

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: FEBRUARY 3, 2021

SUBJECT: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 8, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

FY22/23 Budget

In the last two weeks of January I hosted eight budget kick off meetings with members of the leadership team to discuss the FY22/23 budget. These initial meetings were very informative for myself and the department and division leaders seemed to get a lot of value out of the exercise as well. In February, the Finance Director and I are focusing on deconstructing and reconsidering various "overhead" calculations. At the second meeting in February, we will have a discussion with Council regarding budget priorities for the upcoming two-year cycle.

Land Clearing and Air Quality

In recent weeks there has been a significant amount of land clearing in Homer and Kachemak City which has caused unfavorable smoky conditions. This has been noticed by HVFD staff and they have conducted outreach to those with burn permits within city limits to discuss cold weather burning best practices. See attached for a memo from Fire Chief Kirko regarding the current situation and some changes he is proposing to our existing burn permit requirements. Changes to the conditions imposed on those seeking burning permits are within the powers of the Fire Chief per HCC 5.20.020 (d).

Future Firework Locations

Inspired by comments from Councilmember Evensen, I initiated a conversation with Police, Fire, Harbor, and Public Works staff about potentially directing future fireworks displays to a location towards the end of the Spit. The popularity of the current New Year's Eve program appears to be outgrowing Mariner Park, and there are some additional benefits possible in moving the show further from town. Staff has been directed to conduct outreach to the event organizer and will continue to fine tune the concept of a new preferred fireworks location.

Water Main Break at Lucky Shot

Recently the Public Works Department responded to a water main break on Lucky Shot Street. The narrative and photos below are provided by Director Keiser.

When Superintendent Todd Cook got to the Water Treatment Plant in the morning, he noticed water volumes, as shown on one of the meters, were abnormally high – a clear sign of a water main break somewhere. He traced the data back and found the spike started about 10:00PM last night. He immediately started driving around looking for clean, chlorine-smelling water where it shouldn't be and found it in a ditch on Lucky Shot Street. He was able to bracket the location of the break and direct the road crew's operators where to start digging.

Once the backhoe operator opened the street, you could see clean water bubbling out of the ground, like a spring. He kept digging and eventually got to the pipe, which was cast iron and leaking from obvious cracks in the pipe. As he was exposing the pipe, other crew members were keeping the hole dewatered with pumps and mobilizing parts for the repair. The water/sewer crew turned the water pressure down and notified the neighbors they would have little to no water for a while.

Once the pipe was fully exposed, the water/sewer crew cut out the section of pipe that was cracked, cleaned it and installed a new section of pipe, connected to the existing pipe with special couplings. Everything was cleaned and disinfected with our home-made chlorine solution. The water was gradually turned back on, to reduce excess pressures in the line. Plus, our inspector came out and measured the location of the water break, so it could be as-built on our system maps.

When it was clear no further leaking was occurring, the water/sewer guys packed up their gear and left. The road crew stepped back in to do the backfill and restore the road and a private driveway we had to take out in the repair process. Lucky Shot Street is a paved road, but the paving patch will need to wait for warmer weather.

What was a pleasure to watch was how well the crew worked together, even the folks who were relatively new to their roles. It was a dirt-moving ballet!

The photos below show Todd Cook and Paul Raymond digging out the cracked water main, and Ralph Skorski beside the successful repair.



Meeting with AKDOT&PF Commissioner McKinnon

On January 28th, our lobbyists were able to arrange for a meeting with Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Commissioner John McKinnon and Deputy Commissioner Rob Carpenter. Myself, Harbormaster Hawkins, and Special Project Coordinator Jenny Carroll were in attendance. We discussed the regional importance and funding needs for the port expansion project and Spit erosion management general investigations. We also discussed potential Federal COVID relief funds for transportation and the Governor's GO Bond package plans.

Remote Sales Tax

In 2020 the City of Homer began receiving sales tax income via the Alaska Remote Seller Sales Tax Commission (ARSSTC). This program has the benefit of collecting sales tax fees the City was not previously able to collect. In 2020, the City received \$183,955 from ARSSTC. The City paid \$39,947 in fees to the Commission in 2020. Starting with the FY22/23 budget, this revenue source will have its own line.

