast Update

When City Council meetings went all virtual back in March 2020, KBBI graciously dedicated their 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. slot on Mondays to air the Council's Committee of the Whole meeting in an effort provide

accessibility to Council meeting content. Now that the Council Chambers are open again and public has the ability to hear and see the Committee of the Whole meeting online, KBBI is going to take back its 5:00 p.m. slot and resume the evening edition of Alaska News. They will continue to air the City Council Meeting at 6:00 p.m. A big shout out to KBBI and their staff for their support of local government!

Winter Camping and Restrooms

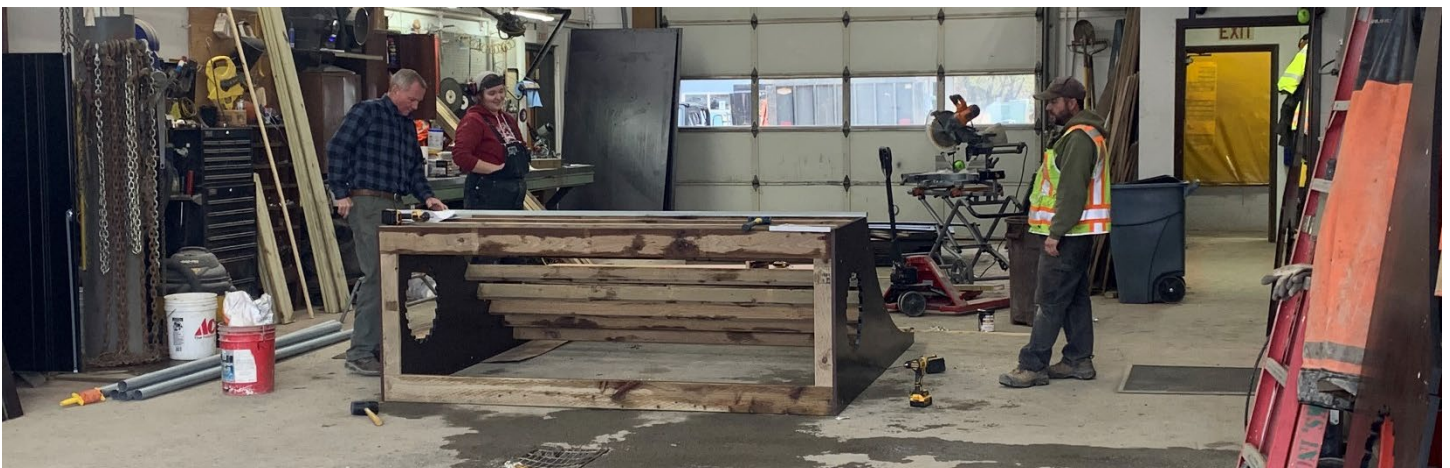
The City will not be hosting off-season campers at the Fishing Hole Campground, and we will be have fewer open public restrooms than usual this winter. Staffing is very tight for the Parks Division this year as we have had a lot of difficulties recruiting for seasonal positions. This leaves us unable to support camping and provide what I consider an acceptable level of service to our very large collection of restrooms. See the attached memo for more information regarding the closure of the Fishing Hole Campground. I am working with the Public Works Director on some options, which will allow us to better serve these resources in the future.

Finance Stakeholder Group Kickoff

In my August 23rd report to Council, I mentioned that I would be creating an internal stakeholder group which would include representatives from all departments and focus on Finance-related issues. The purposes of the group include: creating a friendly group setting for interdepartmental discussions about Finance processes, policies, procedures, etc.; allowing staff to share ideas and best practices for handling finance-related tasks; identifying issues with existing Finance processes (with the intent of improving them); strengthening connections between those who interact the most with the Finance Department; serving as an important contributor to some upcoming projects (i.e., procurement policy overhaul, etc.); and providing feedback to City Manager and Finance Director on finance-related topics. This group recently held its first meeting on October 14th. I helped kick off the first meeting, but moving forward I have asked Port Administration Supervisor Amy Woodruff to be the group leader.

Skate Park Update

On October 19th, Public Works began work on the assembly of the skate park half-pipes purchased by the Friends of the Homer Skate Park for use at the skate park on the HERC campus. Staff from the Road Crew and Parks are working together on this project before the snow starts to fall.



