



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: June 21, 2021
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for June 28, 2021 Council Meeting

FY22/23 Budget

After six months of focus and effort by staff and Council, the operating and capital budgets are up for adoption at this evening's meeting. Preparing a new two-year budget for a post-pandemic period which also included a change in fiscal year has been quite the undertaking. I want to thank the Council for taking the time to participate in an extended series of budget work sessions in the spring, and to also thank Finance Director Elizabeth Walton for the huge amount of work she put in behind the scenes to bring these documents to life.

Hydrant Flushing



In this photo, Dave Welty is sloooowly shutting down a hydrant, as part of the City's annual hydrant-flushing program. Hydrant flushing maintains water quality by cleaning out bioslimes, manganese deposits and sediment from the water distribution mains. Operational procedures are highly choreographed and carefully

timed to prevent water hammer, which could damage pipe and valves. Here is further explanation from Public Works Director Jan Keiser:

The hydrant flushing program is highly structured because of all the different pressure zones in the City. If you open and close valves too quickly or cross pressure zones improperly, you can damage the system. Plus, the goal is to have water moving throughout the entire system, which is one reason we like to have water mains designed to avoid “dead end lines”; that is, mains should connect to each other. The flushing program takes place over a week or two, depending on what else is going on, often at night when customer usage is lower. It uses a prescribed procedure of starting/ending points, directions of flow, duration of flushing and volumes of flow. The flushing is necessary because even with our sophisticated water treatment plant, stuff can enter the system as new water services are put in, cracks occur, minerals metabolize and bioslime grows. I’m told that in Homer’s early days, there was no flushing program and whole pipelines would fill up with silt and bioslimes.

Harbor Bond Refunding

In late April the City Council approved Ordinance 21-021 which authorized the issuance and sale of a series of Harbor revenue refunding bonds for the purpose of refunding all or a portion of the City’s outstanding Harbor revenue bond from 2013. Cindy Cartledge from JDO guided us through this complex procedure. The new bond closed June 16th and resulted in a 12% present value savings which is equal to approximately \$239,600 in reduced costs to the Harbor Enterprise.

Library Grounds Update

The Friends of Homer Library (FHL) have been leading a project to expand the trail system to the west of the library building, in collaboration with several other community groups. The FHL’s grant application to the National Parks Service Alaska Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program was supported by Council via resolution 21-018. During the week of June 21st, representatives from the National Park Service visited Homer to survey the site and assist with planning. On Monday, the FHL board, Library Director Berry, and Deputy City Planner Engebretsen took them on a walkthrough of the trail. The project is still in early stages and there will be several months of public consultation and ongoing outreach to other groups before work begins. If all goes well, trail improvements might be complete next year.



Library Grounds Update

Library and Parks staff have recommended modifications to the landscaping at the library to ensure that the City can sustainably maintain the grounds. The library grounds include a number of ornamental plants which require a tremendous amount of effort to maintain. These plants were added after construction of the new library in 2006, and no satisfactory plan for maintaining them has ever been developed. Informally, the Friends of the Library assumed responsibility for maintaining the bushes beside the StoryWalk trail, the raised beds in front of the library and along the south wall, the bed at the foot of the HPL sign and recently the Margaret Pate garden beside the building. Rotary maintains the Peter Larson garden in the corner of the parking lot. The Parks Department maintains everything else. Potential solutions/modifications include replacing the following with grass which will be mowed/maintained: the bushes at the beginning of the StoryWalk trail; the raised bed directly in front of the library main entrance; the rock garden in the berm in the middle of the parking lot; and possibly some of the bushes near the generator at the northwest corner of the library. Parks and the Library are evaluating these options and some changes may be implemented this summer.

Pro-Pickleball Clinic at HERC

On July 25th, the HERC will be host to a pickleball clinic with nationally ranked players Steve Wong and Sara Ash. See the attached flyer or contact Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager, at MIllg@ci.homer.ak.us for more information.

COVID-Related Updates

COVID Emergency Declaration Expires June 29th

The City's emergency declaration is set to expire on June 29th. A memo with more information is attached to this report.

COVID Mitigation Changes in City Facilities

Starting June 16th, it is permissible for the public to enter City facilities without a mask. We strongly encourage those who are not vaccinated to continue wearing masks for public health and safety purposes.

Sleeves Up for Summer Commercial

As part of the Sleeves Up for Summer Campaign, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services contracted with a video production company to create commercials promoting vaccinations around the State. Homer is one of several communities selected to be featured in the video spots. Homer hosted the production company last month and I'm pleased to share the link where you can view the 30 second spot which features Homer citizens and our very own Mayor Castner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McHnJFvd0kY>

Thanks to everyone who participated in and helped make arrangements for the video shoot last month. We appreciate all of you giving your time to the effort. It turned out great. Thanks also to the State of Alaska for producing and distributing the ad. The spot will run on KTUU-Channel 2, a variety of cable stations, Hulu, and digital. The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services will post it on their Facebook page and Unified Command partners will share it locally.



Enclosures:

- 1. Pickleball Flyer
- 2. Memo – Emergency Declaration Expiration

ARMOUR

STEVE WONG and SARA ASH

- Dinking with a purpose
- Aiming to hit better shots
- Small group sizes
- Strategy for Women's, Men's and Mixed Doubles
- How to volley effectively
- Various games and drills
- Hitting the Third shot

LEARN FROM THE PROS!



INTERMEDIATE CLINIC

Sunday, July 25, 2021

2-5 p.m. at the HERC

12 Player Limit

Cost is \$60 plus a \$5 Community Recreation usage fee for a total cost of \$65 per player

Register through Mark Daly at madwater.mark@gmail.com



- Tips & techniques to improve your serve, return, third & lob shots
- Focus on improving footwork
- How to reset the ball to get to the net
- Drilling games for improvement
- Hitting 5th & 7th shots and beyond
- Play with or against the Pros and they will critique your game

Steve Wong and Sara Ash are a great Mixed Doubles team that plays Pro and 5.0+ events all across the Nation! They have recently received Bronze in Mixed Doubles 5.0 at the International Bainbridge Club in Florida. Steve Wong has been playing for 30 years and is the first pickleball pro to teach all over the world. He is a six-time national champion and founder of Armour Pickleball and has been nominated for the Pickleball Hall of Fame. Sara Ash has been playing for 7 years and has received many Gold medals at the SoCal Classic Tournaments, Fall Brawl and is a USA Pickleball Nationals Medalist.





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TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: June 21, 2021
SUBJECT: Expiration of the City's COVID-19 Emergency Declaration

The City's Local Emergency Declaration due to the COVID-19 pandemic (which was last extended by Resolution 21-019) will expire June 29, 2021. This memorandum outlines accommodations that end with the end of the Emergency Declaration:

- The ability to request City utility payment deferrals and the waiver of penalties, late fees and utility shut-offs for requested deferrals (as provided in Resolution 20-37).
- Allowance for telephonic meetings of Homer City Council (the continuation of which will be addressed in another agenda item during the June 28th Council Meeting).

The City's EOC will be deactivated as well. EOC activity has significantly diminished since getting through the height of mitigation response. EOC efforts since the last mass vaccine POD event in May consists only of staying informed of COVID-19 trends and providing communication and public education support to area vaccine efforts. I anticipate Jenny Carroll, the City's Special Projects and Communications Coordinator will remain involved in communications throughout the duration of the State COVID-19 Health Equity grant.

The City has the option to reinstate a new Emergency Declaration or dedicate additional resources to COVID-19 response should conditions warrant such actions.