

VOL. I - ISSUE V | JANUARY 2022

CITY OF HOMER

Monthly Newsletter from the office of the City Manager



WHAT'S NEW?

- Library News
- Community Corner
- Public Works
- Public Safety Notes
- Parks & Community Recreation
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Port & Harbor
- Meet the Staff
- City of Homer Roster
- Stay Connected with City Council
- Municipal Art Collection

We hope you'll discover something new today as we share information and ways you can tap into what's going on at City Hall and in the Homer community.

Check us out on Facebook



City Hall - @cityofhomerak
Parks & Recreation - @homerparksandrec
Homer Public Library - @homerpubliclibrary
Homer Police - @homerpolice
Fire Department - @HomerVolFireDept.

Share this link with your friends, so they can get the newsletter too - <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter>

Greetings from City Hall

Happy New Year!

Out with the old and in with the new! Hundreds gathered to watch 2021 go out with a bang and welcome 2022 with a terrific display of fireworks put on by Aaron Weisser and his crew at Mariner Park. People from all over the Central and Southern Kenai Peninsula attended the crowd-funded show to celebrate the new year. HPD did a great job to wrangle the crowds and keep traffic flowing for the fantastical display!

Thank you to the Weissers, all the private donors, and the many volunteers who collaborated to welcome 2022 with a spectacular light show to remember.

Reminder: ATVs Prohibited on City Roads

As of January 1st, the State of Alaska will allow all-terrain vehicles to be driven on some public roads with speed limits of 45 mph or less. However, ATV use on all roads inside Homer city limits is prohibited per Ordinance 21-33 and Homer City Code 07.20.030. A violation of this section comes with a \$320 fine and two points on your license if convicted.

City limits begin just East of Bluff Road on Sterling Highway and extends to the top of West Hill Road, to more rural areas along Skyline Drive and out East End Road to McLay. [Click here for a detailed map.](#) See where you can ride your ATV in Homer - [Click here for a map.](#)

Please be stay safe and know the State laws about driving an ATV on Kenai Peninsula Borough roads outside Homer City limits. [Click here for more information.](#)

"where the land ends and the sea begins"

LIBRARY NEWS



Annual Lit Lineup Launches this Month

We've created a community-wide initiative to read 15 books throughout the year. Anyone can participate,

although books were chosen with adults or mature teens in mind. Prizes are given out each month and there is a grand prize at the end of the year. To read more about it and to get a copy of the Lit Lineup Book List go to cityofhomer-ak.gov/library or pick up a brochure at the library.

Radio Storytime

Tune into KBBI 890 AM the third Thursday of the month at 10am beginning January 20th for Radio Storytime.



Join us for Lunch with Council Member Caroline Venuti



Monday, January 10 at 12:00 p.m.

Zoom in over lunch with Council Member Caroline Venuti. Bring your questions and ideas to have an informal conversation. Info on how to connect is on the library's website, below.

Homer Public Library

500 Hazel Street
907-235-3180

circ@ci.homer.ak.us

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library

Community Corner

What's happening around the City of Homer

Let's Create a Vision for a New Multi-Purpose Community Center

TAKE THE SURVEY

January 10th Deadline

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z8BM2BC>

HERC - Homer Education & Recreation Complex

What's Happening?

The City of Homer is considering options for redevelopment of the old school property (HERC) at the corner of Pioneer Avenue and the Sterling Highway. Your input is requested to help in this phase in bringing the community together and letting voices be heard.

Share Your Opinion!

What programs do you currently participate in? What kinds of activities - indoors and outdoors - do you like to do? What types of facilities do you use? What would like to see here in the future?

Opportunity!

We hope you will take this opportunity to share your vision for the future. Do you have a business that could co-locate here? A business idea you'd like to launch, but need a place to base it? We look forward to hearing from you!



City of Homer Survey QR Code
cityofhomer-ak.gov



Join us In-Person to talk about the new redevelopment project!

Tuesday, January 4 ~ 10 am - Noon
HERC Gymnasium

Saturday, January 8 ~ Noon - 2pm
Homer Library Fireplace Lounge

Paper Surveys Available at City Hall, HERC Gym, Homer Library and the SPARC

Masks required in City facilities. Thank you.

Public Works

Big Shout Out to the Public Works Roads Crews on Snow Removal!