All-Purpose Vehicles

It was recently announced by the State of Alaska's Department of Public Safety that beginning January 1, 2022, all-purpose vehicles will be allowed on roads with speed limits of 45 miles per hour or less – unless a local government has restricted usage within their borders. In June of this year, the City Council proactively

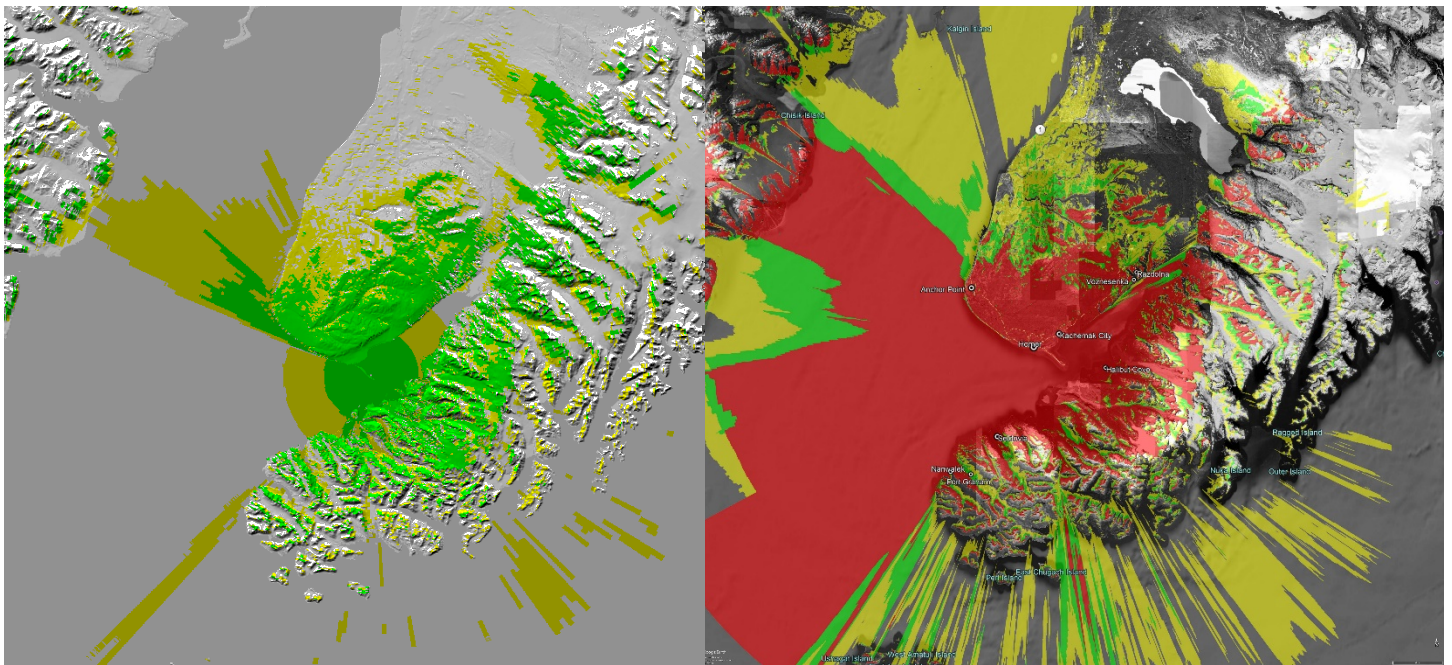
passed Ordinance 21-33 which expanded Homer City Code Chapter 7.20 Snowmachines to also cover all-purpose vehicles. All-purpose vehicles are, and will remain, expressly excluded from use on sidewalks, alleys, streets, and highways within the City of Homer.

AKDOT&PF Response to Resolution 21-065

City Council recently adopted Resolution 21-065 which requested that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF) include accommodations for non-motorized users and evaluate a future project to create safe and sustainable pedestrian facilities among Kachemak Drive as part of the upcoming Kachemak Drive Pavement Preservation Project. The resolution was sent to AKDOT&PF and a response from Planning Chief Todd Vanhove is attached to this report.

Radio Upgrade

We recently completed the Port and Harbor radio upgrade project. The two radio propagation charts below show the range we were capable of reaching with our old system, and the expanded range now that we have moved our base station to the Skyline tower. The different color bands correspond to the approximate size of a receiving vessel. The larger the vessel, the higher the antenna is off the water and therefore the longer the range for our communications. We are still learning the system operationally but now that we have everything in place and tuned to optimal levels we are enjoying the expanded range and clarity of communications especially on our port operations channel.



Before radio upgrades (left), after radio upgrades (right)

Personnel Updates

Port & Harbor: Jedidia Gautier was hired as an Ice Plant Operator I. Jed has worked for the City in a seasonal capacity so it will be a seamless transition and the team is excited to have him join in a full-time capacity!