Much like our regular sales tax collected by the Borough, there is a lag between when a taxable sale occurs and when the City receives income. The table below show the funds received in 2020 and breaks them into the City's different sales tax streams. It is difficult to forecast the long-term impact of this revenue because 1) it is a new revenue source; 2) COVID has greatly disrupted spending habits and patterns. I believe, based on the limited amount of data we have so far, we would be conservative in saying that funds from ARSSTC could easily exceed \$300,000 on an annual basis.

	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
General	\$99	\$7,897	\$11,545	\$14,532	\$15,325	\$15,551	\$15,559	\$35,175	\$115,683
Fund									
HAWSP	\$24	\$1,942	\$2,839	\$3,573	\$3,768	\$3,824	\$3,826	\$8,650	\$28,447
HART-	\$22	\$1,748	\$2,555	\$3,216	\$3,392	\$3,442	\$3,443	\$7,785	\$25,602
Roads									J
HART –	\$2	\$194	\$284	\$357	\$377	\$382	\$383	\$865	\$2,845
Trails									
Police	\$10	\$777	\$1,136	\$1,429	\$1,507	\$1,530	\$1,530	\$3,460	\$11,379
Station									
TOTAL	\$157	\$12,558	\$18,359	\$23,108	\$24,369	\$24,729	\$24,741	\$55,934	\$183,95 5

FY21 State Homeland Security Grant Requests Submitted

The application period for FY21 State Homeland Security Program grants just closed. Over the years, SHSP grant support has been instrumental in incrementally and systematically keeping our public safety communications system up to date. This round, the City applied for two critical pieces of equipment: (1) a bidirectional amplifier system to improve radio communication coverage for ALMR system channels inside the new Homer Police building. An unanticipated high noise floor level in the new building interferes with ALMR radio signals making it necessary to amplify ALMR radio signals; and (2) microwave links that carry radio control, data, video and voice traffic from dispatch to Homer Police Department, and during emergencies, to the City's response personnel in the Fire, Port & Harbor and Public Works departments. The microwave link the City relies on is aging out of manufacturer support and is not capable of fully meeting current system needs. Should the City be successful in these requests, we will bring an ordinance to Council for grant acceptance and request sole source procurement of funded items to insure they are compatible with and successfully integrated into our communications system.

New Certified Municipal Clerk - Rachel Tussey

I would like to congratulate Deputy City Clerk Rachel Tussey who has earned the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). According to IIMC, the CMC is a "declaration that you are proficient in your important position and that you have demonstrated mastery of administrative skills critical to good government."

"I'm super excited for Rachel and very proud of her accomplishment! When we planned for 2020 training she was slated to attend two weeks at the Northwest Clerk's Institute (NCI) in Tacoma to complete her education requirements for this certification. Then COVID hit, travel and in person trainings were canceled, and she stepped up to assist in PIO duties. NCI and IIMC worked to get virtual trainings together to ensure Clerks could continue to receive continuing education, and despite all the other duties Rachel has taken on this year she buckled down, signed up for the virtual sessions, and fulfilled her requirements to earn the prestigious designation of Certified Municipal Clerk. COVID high 5 to Rachel!" – City Clerk Jacobsen

Retirements

Jim Knott; HPD/Investigator III

Jim was hired October 30th, 2006. He stayed until June 26th 2009, and then decided to see how the dark side was, working for Kenai PD. Jim came back to us February 2010 because let's face it- Homer rocks. He was promoted to PO III October 31st, 2016, attended a prestigious polygraphing school in 2017 and was again promoted to Investigator III March 25th, 2018. Over his almost 14-year career with us, Jim has been instrumental in training, teaching and mentoring many officers, and many of you. He has been dedicated and an integral part of Project Drive and its success. Jim has been one of the hardest working law enforcement officers I've had the privilege to work with over the years. His experience and knowledge will be hugely missed here. Jim, we wish you well and success in all future endeavors and I know you'll succeed in all. Thank you for being part of our team and giving us your best for almost 14 years. – Lieutenant Browning

Manfred Kirchner; PW/Treatment Plant Operator III

Manfred started with the City of Homer in June 2012 working in the Utility section of PW. He soon moved to the Treatment Facilities. Manfred is very knowledgeable in Water/Wastewater operations. He has been a valuable part of the Water/Sewer team and will be missed. We wish him the best in his retirement. – Superintendent Cook

COVID-Related Updates

COVID Risk Status

On February 1st I moved the City from the "Red" to "Orange" level on our COVID risk framework. The move to orange allowed for a limited reopening of the HERC and the Library by appointment-only. The change in risk level also allows staff to hold more in-person meetings as long as masking and social distancing guidelines are followed. As an organization we continue to do quite well with very minimal positive COVID cases or close contact related absences across the last couple months.

