



# City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

Office of the City Clerk

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## Memorandum

### Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: MAYOR ZAK AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK  
DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2017  
SUBJECT: AGENDA CHANGES AND SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

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#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Ordinance 17-42**, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Appropriating Funds for the Calendar Year 2018 for the General Fund, The Water Fund, the Sewer Fund, the Port/Harbor Fund, Capital Projects, and Internal Service Funds.

Budget Amendment to reduce funding for the Vac Truck and approve funds for a brush cutter sponsored by Councilmember Erickson. Page 3

Written Public Comments. Page 5

**Resolution 17-086**, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the City of Homer Fee Schedule Under Camping Fees.

Memorandum from Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission as backup Page 13



City of Homer  
2018 Capital Budget

**2018 Proposed Budget Amendment Form**

**Fund Name:** General Fund- 100 and Water/Sewer- 256

**Project name:** Reduce funding for Vac truck from \$450,000- \$400,000 and approve \$50,000 for brush cutter

Account #	Account name	Page #	Increase	Decrease	Balance
256-0378	Sewer Reserves	173		\$16,666	\$133,333
256-0379	Water Reserves	173		\$16,666	\$133,333
152-0383	Public Works Fleet Reserves	173		\$16,666	\$133,333
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$399,999</b>
152-0383	Public Works Fleet Reserves	169	\$50,000		

**Rationale:**

This amendment decreases the Vac truck to \$400,000 and authorizes \$50,000 to be spent on a brush cutter, which was requested for \$82,000 but not approved in the City Manager's draft budget. \$400,000 should be enough to purchase a top of the line new Vac Truck, especially in today's competitive bidding market. By reducing the allocation Council is able to dedicate funds to other much needed infrastructure, such as a brush cutter.

The current brush cutter is 21 years old, constantly in need of repair and spends a fair amount of time out of service each season, delaying important right of way clearing work. This causes more work and disruption to the public by the time public works eventually is able to get to clearing.

Requested By:  
Councilmember Erickson

Prepared By:  
City Manager



**From:** charles barnwell  
**To:** [Melissa Jacobsen](mailto:Melissa.Jacobsen)  
**Cc:** [Jenna deLumeau](mailto:Jenna.deLumeau); [Elizabeth Walton](mailto:Elizabeth.Walton)  
**Subject:** Re: questions regarding 2018 draft budget  
**Date:** Monday, December 04, 2017 6:34:20 PM

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Thanks Melissa for the response.

Regarding Item 1—drone use—I think Mr. Robl’s letter addresses the privacy issue, but there is nothing about their plan for deploying and learning how to use, and applying the drone. \$34,000 is a considerable sum for a basic drone. Learning how to use a drone is time consuming and needs training and a plan. I don’t see either of these issues addressed in his letter. Given budget constraints at COH, I think they should at least justify carefully their plan.

thanks again,

Charles

> On Dec 4, 2017, at 2:08 PM, Melissa Jacobsen <MJacobsen@ci.homer.ak.us> wrote:  
>  
> Hi Charles,  
>  
> In response to your email:  
>  
> Item 1. I have attached a memo from the Police Chief that was included in the City Manager's report regarding the purchase.  
>  
> Item 4. The Council has scheduled a joint worksession with the Parks Art Recreation & Cultural Advisory Commission to discuss the future of the HERC. This worksession will be held on January 8th at 4 pm if you are able to attend. Currently the budget for that building is primarily the cost to keep the building warm and there are a few programs through community recreation that take place in the gym.  
>  
> I will share your other budget comments with council for consideration on December 11th.  
>  
> -Melissa  
>  
> -----Original Message-----  
> From: charles barnwell [<mailto:barnwellce@gmail.com>]  
> Sent: Saturday, December 02, 2017 7:16 PM  
> To: Melissa Jacobsen <MJacobsen@ci.homer.ak.us>  
> Cc: Jenna deLumeau <JdeLumeau@ci.homer.ak.us>; Elizabeth Walton <ewalton@ci.homer.ak.us>  
> Subject: Re: questions regarding 2018 draft budget  
>  
> Hi Meliissa,  
>  
> Some questions I have regarding the budget as follows:  
>  
> 1. drone purchase by Police. Why is this necessary? While \$34,000 is not excessive for drone and training costs, I think this expenditure should wait until the technology is generally more used and proven in the police profession.  
>  
> 2. Information technology costs. The proposed budget seems excessive for a small city like Homer. I used to work as an IT executive for the Municipality of Anchorage and dealt with IT costs every day. I think that small city IT “infrastructure” costs could be reduced greatly by leveraging the cloud and other means. I’d like to see more detail on this budget. I think funds should be allocated to improving the city’s database and GIS capability so that

they can track assets better.