Volunteer Fire Department: Samantha Cunningham has joined the team as our new EMS Assistant Chief.

Public Works: David Welty transferred from the Water/Wastewater Division to Building Maintenance where he will now fill the role of Building Maintenance Supervisor which was left vacant by Mike Zelinski's recent promotion to Public Works Superintendent. Russell Anderson is promoting to Building Maintenance Tech II. We also have a new mechanic, Andrew Cranley was brought aboard as a Mechanic II.

Administration: Congratulations to City Clerk Melissa Jacobsen who has earned the designation of Certified Public Manager (CPM) through the Arizona State University Certified Manager Program. The program is accredited by the National CPM Consortium and is designed to develop the effectiveness of municipal, county, state, tribal, and federal public managers. Her Certified Municipal Clerk's designation fulfilled the prerequisite component and qualified her to be accepted into program that began in January and wrapped up earlier this month. The program required 240 hours of CPM specific content over a nine month period where she and 42 other participants engaged in five courses designed to develop competencies in personal and organizational integrity, managing work, developing self, leading people, system integration, change leadership, and public service focus.

Enclosures:

1. October Employee Anniversaries
2. Memo: Winter Closure of Fishing Hole Campground
3. Letter: Response to Resolution 21-065



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: October 25, 2021
SUBJECT: October 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.

Paul Raymond	Public Works	8	Years
Charles Lee	Police	1	Year



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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: October 14, 2021
SUBJECT: Winter Closure of Fishing Hole Campground

In 2016, Council approved ordinance 16-08 which amended Homer City Code (HCC) 19.08.030. It allowed the City Manager discretion to allow winter camping within campgrounds on the Homer Spit.

In recent years, the Fishing Hole Campground area has remained open in the off-season (camping season is defined as April 1st through October 31st in HCC 19.08.020) and hosted a small number of campers. At this time, the Fishing Hole Campground is experiencing a high level of inappropriate use and is creating significant work for the Parks Division and the Police Department, both of which are currently understaffed for normal operations.

For the 2021/2022 camping off-season, I will be closing Fishing Hole Campground to campers. The camp host will remain on site as a caretaker and no others will be allowed to camp in this location. The Parks Division will post signage on site, erect appropriate barriers, and update camping information on the City's website. While camping will be prohibited, the park will remain available for day-use in the off-season.

At this time, there are other private options for visitors that wish to camp within the City over the winter.

Staff Recommendation: No action necessary, memo is informational in nature



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities

DIVISION of PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT and STATEWIDE PLANNING
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October 6, 2021

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
Homer City Hall
491 East Pioneer Ave

Dear Mr. Dumouchel,

The department received the City of Homer's RESOLUTION 21-065 requesting the addition of non-motorized accommodations be added to the pavement preservation project on Kachemak Bay Drive. We agree a pathway is a desired amenity and would do much in service of the community at large.

The current project in design has very specific funding limitations in terms of scope. Funding can only be used for resurfacing the pavement. Given the preventative maintenance purpose and need of this project, and the lack of available funding to address pathway-associated safety and engineering concerns, we regret we will not be able to include the addition of a bike lane on the Kachemak Bay Drive within the current project.

Because of the urgent need to resurface Kachemak Bay Drive as soon as possible, the paving project must go forward even without the pathway. The department suggests the critical path to building non-motorized amenities is to initiate an entirely new and separate project just for the pathway. This new project will require ROW acquisition, a safety analysis, geotechnical, and environmental work, as it will extend beyond the existing right of way.

As Kachemak Bay Drive is currently a DOT owned and operated facility, this new project will be subject to competing for federal funds for non-motorized improvements with every other Alaskan road in the same functional class. There will be opportunities in 2023 to compete for funds for projects that build these types of amenities. This can be an extended process and not produce the desired results for several years. However, if the city wants to pursue federal funds for this new project, we will be happy to assist you.

Another approach is to fast track the project by the city of Homer taking over ownership and maintenance of this route. With local funds, federal processes are not required, so a much expedited timeline can be achieved. The Department urges you to ponder this option and see if the city agrees it is the best route moving forward to provide this amenity as quickly as the

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

community would like. If you decide to explore this option, your Area Planner, Joselyn Biloon, will be happy to discuss the process.

In any instance, we look forward to working with you on developing a new project.

Sincerely,



Todd Vanhove,
Planning Chief