COVID Vaccine Clinic Support

On February 2nd, City staff and volunteers assisted SPH with phone-in appointment setting for the February 5th & 6th mass vaccine clinic. A phone-in option is key to providing vaccine access and assistance to those in our

community without computer or internet. The scheduling was very smooth and more satisfying to callers this time around thanks to a call queue system developed by IT Manager Nick Poolos for the vaccine call line. Thanks go out to community volunteers for their time assisting!

Council Chambers Update

Work continues on the Council Chamber update. The furniture pieces are largely complete but we're continuing to have some supply chain issues for a handful of electronic components. I'm hoping to have a solution to that shortly. At the last meeting a question was asked about the space each Councilmember would have, the photo below shows the space available with the maximum number of individuals seated at the dais (ten). Once the dais is fully wired for electricity, microphones, etc. that unfinished space will be covered up.



Enclosures:

- 1. Memo from Fire Chief Kirko w/ Attachments
- 2. Letter of Appreciation received from Pier 1



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: **Andrea Browning** DATE: February 8, 2021

February Employee Anniversaries SUBJECT:

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.

Dan Miotke	Fire	19	Years
Tim Yarbrough	Fire	19	Years
Daren Hill	Public Works	6	Years
Jenny Carroll	Admin	5	Years
Morgan Tracy	Police	4	Years
Kevin Co	Library	2	Years
Tyler Jeffres	Police	2	Years



Volunteer Fire Department

604 East Pioneer Ave Homer, Alaska 99603

fire@cityofhomer-ak.gov (p) 907-235-3155 (f) 907-235-3157

Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: ROB DUMOUCHEL, CITY MANAGER

FROM: MARK KIRKO, FIRE CHIEF

DATE: JANUARY 27, 2021

SUBJECT: AIR QUALITY

In recent weeks there has been a significant amount of land clearing in Homer and Kachemak City causing unfavorable smoke conditions in the area. The smoke conditions are noticed by most and may produce a health risk to some citizens with existing respiratory problems. Our burn permit regulations are clear, but I am suggesting some revisions to the requirements.

I would like to add two statements to the existing burn permit requirements:

- No burning will occur when exterior temperatures are below 34 degrees.
- The fire department may require permitted fires to be extinguished if smoke conditions are determined to be a nuisance by a fire department official or multiple complaints are received from the public.

At this time, the fire department is reaching out to burn permit holders and reminding them of the requirements for burning and advising them to only burn when conditions are suitable.

The other problem that exists is that we are not the only regulatory agency for the affected area. The State and Borough also have a part in the permit and enforcement process that is similar to what has been adopted by the local jurisdiction.

I am actively working with the borough area fire departments and the Alaska Division of Forestry to improve the burn activities and educate the community on the open burning process and regulations.

Attached is a copy of the existing City permit and a State Forestry Small Scale Permit brochure for your review.

CITY OF HOMER BURNING PERMIT

	of	on the	tollowing property in the
	of (Woody debris, brush, etc., not to exceed	d 4" diameter)	• • •
Kenai Peninsula Borough: (Further, specify location	1/4, Sect Township Range by milepost, street, subdivision, and local landmarks	Seward Meridian	
	man all Materials and a company		
A Last do	visitoiriler Sitin manifest here		
Burning is authorized subject to	o the following terms and conditions:		
Construct a firebreak	wide to mineral soil around materia	al to be burned before light	ing fire
2. Have adult perso	on(s) attending the burn, until the fire is out and	d cold to the touch.	
3 Have sufficient water	and tools		on site to control
and if necessary to extinguing	sh the fire.		H mil
4. No burning if wind exceeds	s 10mph.		
Call Homer disnatch at	t 235-3150 each day before burning.		
(Leave permit #, name, p	phone #, and location of burn)		
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In an EMERGENCY-DIAL 911

A Burn Permit is required for Open Burning throughout the year within the City of Homer (Rev Dec. 02)

