



## City of Homer

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

## Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603

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(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

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## City Manager's Report

TO: Honorable Mayor Wythe and Homer City Council  
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager  
DATE: January 11, 2016  
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report

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It has been 5 weeks since the last Council meeting - feels like almost an eternity! I hope everyone enjoyed the respite and the holidays. There promises to be plenty to keep us busy in 2016.

### **Storm Drain Failure on Bunnell Avenue**

On Tuesday, a hole opened up in the Bunnell Street roadway, south of Main Street. The "sink hole" was caused by a deteriorated 36" storm drain which allowed soil to wash into the drain - undermining the pavement. Public Works responded; excavated to expose the drain, put a patch on the hole in the side of the storm drain, and backfilled the hole. Pavement will be replaced in the Spring. The storm drain was installed by the State in the early 80's. This storm drain, as well as the storm drain in Heath Street (installed during the same time frame), will need some work. These two storm drains serve the Central Business District. Public Works will be working with ADOT to determine who is responsible for rehabilitation. Public Works will be asking the Council for authorization to proceed with the design of a fix for the portion that the City is responsible for at the second meeting in January using HART funds.

### **Council Open House at Library**

A patron at the Homer Public Library suggested the Council do a once a month 'open house' with the public at the library. It could be a good way to increase dialogue with the public and reach out to the community in a new way.

The Friends of the Library are willing to advertise it through their usual channels (flyers, newsletter, community calendar, radio). If the program is successful and at a regular time, the community will come to expect the event and advertising won't be as much of an issue.

It is hard to predict what would be the best time for turn out, however the Library Director suggested lunch time. People are out and about then, and people who work could stop in on their lunch hour. One option would be the first Council Monday of the month - which would give people an alternative to an evening meeting to visit with you. A noon meeting could be held in the study room and we could serve tea/coffee. If one councilmember a month volunteers, each member will have to commit to two lunch meetings a year (or less).

If Council is interested, I suggest you pick a time and day and give it a try for one month each. Then we can revisit if it is successful. I can circulate a signup sheet via email. I propose starting next month, February 8 at noon.

### **Seafarer's Memorial Camping**

The Seafarer's Memorial parking lot has been occupied this fall/winter by a dozen long term campers. Some of the trailers are in such a bad state of repair they had to be towed in. The site has been problematic; HPD has arrested several of the campers for various misdemeanors. HCC 19.08.030(d) allows people to camp in the Seafarer's Memorial parking lot when all City campgrounds are closed (April 1-October 30). The same section allows the City Manager to open a campground at any time. I have issued the attached notice to open the Pier One campground. On December 15<sup>th</sup> campers were served notice that they needed to move their camper to the Pier One Theatre lot or elsewhere. To date, none of them have moved. The next step is for HPD to enforce the issue with fines and impounds. During the process, as always, HPD will refer individuals in need of any available services.

### **Hickerson Cemetery**

A couple of Borough residents have brought concerns with the impact to area groundwater and clearing of trees associated with the expansion of Hickerson Cemetery to the attention of city staff and Council. I have offered to hold a neighborhood meeting so residents have an opportunity to ask questions and air their concerns which I am hoping will be a good starting place to work with the neighborhood.

The Hickerson Cemetery expansion project has been in the works since 2010 when the land was purchased adjacent to the existing cemetery. The 2012 budget authorized design, and this year Council authorized a phased development of the first few hundred plots. Though if winter conditions allow, Public Works could do some site preparation of the land this winter. The project will not be bid until the next construction season.

Homer cemeteries average 12 burials a year, and according to the Homer Funeral Home, only about half of those choose to be embalmed (which involves chemicals that are of a concern to area residents). Using arsenic in the embalming process was discontinued in the early 1900s. The existing Hickerson Cemetery was developed in 1960. City of Homer Public Works checked with the State (DEC drinking water and solid waste management) to make sure all the proper rules are followed. There are no State regulations regarding the creation or expansion of cemeteries as it relates to zoning/groundwater concerns. The KPB has established no zoning in the area of the proposed cemetery and does not regulate the creation or expansion of cemeteries. According to the Public Works Director and City Engineer, the hydrology of the area is conducive for minimizing or eliminating the potential for metals (from deceased fillings, watches, etc.) or embalming fluid from entering groundwater and moving off site.