>

> 3. Library budget. I think the library budget is not enough. The recent proposal for \$10,000 for book purchases is not adequate to build a good quality library collection. I think interlibrary loan program will help offset collection needs, but still the collection should be bolstered, and funds should be allocated to build a strong library that is a center of the community.

>

> 4. Budget for recreational and cultural center. I am not clear upon reading this budget how much and where funds are being allocated for the HERC. In particular, it seems a long term plan coupled with budget should be developed for this community need.

>

> Thank you for the opportunity to submit questions.

>

> Charles Barnwell

>

>> On Dec 1, 2017, at 1:45 PM, Melissa Jacobsen <MJacobsen@ci.homer.ak.us> wrote:

>>

>> Yes, if someone is requesting public records, the records request is the appropriate avenue. If Mr. Barnwell has questions, he can certainly submit them to me and I can get them to the appropriate person to reply.

>>

>> I hope this helps.

>>

>> Melissa

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Jenna deLumeau

>> Sent: Friday, December 01, 2017 11:45 AM

>> To: charles barnwell <barnwellce@gmail.com>

>> Cc: Elizabeth Walton <ewalton@ci.homer.ak.us>; Melissa Jacobsen <MJacobsen@ci.homer.ak.us>

>> Subject: RE: questions regarding 2018 draft budget

>>

>> The proper way is to file a record's request from the Clerk's office. Melissa?

>>

>>

>>

>> Jenna deLumeau

>> City of Homer

>> 491 E Pioneer Ave

>> Homer, Ak 99603

>> 907-435-3116

>>

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: charles barnwell [<mailto:barnwellce@gmail.com>]

>> Sent: Friday, December 1, 2017 11:09 AM

>> To: Department Finance

>> Subject: questions regarding 2018 draft budget

>>

>> I'm reviewing the COH draft budget. How do I submit questions regarding the budget?

>>

>>

>> thanks,

>

> <Drone use..pdf>

**From:** Laurie Stuart  
**To:** [Donna Aderhold](#); [Heath Smith](#); [Rachel Lord](#)  
**Cc:** [Department Clerk](#); [Department City Manager](#)  
**Subject:** Pratt Museum is an Institution of the City of Homer  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 06, 2017 8:19:19 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

This is a conversation that I would like to have in person, but I am emailing just days before the budget vote on December 11 to convey the most salient points as quickly as possible. Ideally, this conversation would be had outside of the budget process so that we have time to discuss the full merits and components of the relationship between the City of Homer and the Pratt Museum. I didn't bring this up in my oral report to the Council on November 27 because I wanted to initiate a longer dialogue with the Council and the City Manager after the December 11 meeting. I did meet with the City Manager on November 3 and, based on that conversation, I have been discussing the best path forward with our Board of Directors.

I am writing to request that the Homer City Council pass the Pratt Museum line item in the 2018 City Budget for \$69,000 at the December 11 meeting, and that no reductions in this amount are proposed or approved until the City and the Pratt Museum have taken the time to meet and thoughtfully discuss the legal aspects of our relationship.