This hard-working team has been spending many hours of overtime plowing City roads since the heavy snowfalls of Thanksgiving hit. In times like these, the 12-16 hour work day starts at 4am with all hands on deck.

Heavy snowfalls keep everyone in the department busy. From mechanics, water/sewer operators, and anyone else who knows how to run a backhoe or sanding truck - they're all in! With everyone involved, the heavy equipment operators can devote their time to operating graders and loaders. As snow falls have since gotten lighter, things have become a little less hectic, but there is still plenty of snow to clear on the roads.

The highest priority is to clear the streets and sidewalks in the City center and keep emergency routes and access to public safety buildings open. Heath Street, Pioneer Avenue and Bartlett Street are the first three streets to be cleared every morning, in that order. After clearing the City center, the equipment operators divide into east and west routes.

The east route begins on Ben Walters Lane and heads out East End Road clearing many side streets along the way and ending up near Little Fireweed Lane. They then head up East Hill Road across Skyline Drive to meet up with the west route. The west route begins on Bunnell Avenue to lower Soundview Avenue and through the Bay Crest subdivision. Once done there, they head up West Hill Road to Skyline, clearing side streets along the way to meet up with the east route operation. It takes at least 12 hours to complete these two routes, often longer if snow is heavier.



Joe Inglis drives a snow caked grader into the shop. The plow on the front is only used for extremely heavy snow. Equipment operators say it's been 10 years since they've had to use it.



Water Main Break on Lake Street

Quick response by the Public Works roads crew fixed the 10 inch water main that broke near Beluga Slough on Lake Street Monday, December 20th. Once the line was exposed, a crack all the way around the pipe was discovered. The fix was relatively easy with a new 10-inch clamp. Fortunately, only one customer was without water for the day. This line is part of a system that connects the loop that serves Ocean Drive, Kachemak Drive and the Spit.

During the work to uncover the break, an unmarked gas line was accidentally hit by a city excavator, which resulted in a leak that had to be shut off by Enstar. The gas line repair was completed the next morning without closing the road.

Public Works Director *Jan Keiser* said it was difficult to say what caused the water main break, though the warm snap and rain may have contributed to heavy water movement in the gravel under the road.

Since the work was in the state right-of-way, the city used a local traffic-control company to provide flaggers and submitted a plan to the state.



What is this slime on my faucet?

Bridge Creek Reservoir, City of Homer's water source, contains both iron (Fe) and manganese (Mn). The Ultrafiltration system at the Water Treatment plant easily removes the iron. Manganese on the other hand is more challenging. EPA has set a secondary MCL (maximum contaminant level) 0.05mg/l for manganese. Secondary MCLs refers to cosmetic or aesthetic effects. Homer's drinking water can contain a manganese dose of 0.05mg/l to non-detect, depending on water quality in the reservoir.

Manganese (Mn) may exist in 2 different forms, solution and precipitated (solid). Manganese entering the treatment plant is usually in solution. This is why most of the Mn passes through the Ultra-Filtration system. Mn has a high valence attraction to the water molecule making it difficult to remove. Changing the state of the Mn requires treating the water with an oxidizer or high dissolved oxygen, just to name a couple of techniques.

Homer operators add Orthophosphate as a corrosion inhibitor to the water. As a side benefit Orthophosphate helps to keep Mn in solution. Operators perform a system wide flush annually to improve water quality for our customers. This flushing helps to reduce the precipitated Mn in the system. Most of our customers don't even realize that there is Mn in the drinking water. We do receive calls on occasion about "black slime" or black/brown particles in sinks and toilets. The good news is that Manganese, at the level present in Homers drinking water, does not pose a health threat. For customers that have "black slime," changing cleaning product from chlorine base to ammonia may help, but never clean up with mixed chlorine and ammonia products. For customers with precipitated Mn, flushing the household water lines may help reduce sediments in fixtures. If customers are flushing their electric hot water heaters regularly to prevent scale build up on the elements, this will also help reduce the amount of precipitant in the heater.

What is Manganese and what's it do? Glad you asked.

Manganese is an important trace mineral needed for some vital bodily function like bone development and nutrient absorption. It is also needed to produce digestive enzymes and immune system defenses. Mn can be found in foods like grains and beans and.... Homer's drinking water! Although drinking water with Mn is not an adequate source of Mn by itself, studies have shown that it does contribute to your overall daily intake of Manganese. Just another good reason to drink more of Homers award winning water.