I know the Council has both an interest in being a good neighbor and providing area community members a place to bury their loved ones. If the community members feel

strongly one way or another, I encourage them to let the City know. I will keep the Council abreast of how the project progresses.

### **KPEDD Industry Forum**

Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District will be holding their annual Industry Outlook Forum this January 28-29 (draft agenda attached). This is open to the public, free, and a great opportunity to network with industry professionals and other business and public entities on the Peninsula and around the state. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/industry-outlook-forum-2016-tickets-19973176308>

### **City Manager's Office Staffing**

As you know, Assistant City Manager Patrick Lawrence left the City of Homer at the end of 2015. I have struggled with how to fill his position. There is plenty of justification for an Assistant City Manager position given the work load and supervisory responsibilities in the City Manager's office. Nevertheless, I also feel like it is difficult in these lean budget times to justify funding the position at the level that is needed to attract qualified candidates. I have decided to advertise the position as a Special Projects/Communications Coordinator. This person will be in charge of the CIP, website and social media, and staffing the Economic Development Advisory Commission, among other things. Given the projects the City has on its plate, the position will also have a renewed emphasis on grant writing. However, I will retain many of the afterhours and broader community relations functions as this will not be a salaried position. I am confident we will receive excellent candidates and the changes in the job description will benefit the City. However, I am concerned about capacity in the City Manager's office with these changes and the administrative assistant position moving to a part time status. I will ask for help if I need it at midyear, but am looking forward to solidifying my team for 2016 and getting our feet under us. Please direct any interested candidates for the Special Projects/Communications position to the City website.

### **New Website**

I have mentioned that the City is going to have a new website design in a couple of City Manager reports, however over the holidays we took the plunge and transitioned to a more mobile friendly template with greater capacity. Holly Brennan at the Library deserves special recognition for taking on the immense technical details of this project. The new site has inspired a renewed interest in the website from City departments, which is a good thing as we strive to be more communicative with the public. There are still a few bugs to work out linking the old site to the new design, so please let my office know if you see something that needs tweaking or does not work quite right as you navigate around.

Enc.

Notice of Opening Fishing Hole Campground  
Industry Outlook Forum Agenda  
Grant Support for Homer Kachemak Bay Rotary Club  
Homer Public Library Advertised in Lonely Planet



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## NOTICE

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Due to a demand for camping outside of the traditional camping season, effective January 1, 2016, I am opening camp spaces 1 to 16 of the Fishing Hole Campground next to Pier One Theater on the Homer Spit until further notice. City campgrounds are closed by ordinance from September 30<sup>th</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>. However, according to Homer City Code 19.08.030d, they can be opened at any other time by order of the city manager.

City of Homer campground rules and fee schedule applies and will be enforced.

Katie Koester  
City Manager



Leadership to enhance, foster  
and promote economic development

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## INDUSTRY OUTLOOK FORUM

HOSTED BY

*Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District  
And Supported By*

*City of Kenai, City of Soldotna,  
And Chambers of Commerce of Kenai, Soldotna, Seward  
and Homer*

Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

8:15	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00	Welcome Pledge of Allegiance Self-Introduction  Moderator: Tim Dillon <i>Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Board of Directors City Manager of Seldovia</i>
9:15	<b>Workforce Development and Economic Overview</b>  Alyssa (Shanks) Rodrigues (Confirmed) <i>Economist III, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development</i>
9:45	Barbara Sheinberg (Confirmed) <i>Sheinberg Associates, Situation and Prospects Update</i>
10:15	Networking Break-Door Prize Drawing

10:30	<b>Community Economic Outlook</b> Mayor Mike Navarre – <i>Kenai Peninsula Borough</i> (Invited) Mayor Pat Porter – <i>City of Kenai</i> (Invited) Mayor Pete Sprague - <i>City of Soldotna</i> (Invited) Mayor Bill Overway - <i>City of Kachemak</i> (Invited) Mayor Dean Lent – <i>City of Seldovia</i> (Invited) Mayor Jean Bardarson - <i>City of Seward</i> (Invited) Mayor Beth Wythe - <i>City of Homer</i> (Invited)
12:00	<b>Lunch</b> <b>Keynote Speaker: State Revenue Update</b> <b>To Be Determined</b> <i>State of Alaska</i> **To be broadcast**
1:00	<b>Melissa Houston, UA Center for Economic Development (Invited)</b> <i>Associate Director for Strategy</i>
2:00	<b>Networking Break- Door Prize Drawing</b>
2:15	<b>Bruce Webb, Vice President (Invited)</b> <i>Furie Alaska</i>
2:35	<b>John L. Hendrix, General Manager (Invited)</b> <i>Apache Corporation</i>
2:55	<b>Benjamin Johnson, CEO (Invited)</b> <i>Blue Crest Energy</i>
3:15	<b>Dave Wilkins, Senior Vice President (Confirmed)</b> <i>Hilcorp Alaska LLC</i>
3:35	<b>Networking Break-Door Prize Drawing</b>
4:00	<b>Frank Richards, VP Engineering and Program Management (Confirmed)</b> <i>Alaska Gasline Development Corporation</i>
4:30	<b>Reception (No Host Bar)</b>
5:30	<b>Congressional Update Video Presentation from:</b> Congressman Don Young (Invited) Via DVD Senator Lisa Murkowski (Invited) Via DVD Senator Dan Sullivan (Invited) Via DVD
6:15	<b>Keynote Speaker:</b> <i>Dinner at the old Carr's mall</i>
6:40	<b>Ross Sorensen, Contracting Lead (Invited)</b> <i>Alaska LNG Project</i>



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Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

8:15	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00	<p>Welcome</p> <p><b>Moderator: Tim Dillon</b>  <i>Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Board of Directors  City Manager of Seldovia</i></p>
9:15	<p><b>Bruce Anders, Vice President (Invited)</b>  <i>CIRI Alaska Native Corporation</i></p>
9:45	<p><b>Gabriel Kompkoff, CEO (Invited)</b>  <i>Chugach Commercial Holdings</i></p>
10:15	Networking - Break
10:30	<p><b>Rick Davis, Chief Executive Officer (Confirmed)</b>  <i>Central Peninsula Hospital</i></p>

10:50	<b>Monica Adams, Chief Executive Officer (Invited)</b> <i>Peninsula Community Health Services</i>
11:10	<b>Networking - Break</b>
11:25	<b>Gary J. Turner, Director &amp; CEO (Invited)</b> <i>Kenai Peninsula College</i>
11:45	<b>Ben Eveland, Director (Invited)</b> <i>AVTEC Institute of Technology</i>
12:05	<b>Lunch</b>  <b>Keynote Speaker:</b> <b>To Be Determined</b> <i>State of Alaska</i>  **To be broadcast**
12:45	<b>Mining Update</b>  <b>Dan Graham, Project Manager (Confirmed)</b> <i>Pacrim Coal, LP</i>
1:15	<b>Mike Heatwole, VP of Public Affairs (Confirmed)</b> <i>The Pebble Partnership</i>
1:45	<b>Kurt Parkan, External Affairs Manager (Confirmed)</b> <i>Donlin Gold</i>
2:15	<b>Closing Remarks</b>





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Homer Foundation  
3733 Bean Walters Lane #4  
Homer, AK 99603

December 30, 2015

Dear Homer Foundation,

The City of Homer supports a grant application by the Homer Kachemak Bay Rotary Club in the amount of \$5,000 to build a picnic shelter. The shelter supports the Kachemak Bay Water Trail trailhead, and will be on city parkland near the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon. The City envisions the shelter will be very popular with a diverse group of day users due to its location near fishing, the trailhead, and its distance from the road noise and wind of Homer Spit Road.

The City of Homer supported this project with \$5,000 in capital project funds during the 2015 budget cycle. With those funds, the City hoped that Rotary could leverage more public and private funding to complete the project. Rotary's application to the Homer Foundation has the support of the City as they move forward on this new asset to the community.

Sincerely,

Katie Koester  
City manager

## Drinking & Nightlife

The bumper sticker says it all: 'Homer, Alaska: A quaint drinking village with a fishing problem.'

### Kharacters

(Map p246; Pioneer Ave) Pure Alaskan, this smoke-filled, intimate, and somewhat raucous cro

### Salty Dawg

(Map p250; storied bar Dawg isn't cavernous pool table start in ea

### Down East Saloon

(Map p250; 3125 E End Rd) This spacious bar is where locals head to listen to live music. The view is killer, but you'll likely be paying more attention to whichever Homer talent is on stage and the sexy hippies.

### The Alibi

(Map p246; www.alibihomer.com; 453 E Pioneer Ave; ☺ 4pm-4am) Catering to a younger crowd, the Alibi has DJs, karaoke and occasional dance parties. The large picture windows reveal the bay and locals say the food isn't bad.

### Homer Brewing Company

(Map p246; www.homerbrew.com; 1411 Lakeshore Dr; ☺ noon-7pm Mon-Sat, to 6pm Sun) This tast- ing room has picnic tables and fresh Jakalof Bay oysters Friday and Saturday. Try the broken birch bitter ale and then grab a growler to go.

### Bear Creek Winery

(Map p250; www.bearcreekwinery.com; Bear Creek Dr; ☺ 10am-6pm) Wineries are scarcer than vineyards in Alaska, but this impressive family-run operation bottles some fine berry-based wines. Tastings are \$5 (credited to your purchase), and they do tours at 11am Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

## Entertainment

### Pier One Theatre

(Map p250; ☎ 907-235-7333; www.pieronetheatre.org; Homer Spit Rd) Live drama and comedy are performed in a 'come-as-you-are' warehouse next to the Fishing Hole on the Spit. Shows start at 8:15pm Friday and Saturday, and 7:30pm Sunday during summer.

## Shopping

### Chain Reaction Sports

(Map p246; 5 Lake St; ☺ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat & Sun) This outfitter sells camping, hunting and fishing supplies.

## Information

### INTERNET

**Homer Public Library** (500 Hazel Ave; ☺ 10am-6pm Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat, to 8pm Tue & Thu; ☎ ☎) Homer's excellent library is arty and airy, with a decidedly Homer-esque selection of magazines. Internet access is free, and they have a great kids section for rainy days.

### LAUNDRY

**East End Laundry** (Mile 2.9, E End Rd; ☺ 10am-8pm Mon-Sat) Convenient to Seaside Farm.

**Sportsman's Supply & Rental** (1114 Freight Dock Rd; ☺ 6am-midnight) Offers showers (\$7) and laundry right on the Spit.

**Washboard Laundromat** (\$6) The showers come with towels and last as long as you want.

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Homer Medical Clinic** (☎ 907-235-8586; 4136 Bartlett St) Next door to South Peninsula Hospital; for walk-in service.

**South Peninsula Hospital** (☎ 866-235-0369; Bartlett St) North of the Pratt Museum.

### MONEY

**Wells Fargo** (88 Sterling Hwy) ATM.

### POST

**Post Office** (Map p246; 3658 Heath St)

### TOURIST INFORMATION

**Halibut Derby Office** (Map p250; ☎ 907-235-7740; www.homerhalibutderby.com; Homer Spit Rd; ☺ 5:30am-8am & 3-7pm) Has a few pamphlets and is the official weigh-in station for the Homer Halibut Derby.

**Homer Visitor Center & Chamber of Commerce** (Map p246; ☎ 907-235-7740; www.homer.alaska.org; 201 Sterling Hwy; ☺ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun) Has countless brochures and a funky mosaic on the floor. It's operated by the chamber of commerce, however, and only provides info on members.

## Getting There & Around

### AIR

Ravn Alaska (p219) provides daily flights between Homer and Anchorage from Homer's airport, 1.7 miles east of town on Kachemak Dr. The advance-purchase fare runs at about \$140 one-way, or \$250 for the round-trip. **Smokey Bay Air** (☎ 907-235-1511; www.smokeybayair.