In 1967, the City of Homer and the Homer Society of Natural History (which was in the process of constructing the Pratt Museum to open in 1968) signed and recorded the attached. By this contract, the City agreed to accept the property of the Society should it cease to exist. Furthermore, the City agreed to "maintain a museum for the citizens in keeping with the policy and intent of the Society." In 1967, the City of Homer recognized the museum as an institution as integral to the community as the library has become. Libraries and Museums were often started by small, local societies of passionate and committed citizens. Whereas many other cities eventually absorbed libraries and museums into the more stable framework of City infrastructure, the Pratt Museum has been able to remain independent and continues to run the institution at a far lower cost than the City would be able to maintain. The annual support that the museum does receive from the City of Homer is critical to maintaining the unrestricted funding necessary to apply towards operating costs and matching opportunities for supplemental grants. If any changes were to be proposed to the 2018 City budget, it should be to increase the Pratt Museum's funding to the nearly \$120,000-level allocations made in earlier years. The Museum continues to honor the original contract and, in fact, provides many services to the City not specifically listed, including: caring for cultural and natural resource collections pertinent to City history, aiding in the curation of City artifacts and memorabilia, partnering on projects such as the Spit signage, etc. While the Pratt Museum has successfully maintained the community-focused Museum as an independently-run institution, with a knack for "doing more with less", our facilities and staffing costs have grown rather than diminished.

In November 2017, the Pratt Museum Board of Directors passed our 2018 budget. Reductions in the Pratt Museum allocation would create significant challenges in the maintenance of our 2018 operations. So while I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss our relationship in depth during 2018, I would request that we begin that conversation well before the 2019 budget process. In addition, the City Manager has indicated that the City may not consider itself bound by the 1967 contract. I request that we take time to mutually explore the status of our legal relationship before any significant decisions are made in the final moments of budget

approvals.

If you have any questions, I am available by cell phone at [907-491-3049](tel:907-491-3049). I am also readily available by email at [director@prattmuseum.org](mailto:director@prattmuseum.org).

Thank you for your consideration of these details. I am still relatively new to the long history of the City of Homer and the Pratt Museum, and I sincerely look forward to spending time in 2018 to better define the relationship between our entities.

[cc: This email has also been sent to the City Clerk and City Manager for inclusion in the council packet.]

Sincerely,

Laurie

--

Laurie K. Stuart

Executive Director

***Pratt Museum***

3779 Bartlett Street

Homer, Alaska 99603

[\(907\) 435-3333](tel:907-435-3333), Fax [\(907\) 235-2764](tel:907-235-2764)

[www.prattmuseum.org](http://www.prattmuseum.org) | [Facebook](#) | [Volunteer](#) | [Donate](#)



**From:** Linda Rowell  
**To:** [Department Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the Pratt Museum  
**Date:** Thursday, December 07, 2017 12:41:44 PM

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Dear City Council Members:

As a 20 year regular volunteer at the Pratt Museum, I am requesting that you continue support of this vital piece of the Homer community at least at the \$69,000 level and consider increasing the support to what it was in earlier years. As the final remaining docent of summer harbor tours trained by Don Ronda, the originator of this tribute to Homer offered to both visitors and locals, I regularly see the public relations benefits the museum provides to both the city and local business. Through the years as a former teacher and a frequent docent for educational groups from preschool to college to elder hostel, I know the tremendous resource that the Pratt museum is to our local students and many from afar and to teachers. Excellent programs and a wide variety of kits on local topics that can be checked out are available to increase awareness of our unique community and environment. Also having worked in collections through the years, I know the valuable of the large number of historical, cultural, and natural treasures carefully preserved by the museum, so that they not only can be saved but used in exhibits and programs to foster Homer as a tourist attraction and a unique place to live.

Currently I am the Vice President of the Board of Directors and the Board has already approved the operating budget for 2018 which will begin in January. Any cuts to the current allocation will significantly impact Museum operations for next year.

Having visited many of the smaller museums in the State which receive proportionally much more support from their local communities, I know what a treasure the Pratt Museum is and feel that the City of Homer needs to recognize this gem with more financial support. Already the city receives tremendous "bang for its buck" and with more local support the benefits to the city will only continue to grow.

Sincerely,

Lida Rowell

**CITY COUNCIL REQUEST 12/11/2017**

**As the Homer City Council** plans its allocation of funds for the upcoming year, the Patrons of the Pratt Society requests strong consideration for continuing support for the Pratt Museum at the current level. This important institution is vital for the health of the community. The museum serves several important functions: as the repository for the artifacts of Kachemak Bay culture, both past and present, as the focal gathering place for educational programs for the community, as a forum to display art and science for all ages of Homer citizens. These activities are implemented by a dedicated and informed staff who enrich the lives of the people of Homer.

