



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: August 4, 2022
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for August 8, 2022 Council Meeting

Federal Funding for the Large Vessel Harbor Expansion General Investigation

I am happy to report that the City's Congressionally Designated Spending request to Senator Lisa Murkowski for Federal matching funds for the Homer Large Vessel Harbor Expansion General Investigation have successfully moved out of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee. Currently, \$300,000 is budgeted, the amount the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) anticipates expending in FY23 to initiate the 3-year, \$3M million study (funding is split \$1.5M federal, \$1.5M local sources which we have split 50/50 between the State of Alaska and the City of Homer). While funding is not guaranteed, approval by the Senate Appropriations Committee is a significant step in the process. The Federal budget will now move forward for consideration by the full Senate and then needs to be finalized by the full Congress. We hope to know definitively in December before the holiday recess.

Thanks to Senator Murkowski's strong project support, Senator Sullivan's advocacy for the project, State matching funds, and the continued coordinated efforts by Council and staff, we are cautiously optimistic that we will secure funding and be able to start the General Investigation in FY23.

The General Investigation will accomplish the necessary front-end planning for the project. Planning will involve the City and stakeholders and will be done cooperatively with the USACE. It will define and quantify Federal and non-Federal harbor conditions and needs, solicit input from stakeholders, develop alternative approaches and designs to solve the problems and determine whether the benefits of the project merit Federal investment in construction. We look forward to seeing this item in Congress' final budget for FY2023. Staff will continue to work with the USACE and Senator Murkowski's office to assist as needed.

Main Street Sidewalk Construction on a Short Pause

The Main Street Sidewalk project is on a brief hiatus as the contractor awaits delivery of some materials for the next stage of the project. It is expected that the hiatus should be approximately two weeks and we remain on track to finish the project this season. While there has been a break in the action, Public Works took advantage of the excavation for the sidewalk to replace two obsolete fire hydrants and upgraded a pressure reducing station on the Main Street water line.

Weed-Free Gravel and Sand Program

The City contracted with the Homer Soil & Water Conservation District to help Public Works address invasive species as part of the Department's normal operations. So far, the District has certified the three contractors

who have provided the City with most of its gravel and sand, as Weed-Free: East Road Services, Inc., Dibble Creek and R/C Land Development. This was just in time to ensure that the gravel/sand used on Main Street Sidewalk Project, the Frost Boil Dig-out projects and the City's stockpile of winter sand would be certified weed-free.

Bunnell Sidewalk Discussion

On Tuesday July 26th, Public Works Director Jan Keiser and Economic Development Manager Julie Engebretsen met with Old Town business owners and residents to discuss future road and sidewalk improvements. Engineers from Kinney and Associates were there to present some choices and listen to the conversation. Bunnell Street Arts Center graciously hosted the event, and participants appreciated talking about the traffic and parking issues, while watching large trucks delivering freight navigate the uniquely narrow streets. The quest for traffic calming and better pedestrian access began in Old Town in 2014 and culminated in improvements such as lower speed limits, speed humps and striped pedestrian walkways. The neighborhood looks forward to working with the City on the next stage of improvements for this vibrant neighborhood. Councilwoman Aderhold has expressed interested on working on policy changes and staying well-informed on developments in Old Town.



Jail Funding Update

The City of Homer is tentatively set to receive a 46% increase in community jail funding. An increase in jail contract funding is something that Homer and many other cities with community jails lobbied for this past year in Juneau. Our annual amount has remained the same for quite some time at \$424,080. Beginning in FY23 (effective July 1, 2022), the annual disbursement to the City is projected to increase to \$619,938 (increase of \$195,858). As stated these numbers are tentative and there is still the matter of updating our jail contract to contend with before this topic comes to a close. I will report back as the situation develops.

Building Code Update

Special Project Coordinator Ryan Foster has gotten to work on the Council priority of moving forward on the implementation of a building code for Homer. The first step is to address permitting of dirt work (i.e., grading).

As part of this change, we have identified three sections of Homer City Code (HCC) Title 21 which should be considered for transfer to a new title set up specifically for building regulations. The following are likely to be moved: HCC 21.44 Slopes; HCC 21.50 Site Development Standards and Miscellaneous Regulations; and HCC 21.75 Stormwater Plan. This project is currently under review by the Development Work Group and will need to make a trip to the Planning Commission before it gets up to the Council table. We're also planning on conducting some stakeholder outreach with the development community. Work related to building code adoption and implementation for structures is also underway, however, that is a larger topic which will take more time to develop.

Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update

City Planner Rick Abboud, Economic Development Manager Julie Engebretsen, Special Projects Coordinator Ryan Foster, and I have been meeting to formulate a first draft RFP for the Council priority of updating the comprehensive plan and zoning code. We have some more work to do before we start to bring in other stakeholders, but I wanted Council to be aware that this is now moving ahead thanks to the added capacity of the new special project coordinator positions.

Agenda Management Upgrade

The Clerk's office is excited to announce a change in agenda management software from Municode Meetings to iCompass. iCompass provides for improved internal routing capabilities to assist staff in preparation for Council and Board/Commission packets. There will be an app on Council's tablets for quick access to agenda packets that provides quick links to agenda items, and it has an easy to use public facing portal for citizens to stay informed on meeting schedules and agendas. We don't have a date to go live yet, but we're close to having the agenda packet formatting completed and will be scheduling staff and council training on using the program soon. If you'd like a quick peek at what's to come, visit the City of Wasilla's page at <https://cityofwasilla.civicweb.net/Portal/> or the Village of Lisle at <https://villageoflisle.civicweb.net/portal/> to see what the iCompass public portal offers.

Running for Local Office Open House

The first Running for Local Office Open House was held Saturday, July 23rd from 10 to 11 am in the Council Chambers. The City Clerk was available for the hour to meet with folks interested in running for local office. One person stopped by, asked questions, and took copies of the materials that were available. The Clerk's Office will look at ways to improve on the event for next year. As a reminder, the Candidacy Filing Period is open until Monday, August 15th at 4:30 p.m. and filing packets are available on the City Clerk's webpage and at the City Clerk's Office.

Disaster Relief Funding from the 2018 Pacific Cod Federal Fishery Disaster

The City received disaster relief funds in the amount of \$2,106 related to the Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Disaster of 2018. Communities must use the funds to improve or maintain infrastructure or services that support Pacific cod commercial fisheries. The City will utilize the funds to help complete necessary maintenance on the Fish Dock cranes. Thanks to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission for administering the funds for affected communities.

Attachment- August Employee Anniversaries



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TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: August 8, 2022
SUBJECT: August 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.

Joe Inglis	Public Works	11	Years
Shawn Krause	Public Works	3	Years
Kellen Stock	Police	3	Years
Rob Dumouchel	Admin	2	Years
Nate Brown	Public Works	1	Year