



City of Homer

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Wythe and Homer City Council
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager
DATE: July 20, 2016
SUBJECT: July 25 City Manager's Report

Animal Control Contract Advertised

The contract for Animal Control is up for renewal in December of 2016. The City will be issuing a request for proposals this week. The Animal Control Sustainability Committee spent a great deal of time updating City Code (changes to Title 20 before you today) and made useful suggestions on updates to the contract to be more reflective of current standards and practices. The RFP will be open for a full 7 weeks in an effort to give prospective contractors plenty of time to respond.

ICMA Conference in September

I will be missing the September 26 Council meeting as I will be attending the International City Manager Association conference in Kansas City, Missouri. I am very excited about so many workshops that pertain directly to City Manager responsibilities, development in small communities, and the Council-manager relationship. I really appreciate Council's support of my professional development. I applied for and received a Workplace Diversity scholarship that will cover much of the conference and travel expenses (about \$2,200 value).

What is Next with Harbor Rates?

Resolution 16-055, amending the harbor tariff failed at introduction and its companion, Resolution 15-054 amending the fee schedule to implement a graduated rate, was postponed until the second meeting in September, leaving many to question what is next. I appreciate all the Councilmembers and public who have met with me and expressed a desire to tackle this issue and build on the work of the Port and Harbor Commission. There is approximately \$8,000 left in the budget for moorage rate consultant services. Given the complexity of the issue, I suggest an extended work session with Northern Economics to help explain how the Port and Harbor Commission got to their recommendation, alternatives and compromises, and answer any questions Council may have. With elections in October and the potential for 2 new councilmembers and a new Mayor, the timing is awkward. I propose postponing Resolution 15-054 until the second meeting in October and scheduling an extended worksession on Monday October 17th with Northern Economics. Does that work for Council? Please submit any specific questions you have on harbor rates to so we can make the best use of Council's time and maximize time with the consultant.

How Useful are Monthly Stats?

Council should be receiving monthly statistical reports in their box (see attached March 2016 example). These stats cover items like animals reported lost at the shelter, number of packets distributed by the Clerk's office, Fire and EMS calls, number of arrests, volunteer hours at the Library, work orders process at Public Works, and wait list requests at the Homer Harbor (just to name a few, there is a great deal of information in the reports). While this information is interesting, I wonder how useful you find it. Most of the information is collected by the departments regardless of whether or not it is provided to Council, however it is an extra step to report it to the City Manager's office and my staff can spend a great deal of time hunting down and compiling statistics. How useful does Council find the statistics? Are there suggestions on how to present the information in a more useful way? Should we consolidate our energy in a single comprehensive annual report?

Status of Borough's Property and Sales Tax Code Revisions

The borough assembly has approved an ordinance to ask the voters to raise the maximum sales tax transaction to \$1,000, effective Jan. 1, 2017, and to eliminate sales tax on residential rent. Look for this on the October municipal ballot (October 4). The Assembly is scheduled at its July 26 meeting to vote on whether to put the senior citizen property tax exemption ordinance before voters Oct. 4. The ordinance would reduce, over several years, the optional (second) \$150,000 exemption in borough code. A third ordinance, dealing with other property tax issues (no voter approval required), will be introduced at the July 26 assembly meeting. Public hearings will be Aug. 9 and 23. The ordinance contains mostly procedural issues, but also amends code so that no one can get a residency-based property tax exemption if they have applied for or received a similar residency-based exemption outside of the borough in the same year. And it requires taxable personal property owners to notify the borough of sales, including the name and address of the new owner, so that the assessor can maintain an accurate list for assessments and tax billings. This Ordinance will have little impact for Homer.

Of greater interest to the City of Homer, is an ordinance dealing with all-things-sales-tax that is scheduled for introduction Aug. 9. This is the one that scales back which businesses can sell non-prepared foods as tax-exempt, amends code to require sales tax on flightseeing rides, says sales by a nonprofit ongoing business are subject to sales tax, and seeks to expand (as much as legally possible) the taxation of goods ordered and delivered into the borough. Per the direction given in the Revenue Worksessions, I will be drafting a resolution in support of many of these items for consideration at the next Council meeting (August 8).

Alaska Public Library Assistance Grant Agreement FY2017

The Library has received a grant from the Alaska State Library for \$6,900 for purchasing materials and staff training. This is a routine grant that the Library receives every year. In the past, it has been accepted and appropriated by ordinance. However, during the 2016 budget Council gave the City Manager the authority to accept and appropriate grants under \$25,000. I will report any small grant we receive to Council in the City Manager's report.

Enc:

March monthly statistical report

Alaska State Library grant agreement

Special use permit for KBCHA
Pioneer Avenue press release
Letter to Governor on state sales tax
Thank you card from Bunnell