



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: August 23, 2023
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for August 28, 2023 Council Meeting

Safety Exercise with USCG

City public safety officials met with the Coast Guard and the State Troopers to discuss the make-up of a joint response to a mass maritime shooting event or a similar event involving an active shooter in our port area. We spoke about our respective agencies' capabilities and training. The Coast Guard highlighted the differences in responding to these events on a vessel versus in a building. The following day, our Police officers joined the Coast Guard for a walk through on the Tustumena. We appreciate the opportunity to get a thorough tour of the vessel and walk through various responses to different situations with the Coast Guard.

Code Enforcement Progress

I have been working with staff to build better processes for code enforcement within the City. In reviewing Homer City Code Chapter 5.16 for public nuisance abatement, we found that certain powers to enforce nuisance regulations can be delegated to positions within the City outside of the Police Department if the City Manager grants them in writing. To meet that standard, I have written a memo which grants the City Planner, Volunteer Fire Chief, City Engineer, and Public Works Director the authority to enforce elements of HCC Chapter 5.16.

Park Plans – Public Engagement Opportunities

Corvus Design will be in Homer on September 12th and 13th to host a variety of public meetings to gather input for the Bayview Park Plan and the Karen Hornaday Park Plan. Once times and locations are determined the information will be advertised publicly.

Hornaday Park Playground Improvements

Funded through a mix of donations from the Homer Foundation and the FY24/25 Capital Budget, the Hornaday Park Playground is getting some needed updates and repairs. The large slide and tire swing have been replaced. We are anxiously awaiting delivery of two new diggers, one of which is an accessible design, to be installed in the lower sandpit between the slide and the rope climber.

City Phone System Upgrade Complete

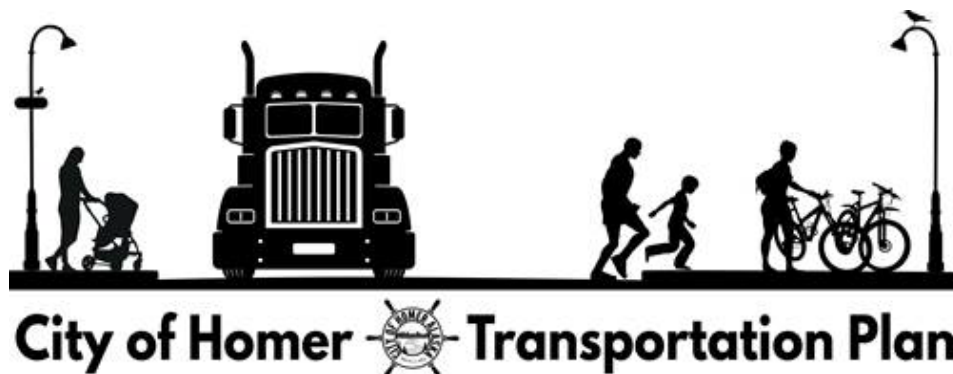
On Tuesday, August 22, 2023, IT staff completed upgrades to the City's phone system which was funded by emergency ordinance 23-38 and extended by 23-47. Upgrades entailed replacing 68 of the oldest desktop phones in use by city staff (most of those replaced were about 20 years old), as well as replacing five separate departmental call manager servers with one new Avaya call manager. These older servers were each a single

point of failure and in some cases were running on computer hardware that is over 20 years old. The new call manager resides on server infrastructure at City Hall that has redundancy built in to provide more robust levels of reliability and availability. The move to put the entire City staff on Avaya phones also means that internal calls can be made with the four-digit dialing plan across all City locations.

Transportation Plan Update

The public review draft of the Transportation Plan is out! Copies of the plan and comment forms are available at City Hall and the library, or via the City website. There will be a public presentation and open house on Tuesday, September 26th at the college, 6-8 pm. Comments on this draft will be accepted until October 10th. Thereafter, a draft with revisions based on public comment will be presented to the Planning Commission in late 2023, followed by the City Council in 2024. Council will be provided with a full project update in September.