CITY OF HOMER OPEN BURNING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Only wood, slash and other similar natural materials may be burned. The open burning of synthetic materials, flammable liquids or materials that produce black smoke, noxious or toxic gas shall not be permitted.
- 2. A firebreak, clear of all combustible materials, shall be provided for a minimum of ten feet or equal to the diameter of the burn pile, whichever is greater. A minimum clearance from structures or other improvements of 50 feet or four times the diameter of the burn pile, whichever is greater, shall be provided.
- 3. Burn piles shall not exceed 20 feet in diameter and 10 feet high. (Requires Site Inspection)
- 4. Material to be burned will not exceed 4 inches in diameter.
- 5. Material to be burned will be as dry as practical. Piles left standing should be covered to permit adequate drying.
- 6. When multiple piles over 10 feet in diameter are to be burned on the same site, one pile shall be lit as a test burn and the burning conditions assessed before any additional piles are lit. Smoke should rise at least 500 feet and remain clear of all inhabited structures.
- 7. The smoldering phase of the fire will be minimized by tending and consolidating the open burn as it progresses into the smoldering phase and will be fully extinguished when active flaming combustion can no longer be maintained.
- 8. All open burning must be tended continually for maximum combustion and safety until the fire is fully extinguished. Fully extinguished is defined as cold to the touch with no hot ash or embers.
- 9. Equipment and personnel capable of extinguishing the open burn must be on site throughout the burn.
- 10. All State of Alaska regulations for open burning and permit requirements must be met.
- 11. As a condition of this permit the emergency dispatcher center must be notified immediately prior to lighting any open burn. Call 235-3150

Violation of the terms of this burning permit may result in suspension modification or termination of this permit. It may also subject you to civil and criminal penalties and the cost to extinguish the fire.

burning or if weather conditions become hotter, drier or windy You are REQUIRED to call the **Burn Permit Hotline before** 907-260-4269

(protection from wildland fire), 41.15.050 (fire This permit is issued by the Alaska Division of Forestry as authorized by AS 41.15.010 season) and **41.15.060** (permits)

This burn permit may be denied, suspended or (Denial, suspension, or revocation of permit) Alaska Division of Forestry. 11 AAC 95.430 revoked by an authorized employee of the

possess it while burning and shall display The permittee shall sign this permit and upon request. **11AAC 95.422** (Permit requirements Non-compliance with this permit may lead to a criminal liability for damages resulting from an fine or criminal prosecution. This permit does not relieve the permittee from civil or unpermitted burn or escaped fire. This permit is valid thru December 31st of the year issued

i have read and understand the conditions and requirements of this permit.

(Print Name)

(Signature-Required)

(Physical Burn Location)

CAMPING, COOKING AND WARMING FIRES

commercially manufactured outdoor burning device does NOT require a burn permit. A campfire not more than three feet in diameter and two feet in height, or a

LARGE SCALE BURN PERMITS

more complex than allowed under this permit, you must contact the nearest Alaska Division the front of this permit, either by phone or in obtaining a Large Scale Burn Permit 11 AAC diameter and four feet in height, more than of Forestry Fire Prevention Office listed on To burn a brush pile larger than ten feet in one pile at a time, or undertaking burning person, to request information about 95.416 (Large Scale burn permits)

COMMON BURNING VIOLATIONS

- Burning during adverse weather conditions (hot, dry, windy) or during a burn permit suspension or burn closure.
- Failure to possess a valid burn permit.
- Burning that exceeds the scope of the
- waste/carcasses, household garbage, waste obnoxious odors or toxic fumes. Examples Burning materials that emit black smoke, include plastic, rubber, vinyl, animal
- Failure to clear the ground around campfire, brush pile or burn barrel
- extinguishing a fire until it is cold to the Leaving a fire unattended or not fully

Statutes and Regulations can be found at: The Wildland Fire Protection http://forestry.alaska.gov,

State of Alaska Division of Forestry

SCALE BURN PERMIT SMALL

Required from April 1st - August 31st

You are REQUIRED to call the Burn Permit Hotline prior to the start of any burning or if conditions get hotter, drier or windy

907-260-4269*



42499 Sterling Highway Fire Prevention Office

Residents living within the following fire service Soldotna, Alaska 99669 907-907-260-4260

areas must also call the number listed below to notify the fire department of any open burning:

Kachemak Emergency Service Area: 907-235-9811 City of Homer: 907-235-3150 Nikiski: 907-776-6401

For information visit:

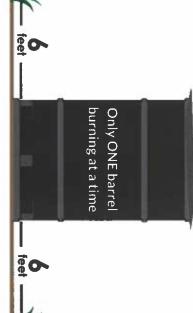
http://forestry.alaska.gov/

TEXT YOUR ZIP CODE TO 888777 TO OPT-IN To receive NIXLE alerts from local agencies