There is so much good info on the net about Manganese. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Manganese-HealthProfessional/> I've include one website to get you heading in the right direction, but as always when doing research on the web, check and compare many sites, this should help weed out opinions from facts.

Happy New Year!

-Todd Cook

Water Sewer Superintendent

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Winter Carnival Celebration

**FEBRUARY 11-13, 2022
PARADE- NOON,
FEBRUARY 12**

The 51st Winter Carnival is hosted by the Homer Chamber of Commerce for a weekend of family-friendly fun!

homer.alaska.org



PUBLIC SAFETY NOTES

Children who get COVID-19 can get very sick, require hospitalization, and even die. School-aged children can also spread the infection at home and in school. Vaccination helps prevent infection and serious illness among children and slows the spread of COVID-19. More: <https://bit.ly/3GLtqKX>.

GREAT NEWS FOR HOMER!
Help keep case rates low,
Get Vaccinated! Get your Booster!

Kids 5 & older
Eligible for COVID-19 Vaccines
Teens & Adults 16 & older
Eligible for Boosters
(If it's been at least 6 months since your second Pfizer or Moderna
or 2 months since your last J&J vaccine).

Call your healthcare provider or register at the
COVID Clinic - 4201 Bartlett Street - Homer
Call 907-235-8586 or Online at www.sphosp.org

**FREE COVID Test Kits also
available at the Homer Library**

**Why do children ages 5 years
and older need to be
vaccinated against COVID-19?**



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Stay safe this winter, STAY FIRE SMART!

This helpful chart can help prevent home fires.
For more information, visit
www.usfa.fema.gov

Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Fires

Did you know? **As you stay cozy and warm this winter, stay fire smart!**

DEC JAN FEB
Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.

Plug only **1 heat-producing appliance** (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.

Keep anything that can burn **at least 3 feet** from any heat source.



U.S. Fire Administration | Alaska Department of Public Safety | NFPA



The State of Alaska AMBER Alert System

There is a live test of the Alaska AMBER Alert System on January 5, 2022 at 10:20am, which will be sent statewide and over social media. On the day of the test, there will be a survey available to provide test results.

Did you know you can sign up to receive AMBER Alert emails? The AMBER Alert System is a cooperative public service to help safely recover abducted children. The Silver Alert system alerts the public when adults are missing or in serious danger.

Cooperative partnership between law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, media and the public provides urgent bulletins for child-abduction and missing adult cases. The State's transportation 511 system is used to distribute information about the person in danger and their abductor. Go to amberalert.alaska.gov to join the email list.

AMBER Alert Hotline: 866-AKAMBER - (866-252-6237)
Silver Alert Hotline: 855SILVR99 - (855-745-8799)

PARKS & COMMUNITY RECREATION

Sports Gear Lending Program

A collaborative effort between Community Recreation and the Homer Library makes the Sports Gear Library available to the public. If you have a library card, you can use it to check out sports gear too! Quantities are limited, but encouragement to get outside and play and recreate is endless. And it's free!

- Sleds
- Ultimate Frisbees
- Balls

This is a free program and we gladly accept any donated item that is clean, safe and in working condition that could be utilized by community members. Please contact **Mike Illg** at millg@ci.homer.ak.us or call 907-399-6090.



WINTER ACTIVITIES



We hope you're getting out and enjoying the snow! Locals know, the Homer area is loaded with outdoor recreation options. Here are a few activities to remind you to get out and have fun!

Cross Country Skiing

From well-maintained and groomed trails to instruction for youth and adults alike, the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club is the driving force for providing incredible cross-country skiing opportunities.

kachemaknordicskiclub.org

Down Hill Skiing & Snowboarding

For over 70 years, the Kachemak Ski Club has helped children and adults discover down hill skiing and snowboarding through instructional programs based at Homer Rope Tow, located off Mile 2.5 Ohlson Mountain Road. Open Sundays 11am-4pm. Call 907-235-SNOW for updates from the hilltop.

homerropetow.org

Snow Machining

Alaska has ample opportunities for snow machining when there is snow! Consider connecting with the SNOWMADS for information and resources at

homersnowmads.org

Ice Skating, Curling & Broomball

In addition to outdoor options for outdoor ice skating at Beluga Lake, the Kevin Bell Arena is home to the Homer Hockey Association that offers several indoor ice activities like Youth and Adult Hockey, Figure Skating, Broomball and Curling. They have skates to rent to get you started as well as beginner lessons. kevinbellarena.org





Celebrating 20th year of Mountainfilm in Homer!