<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/publicworks/inviting-public-comment-transportation-plan-draft>



Dog Poop

I'm receiving reports from the field that an unprecedented amount of dog poop is accumulating in our parks, ball fields, and beaches. We provide numerous dog poop bag dispensers throughout the City and Parks maintenance staff cleans up what they can, but poop scooping is a personal responsibility and not a municipal service. We're considering ways to better educate the public and enforce existing regulations to reduce this public health hazard. In certain situations, up to a \$300 fine is possible under existing code, but we'd much rather folks just clean up after their dogs!

Short Term Rental Tracking

Earlier this year, the City entered into a one year agreement with GovOS to test their short term rental tracking service. Once we got past the set up and initial data collection, the program proved to not be a good fit for the City in the long run and I have terminated the agreement. The City will be refunded for the remainder of the contract. We were able to develop a better idea of the volume of short term rentals within the City. For instance, 206 units (more than double what the Borough has on file as paying sales tax) at an average rent of \$334 were tracked in June with an 80% occupancy which equates to approximately \$1,653,300 in taxable sales. Unfortunately, the connections to actual addresses for enforcement purposes were not meeting our needs. I think it is the unique challenge of rural Alaska that made this so difficult and I don't expect another vendor will perform much better. Councilmembers Aderhold and Davis have been working on this topic with me and I am looking forward to working with them to develop the next phase of action.

Summer Maintenance for Winter Trails

City staff have been working alongside our loyal crew of volunteers from Homer Drawdown to make continued improvements on our trails in town. Resurfacing of Karen Hornaday Nature Trails and Calhoun Trail have been ongoing, with some work still to be done this season. The primary goal this summer has been improving existing trails so that they are more accessible and easier to maintain in the winter time. This has also included several vegetation removal work parties as we reclaim our trails from the encroaching greenery.



Volunteer Mike Haines raking gravel while Parks Coordinator Chad Felice operates the Toolcat and Parks Technician Matt Hornaday runs the compactor on the upper section of Calhoun Trail.

Attachments:

- August Employee Anniversaries
- Memorandum dated August 17, 2023 from City Manager Granting Enforcement Powers under HCC Chapter 5.16
- Memorandum dated August 23, 2023 from Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Re: Homer Harbor Expansion Monthly Written Update
- Council Work Session Schedule



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: August 28, 2023
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
Kellen Stock	Police	3	Years
Rob Dumouchel	Admin	2	Years
Winnifred Wade	Police	1	Year



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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council

FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager

DATE: August 17, 2023

SUBJECT: Granting of "Department" Powers to City Planner, Fire Chief, City Engineer, and Public Works Director under HCC Chapter 5.16

City staff are attempting to refocus our efforts as they apply to issues related to code enforcement in our neighborhoods. There are existing codes which are seldom used. In using Homer City Code (HCC) Chapter 5.16 PUBLIC NUISANCE ABATEMENT as a tool, we believe that we can make an impact on the growing instances of code violations within residential neighborhoods.

HCC Chapter 5.16 includes a definition for the term "Department" in which "Department" means the Police Department or another department or division of the City designated in writing by the City Manager to have the authority, in whole or in part, to enforce the chapter. The intent of this memo is to grant the City Planner, Volunteer Fire Chief, City Engineer, and Public Works Director the authority to enforce elements of HCC Chapter 5.16.

While some nuisances are criminal in nature and require the use of police officers to manage and mitigate, others have a public health and safety aspect which can be more effectively and appropriately handled by either the Planning Division or the Volunteer Fire Department. If either official requires backup for safety purposes, that will be provided by the Homer Police Department.

Staff Recommendation: Receive informational report



MEMORANDUM

Homer Harbor Expansion Study Monthly Written Update

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor and City Council
Date: August 23, 2023
From: Jenny Carroll, Special Projects and Communications Coordinator
Through: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager and Bryan Hawkins, Port Director

Purpose: This memorandum provides the fifth Homer Harbor Expansion Study monthly written update to Homer City Council per Resolution 23-037.

Study Activities Update: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Project Development Team has completed the Scoping Phase and successfully completed the Alternatives Milestone.