John Regan

Patrons of the Pratt Society President

December 5, 2017

Re: Ordinance 17-42

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

I attended the city council meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup>, and it appeared there were some misunderstandings regarding the amendment for a 1% COLA as suggested by the Employee Committee. I am not on the committee, but as a city employee for almost four years and a city resident for much longer, I would like to offer some background on that proposal.

While I appreciated the spirit of compromise that the Council showed in offering a 0.5% increase, the Council needs to understand that the 1% number was already tendered as a compromise, taking into account current fiscal realities. The Employee Committee did not come to you from an adversarial position, ready to fight and bargain to a fair deal. It is not a union, and in fact we are barred from forming a union by city regulations. The Committee came to you as a partner, willing to absorb the higher cost in health care and willing to tolerate salaries that are still several percentage points below those in comparable communities, with a modest proposal for righting this disparity. I think Mayor Zak, with more years of city council experience under his belt, saw it for the good faith offer it was. He probably also understands how critical it is to attract and retain good employees. I urge you all to reconsider the original amendment, and see if it is something that can fit into the budget.

Some of you had concerns about the Anchorage Consumer Price Index being used as a metric for making cost of living adjustments. According to the City of Homer's Personnel Regulations, which you as a council approved in June of this year, that index is precisely how you are supposed to make these decisions (5.1.2). The Regulations direct the city to make adjustments at least once a year as the budget allows; that is not a process that should be open to dispute now.

I would not agree with Mr. Smith that there is already a step system in place that offsets annual inflation. Since the passing of Resolution 17-063(A) this June, employees may only receive pay increases if the employee "more than fulfills" essential requirements for the position; it is not automatic. In my case as a part-time employee, I am only eligible for a merit increase once every two years. This system is not designed to keep salaries in pace with yearly inflation, which is why the Employee Committee had asked for the increase.

There was also some suggestion that the 1% across the board was not appropriate because it would not adequately benefit the employees at the lower pay scale levels, whose salaries are the most deficient compared to similar positions in other communities. If this is a true concern of the Council, then perhaps a Council member could suggest an amendment to address the problem.

I would urge the Council to reconsider this amendment and pass it at the full amount. One percent would make a difference to me. As a part-time library employee, I receive no paid leave for the holidays, no sick leave, and am not able to put in for overtime. **As my fellow city resident said, I do my job for the “intangibles.”** Each week I get to help residents find work and learn new skills, assist elders dealing with technology, and watch over kids who need a safe place to go after school. Sometimes I help people find some diversion in the form of a DVD as they recover from illness, and occasionally I even point people toward an informative book, all for the greater good of democracy in a community I love. **But no matter how hard I try, I cannot feed my children “intangibles.”**

Frankly I am demoralized having to plead for what will amount to a handful of change each pay period. But as a city resident, I can assure you that funding the full 1% would mean more money would follow the rest of my paycheck back to the Homer community: buying raffle tickets to support our sports teams and the arts, purchasing groceries at Homer stores and the Farmers’ Market, buying birthday gifts at our shops, and paying for services from local businesses. If it helps, consider funding the full 1% COLA as a stimulus package for the city.

Thank you and Merry Christmas,

Jacqueline McDonough

479 Mountain View Dr  
Homer, AK 99603



## City of Homer

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To: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council  
From: Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission  
Through: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner  
Date: October 25, 2017  
Subject: 2018 Fee Schedule Recommendations

At the October 19, 2017 meeting, the Commission recommended raising tent camping fees by \$2, and RV camping by \$4. This would raise the fees approximately 15% to \$15 and \$24, inclusive of sales tax.

Minutes excerpt:

PENDING BUSINESS

B. Camping Fees

Chair Steffy introduced the next item for discussion.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen stated that the information on page 18 was provided by Finance Department last meeting and Ms. Otteson was able to provide the information on page 17.

It was noted by the commission that there were discrepancies in the amounts that were reported by Finance.

Chair Steffy noted that in his quick review of the information provided by Finance and it appeared that there were some statistical ghosts in the numbers. He compared the number as a camping event between 2014 and 2017 only. He proceeded to explain his findings to the commission.