Mountainfilm of Telluride combines adventure, mountaineering, unique personalities, and important environmental and social messages. The films tell us something about the world we live in and one we'd like to live in. Mountainfilm is about ideas. It is about cultures and the landscapes they occupy. It is about environmental integrity and about a rich spirit of celebration. At a minimum, the films and ideas featured help audiences gain new insights and can help in their changes in values and social policy.

There will be only ONE SHOW on Saturday, February 5 at 7pm. Tickets will be sold at the door. [Click here for the film playlist.](#)

WHEN: Saturday, February 5th - 7p.m. starting time

WHERE: Mariner Theatre

FEE: \$10 per person

Sunday Afternoon Volleyball Starts January 9th

For all levels of volleyball players Learn elements of the game such as positions on the court and basic skills including set, bump, and spike. For participants 7th grade and up. Masks are required at all time. Good sportsmanship expected.

WHEN: Sundays, 4-6pm - Starting Sunday, January 9th

WHERE: Homer High School Gym

FEE: \$3/visit for adults; Free for 7th-12th grade students



Hospice Lights up WKFL Memorial Park

Beautiful luminaria surrounded the Eric Ringer Memorial Gazebo at WKFL (Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith & Love) Park December 16th. People came out to remember loved ones during the luminaria celebration of light. This memorial event is an annual fundraiser for Hospice of Homer. They also offer year-round memorial options at the memorial wall at the top of the park and are making plans with the City to expand.

You can purchase a plaque or other dedications to remember loved ones through Hospice of Homer. Thanks to the City Parks crews for keeping the park looking good by removing snow and adding lights to help make events like this possible this time of year.

Visit [Hospice of Homer](#) for more information.

Fire Department

December Fun at HVFD

It's been a great month for training. On December 2nd, a multidepartment Advanced Life Saving training night was held to practice moulage. Moulage, from an EMS point of view, is one of the coolest parts of EMT training. Using waxes, makeup, and special effects two-part latex, we created realistic and gory wounds for a whole evening. The best part is that the simulated wounds stay "fresh" and usable even after bandaging, allowing for EMTs to practice their treatment techniques without losing the realism of the scenario.

We put our creations to work the following Tuesday at an Environmental Emergencies training night attended by 14 providers. Mother Nature has been very cooperative in this area and we had a rapt audience for the hypothermic training. After reviewing our proper treatment and protocols, we went outside to have some real fun. Jacklyn Arndt obligingly huddled in the snow clutching a simulated badly burned arm and trying not to get genuine hypothermia while people figured out the best way to move her safely. Lots of lessons were learned and we were all glad to get back into a warm room afterwards.

Despite the subzero temperatures, firefighting must go on! The Firefighter 1 class is at the spray water stage. It took some work to get a place to do it without creating a new ice rink, but everyone finally got some hands on with the hose. It's a good thing for everyone to get time working the hoses, especially with the recent fires. We are all looking forward to the new firefighters completing the training and getting out on the rigs.



Samantha Cunningham, Chelsea Marsh, Jaclyn Arndt, Emily Larson



Chelsea Marsh and Colby Smith working on a Mutual Aid fire.

Police Department

Shop with a Cop

Sgt. Sean Perry and Officer Morgan Tracy participated in the Shop with a Cop program at the Kenai Walmart December 6th along with other Kenai Peninsula law enforcement agencies.

The goal of the program is to create positive relationships and service to the community. Officers, volunteers, donors and Walmart collaborated to make this a successful event and a fun experience for everyone.

As you can see, it's hard to tell who was more excited - HPD or the kids!



Sgt. Sean Perry shopping with two fun kids.