The second phase of the study is underway. USACE activities include:

- Environmental coordination with agencies; sending Tribal engagement letters and regular engagement with the Environmental Stakeholder Working Group. Next meeting is scheduled for August 23rd.
- Economic benefits analysis; developing and submitting a survey for the harbor fleet USACE approval; identifying current fleet and future with and future without scenarios.

HDR – Owner Representative Activities

- Coastal Numerical Modeling (waves, tides/storm surge, sediment transport) of existing conditions.
- Maintaining and updating project website
- Assisting USACE with future with and future without scenario designs
- Coordinating second Community meeting scheduled for Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 10 am. The event will be held at the Kenai Peninsula College Campus at 533 E Pioneer Avenue in Room P201. It will include an update from HDR and the USACE on the study and design alternatives that are moving forward, as well as the opportunity to work in small focus groups to offer input and ideas on reaching HHE Charter objectives. More information about this opportunity will be forthcoming.

USACE Project Management Plan: The USACE is still working to finalize the Project Management Plan (PMP), which defines study costs and timeline for deliverables.

- At a recent Project Development Team (PDT) meeting, the USACE informed the City that the Federal funds allocated to the study in FY23 will carry USACE activities through December 2023.
- Presently, the USACE has not secured Federal funding to continue study activities, and they are evaluating a potential pause January 2024 through June 2024, which will change the milestone dates. The USACE anticipates resuming the study in July 2024 by receiving additional Federal funding through a balance of unused funds in the USACE FY24 workplan, though this funding is not confirmed.
- While all USACE general investigation studies (GI's) are incrementally funded, it is unprecedented for a study to pause for lack of continuation funding. However, the Homer Harbor Expansion study falls into a unique cohort of new start general investigations that were funded through congressionally designated spending appropriations. The procedure for securing continuation funding for these studies in the FY24 Federal budget (either through a second federal appropriation or through inclusion in the USACE workplan) was unclear and no funding was included. It is our understanding that all new start GI's funded through FY23 Federal appropriations are in the same position.
- The USACE Colonel Palazzini will be sending a letter to officially update the City.
- City staff is working diligently to assess funding and other opportunities to keep the study on schedule and/or minimize the impacts of a delay.

The PMP also cannot be approved by the vertical team until final study cost has been calculated and agreed upon. Geotechnical activities (sampling) are a significant component expected to increase the study cost above the budgeted \$3M. The City and HDR are working with the USACE geotechnical team to bring those costs down while gathering sufficient data to support basin design assumptions which is important to mitigating risk associated with anticipated construction costs.

Communications

City staff are actively coordinating with the HDR communications team to provide outreach and public information about the study with a current focus on social media posts sharing goals of the study established in the City Council adopted Charter and have just begun promoting the September public scoping meeting.

Study information and updates are consistently being shared in the City's monthly newsletter, through social media (FB and Instagram), and on the Homer Harbor Expansion website.

RECOMMENDATION:

Informational Only.

WORK SESSION

AGENDA CALENDAR 2023

Council Meeting Dates	4:00 p.m. Worksession Topic
<i>Monday, May 8</i>	
<i>Tuesday, May 22</i>	<i>Coast Guard ws 2 5 COW @ 4</i>
<i>Monday, June 12</i>	<i>2023 City of Homer Salary and Benefits Survey</i>
<i>Monday, June 26</i>	<i>FY24/25 Capital Budget</i>
<i>Monday, July 24</i>	<i>HDR-Homer Harbor Expansion Alternatives Screening and Next Steps</i>
<i>Monday, August 14</i>	<i>HERC & Hazardous Materials Update – Economic Development Manager & Recreation Manager</i>
<i>Monday, August 28</i>	<i>2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan & FY25 Legislative Priorities - Special Projects & Communications Coordinator</i>
<i>Monday, September 11</i>	<i>HERC – Economic Development Manager & Recreation Manager</i>
<i>Monday, September 25</i>	<i>Ord 23-49 Amend Title 2 & Re-Organization</i>
<i>Monday, October 9</i>	
<i>Monday, October 23</i>	
<i>Monday, November 27</i>	<i>Recreation</i>
<i>Monday, December 11</i>	
<i>Monday, December 18 If needed</i>	