Discussion ensued on exclusion of the shoulder months from the figures since each year will be different as to when they open and close the campgrounds; the figures reported by finance were higher than what Ms. Otteson reported; per unit revenue is lower however overall revenue was higher; if the fees were increased since 2014; the rates are \$20 for RV's and \$13 for tents which also included the sales tax; the commission is interested in finding out if the rise in rates and removing the weekly rates was causing a reduction in revenue and it is apparent that that is not the case here with the numbers reported.

It was agreed by consensus of the commissioners present that it would be prudent to withhold amending the camping rates for 2018 until they have a few years to compare numbers.

Commissioner Roedl inquired about the cost to maintain the campgrounds compared to the revenue they are generating. Deputy City Planner Engebretsen explained that the city does not collect enough revenue to maintain the campgrounds but in actuality it takes minimal materials to maintain it is more

of a service provided at Hornaday campground, while the campgrounds on the spit are the definite revenue generators.

Further discussion on the various factors that may affect the outcome of the number of campers this year such as weather, raised rates, and persons staying in their own homes versus camping. It was additionally discussed that the city should charge the Alaska rate and comparing the rates of private RV park's on the Spit and other communities offer shoulder season and peak rates and charge higher rates; differing rates may create more work than is worth it; there was differing opinions on increasing rates versus not, a motion would be needed but is not required at this time.

Carey Meyer, Public Works Director commented on discussion and questions regarding a weekly rate offered an efficiency in labor for collecting the fees, everyone is looking for the deal but there is no statistical information to present on whether it would be worth having a weekly rate. He also provided some information on an enterprise fund versus the general fund and a single event versus a multiple event generating more sales tax revenue for the city.

Responding to a question on approximate percentage of the weekly campers he surmised that it is the loyal visitors that tend to come to Homer wanting to stay a significant period of time; but he does not have any real insight into that number.

Chair Steffy questioned what was the impetus to remove the weekly rate?

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen responded that no other community offers a weekly rate, she cited the cost of maintenance and services provided versus the revenue charged and that the actual rate amounted to approximately \$8 per day since the weekly rate was very low. Ms. Engebretsen noted that city residents pay for a variety of services that are provided and that they in essence should not be subsidizing a visitor's camping experience.

Chair Steffy stated that having information on the weekly visitors versus nightly would be handy and at this time unless one of the other commissioners wanted to propose a motion he would be willing to address this next year.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen noted that City Council will be addressing fees at the upcoming Council meeting so this is the commission's chance to propose changes to the fee schedule.

SHARP/HARRALD – MOVED TO INCREASE CAMPING FEES BY 15% ROUNDED TO THE NEXT WHOLE NUMBER.

Discussion on requesting a reasonable average industry standard rate, increasing by just a few dollars will increase the revenue for the city and may assist in getting some required maintenance completed, will not deter people who like coming to this great city and offering a weekly rate in the shoulder months, April May September, October only to encourage more visitors.

ROEDL/ MOVED TO AMEND TO PROVIDE A WEEKLY RATE FOR THE SHOULDER MONTHS APRIL MAY SEPTEMBER OCTOBER WITHOUT AN INCREASE IN THE BASE RATE IN JUNE JULY AND AUGUST.

Commissioner Harrald inquired about a friendly amendment and Chair Steffy responded that it should be a separate amendment, exact amendment was inaudible to the Clerk for transcribing.

Chair Steffy requested a second to the motion on the floor.

Motion died for lack of a second.

SHARP/STEFFY MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCREASE RATES TO \$15 PER NIGHT FOR TENTS AND \$24 PER NIGHT FOR RECREATIONAL VEHICLES FOR THE 2018 CAMPING SEASON.

Discussion ensued on the rates charged in Seward and Soldotna and that they collect sales taxes on top of those fees and not addressing the request of staff for a weekly rate, performing a wait and see approach on visitors versus revenue for 2018 and the proposed increase reflects a 10% increase in current rates which includes sales taxes.

VOTE. (Amendment) YES. ROEDL, HARRALD, SHARP, STEFFY.

VOTE. NO. FAIR.

Motion carried.