BURN BARREL REQUIREMENTS

55 Gallon Barrel

- Circular, outdoor metal drum, in good condition, with no more than a 55 gallon
- Metal mesh cover on top in good condition, with mesh openings no larger than 5/8"
- At least three evenly spaced 3" square holes covered with metal mesh along the
- Situated on top of non-burnable materials



- At least 6 feet of ground cleared to mineral soil extending to all sides of the barrel
- Stay with the barrel until completely out and cold to the touch

Burn only untreated

clippings, cardboard wood, leaves, grass

Sufficient water to

immediately



extinguish fire and Sufficient water to a tool close by when burning immediately



and paper all times barrel at with the Adult

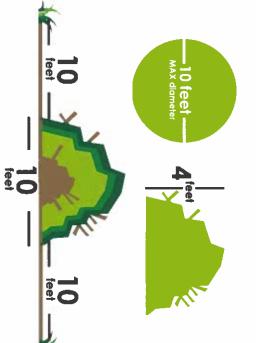
tools close by when extinguish fire and

burning

SMALL PILE BURNING REQUIREMENTS

Pile Specifications

- Only ONE pile burning at a time
- Max ten foot diameter and four foot height



- At least 10 feet of ground cleared to mineral soil extending to all sides of the pile
- Stay with the pile until completely out and cold to the touch
- Burn only untreated clippings, cardboard wood, leaves, grass and paper



LAWN BURNING REQUIREMENTS

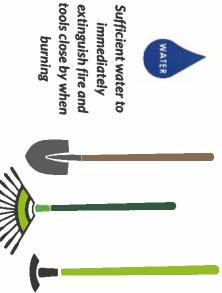
Maintained lawn

Lawn Specifications

Max one acre and four inches in height



- ground around the burn at all times Maintain an 8 foot wet perimeter on the
- Stay with the lawn until completely out and cold to the touch



3 Adults at all times

times



PIER ONE THEATRE

332 E. PIONEER AVE. STE. 3 • HOMER, AK 99603 • 907-226-2287 • PIERONETHEATRE.ORG



City of Homer

The City of Homer 491 E. Pioneer Ave. Homer, AK 99603

To the City of Homer, Mayor Castner and City Council Members,

This year, as with theatres across the world, the Coronavirus pandemic forced Pier One Theatre to close its doors. Our planned season flew out the window, and we faced a year of financial uncertainty and disconnect from our community. As we reflect on the last year, all of its strangeness, and all of its small miracles, we can clearly see that we could not have survived on our own. Your Herculean efforts to administer funds to businesses and organizations in need have sustained us throughout the pandemic. The CARES funds, SBERG and NERG, and the matching funds from the Rasmuson Foundation which you so diligently distributed were essential to the survival of Pier One Theatre. Thanks to these economic relief packages and the tireless efforts of funders to reach communities, we had a very different season than we were anticipating.

In addition to being able to meet our basic operational expenses, we had a surprisingly full season including an acting technique workshop, a Drama Slam in conjunction with the Alaska World Arts Festival which resulted in the creation of nine new plays, and a holiday film which collected music, poetry, and dance celebrating the season. We teamed up with the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies for their Coastal Cosmic Telethon and live-streamed five original plays celebrating the natural world around us. We collaborated with KBBI AM 890 to produce three radio plays including *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde and two original plays by local playwrights, *Rising* by Brenda Dolma - a story about grief and climate change, and *Shakespeare in Quarantine* by Jessica Golden - a modern take on the writing of King Lear while theatres were closed due to plague. We enjoyed an overwhelmingly positive response from the community when we helped celebrate Mary Epperson Day in June, and in October shared a curated live performance of *Haunted Shakespeare: His Murdered, Ghosts, and Otherworldly Creatures* - two COVID safe walks on the Pratt Museum trails featuring over 30 local actors (*Haunted Shakespeare* was also filmed and will be released sometime early this year). It is very clear that the residents of Homer are longing for more live theatre!

This past year has called on all of us to reimagine, to adapt, and to work hard for the community in ways we could never have anticipated. You have risen to the challenge and supported us all the way through. As we look to the end of the pandemic and a brighter future, we hope you continue to view the arts as a core part of society that lifts our hearts and strengthens us all.

Sincerely.

Jennifer Norton
Executive Director

Pier One Theatre, Inc.