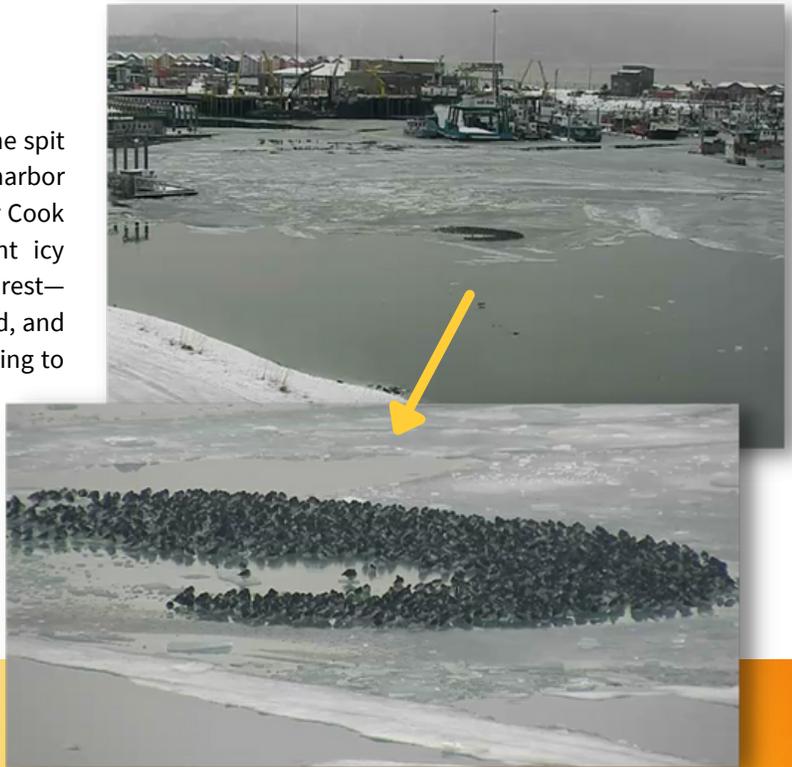
Officer Morgan Tracy helping this young man with his shopping list.

Port & Harbor

Rock Sandpipers Winter in Homer

Homerites willing to brave wintry weather for a walk on the spit may have noticed the flocks of birds that gather on the harbor banks in the winter. They are Rock Sandpipers, and Lower Cook Inlet is their preferred spot to overwinter. With recent icy conditions, these shorebirds have found another spot to rest—the harbor ice! The flock appeared undisturbed by the cold, and remained in this formation for several hours before returning to the rocky banks.

For more on Rock Sandpipers, see this 2019 Point of View piece by local birder George Matz in the Homer News: <https://www.homernews.com/opinion/point-of-view-rock-sandpipers-the-contrarian-shorebird/>



pacific marine expo

Homer Makes a Splash at Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle

Harbormaster **Bryan Hawkins**, along with the Homer Marine Trades Association, represented the Port of Homer at the Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle the first week of December. The expo was a three-day tradeshow featuring all sectors of the commercial fishing industry. It is the largest and longest running commercial fishing and commercial marine tradeshow on the West Coast, held annually in Seattle, WA, serving all aspects of the Pacific market. The event hosts hundreds of exhibitors and welcomes thousands of visitors from Alaska to California who are selling and looking for everything they need, from bow to stern. Harbormaster Hawkins promoted Homer as a strategic and beneficial location to conduct maritime-related businesses along with the Large Vessel Port Expansion project.

Homer makes Top 10 Trails in Alaska List

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy posted their picks for the Top 10 Trails in Alaska and the Homer Spit Trail landed in the number two spot. The Spit Trail provides breathtaking views on both sides of the trail with the sea, sky and mountains surrounding the paved pathway. Birding opportunities are incredible as well.

Rails-to-Trails is a great resource for adventure seekers both in-state and out-of-state travelers. railstotrails.org



Alaska's Homer Spit Trail | Photo by Mel Mashman

Hickerson Memorial Cemetery



The end of the year often brings us to reflection. It's a great time to review estate planning and often future funeral needs. The Hickerson Memorial Cemetery is owned by the City of Homer and located on Diamond Ridge Road. This beautiful place is carefully maintained by the Parks division and administered by the City Clerk's office.

Did you know cemeteries and parks have a long history together? In the early 1800's many intercity cemeteries were designed with a park-lawn atmosphere, often maintained by horticultural societies. HMC follows this tradition so folks can use this space for walking in quiet contemplation while enjoying the views.

If you're considering Homer as your final resting place, you can visit the website and explore the interactive and searchable web map of the Hickerson Memorial Cemetery. cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/hickerson-memorial-cemetery.

[Interactive Map](#) pictured below.



Meet the Staff

This section is to highlight staff achievements, promotions, retirements, departures and new hires to the City's workforce.

Renee Krause, MMC, Deputy City Clerk was elected to serve a two year term as Treasurer for the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks (AAMC) at their November Annual Meeting. Renee has served on the AAMC Finance Committee for 6 years and will now take it to the next level with this important seat on the Executive Board. Congratulations Renee!



Jed Gautier moved to Homer in 2010 from Los Alamos, NM sensing opportunity in the maritime industry and went to work right away. Jed joined the Port and Harbor crew in 2018 as a summertime temporary staff member. As of October 1st of this year, he became an Ice Plant Operator.

Jed enjoys gardening vegetables and has poultry. Working at the Port and Harbor,

Jed enjoys working with the community at the fish dock and watching people grow, learn and work together.



Tamara Fletcher has transferred to the Finance team. She previously worked for the Port and Harbor and brings with her several years of accounts payable experience. Tamara brings her expertise in finance procedures to assist the City's finance department operations.

December Anniversaries

Thank you for your dedication, commitment and service you have provided the City and the taxpayers of Homer over the years.

Mark Robl, Chief of Police - 37 years

Bryan Hawkins, Port Director/Harbormaster - 22 years

Todd Cook, Public Works - 12 years

Sean Perry, HPD - 7 years

Mike Zelinski, Public Works - 7 years

Josh Mershon, Port & Harbor - 2 years

Luis Yoder, HVFD - 2 years

Regina Johanos, Library - 1 year

City of Homer Roster

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk
Andrea Browning, Personnel Director
Rick Abboud, City Planner
Mark Robl, Chief of Police
Mark Kirko, Fire Chief

Bryan Hawkins, Port Director/Harbormaster
Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director
Jan Keiser, Public Works Director
Dave Berry, Library Director
Nick Poolos, Info. Technology Manager
Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager

Mayor - Ken Castner (2022)

City Council

Donna Aderhold (2024)
Jason Davis (2022)
Shelley Erickson (2024)
Storm P. Hansen-Cavasos (2022)
Rachel Lord (2023)
Caroline Venuti (2023)

Commissions & Boards

Planning Commission
Economic Development Advisory Commission
Library Advisory Board
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

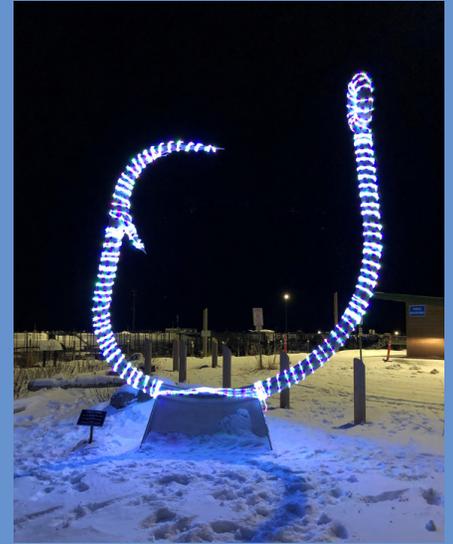
Standing Committees

ADA Compliance Committee



December Morning on the Homer Spit | Photo by Christine Drais

HOMER MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION



Lighting of the Hook

Harbor officers took some time this last month to light up the iconic halibut hook that graces the entrance to Freight Dock Road, just in time to Bring Back the Light on December 19th.

The hook is a welcome beacon to all who drive out the spit through our long winter nights. Thanks for brightening our lives!

Discover more Municipal Art at:

<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection>

STAY CONNECTED WITH CITY COUNCIL

Go to: [cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council](https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council)

Here you will find instructions on how to listen, provide testimony and participate in the meetings via Zoom.

Upcoming Meetings

January

3rd - 5:30 pm	City Council Worksession
5th - 5:30 pm	Planning Commission Worksession
6:30 pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
10th - 5:30 pm	City Council Meeting of the Whole
6:30 pm	City Council Regular Meeting
11th - 6:00 pm	Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
18th - 5:30 pm	Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting
19th - 5:30 pm	Planning Commission Worksession
6:30 pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
24th - 5:00 pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
6:00 pm	City Council Regular Meeting
26th - 5:00 pm	Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Regular Meeting



JOIN OUR TEAM

The City of Homer has current Job Openings.

Sign up for Job Alerts or Apply Online at

[cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs](https://www.cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs)

CURRENT JOB LISTINGS

- Water & Wastewater Utilities Tech I, II or III
- Community Jail Officer, Part-time

City of Homer

491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska 99603
907-235-8121

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov