VOL. I - ISSUE X | JUNE 2022 CITY OF HOMER



Monthly Newsletter from the office of the City Manager

GREETINGS FROM CITY HALL



New Fire Truck Coming in 2024

Ordinance 22-22 authorized the purchase of the City's first new fire truck in many years: a new pumper tanker truck. Fire Chief *Mark Kirko* and Deputy Fire Chief *Joe Kahles* (right) looked on as City Manager *Rob Dumouchel* and Mayor *Ken Castner* (left) signed purchase documents on the front bumper of the truck that will be replaced. Although it will be about 18 months before the truck arrives, the excitement in the air was palpable.

Next September (2023), Chief Kirko, Deputy Chief Kahles and Lead Mechanic *Mike Parish* will fly to Appleton, Wisconsin to meet with engineers and sales personnel of Pierce Manufacturing to finalize and the design of the new pumper tanker. The trip allows the opportunity to examine blue prints and make suggestions to engineers on the truck layout to customize spaces utilized by firefighters during operations and review the latest industry innovations. The new truck will provide the ability for faster and safer deployment of hoses and equipment to be more effective upon arrival at a fire.

The truck build is expected to be complete in March of 2024 when the same team will fly back to Appleton to complete a final inspection and acceptance test before the truck is shipped to Alaska. Once the tanker arrives in Alaska, there will be a training period followed by a new inservice ceremony to welcome the truck into the HVFD fleet.

WHAT'S NEW?

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

We hope you'll discover something new today as we share the latest 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 - <u>https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter</u>

"where the land ends and the sea begins"

LIBRARY NEWS & EVENTS

The Summer Reading Program

June 4-July 30



Everyone loves the summer reading challenge, wildlife bingo, and the Homer scavenger hunt, among many other programs.

Kick off Event: Family "Camp-In"

June 4, 3:00-5:00pm Join the fun with a two-hour series of crafts, games and all-ages storytime.

Outdoor Adventures with Coastal Studies

Tuesdays, June 7-August 2, 1:00-2:30pm Everyone loves the summer reading challenge, wildlife bingo, and the Homer scavenger hunt, among many other programs.

Read Together Book Club

Thursdays, June 9-July 7, 3:30-4:30pm Kids ages 7-12 read *The Very Very Far North* by Dan Bar-el.

Storywalk[®]Books of the Month June 15 - July 15

Chirri and Chirra and *Chirri and Chirra Under the Sea*, by Kaya Doi are the books of the month for June-July. You won't want to miss them.

Wilderness Survival with Coastal Studies

Tuesday, June 21, 4:30-6:00pm Learn wilderness survival skills with CACS! Ages 12-18.

Gullah & Geechee Culture Workshop June 20, 3:30-4:30pm

Educator Ted Carter leads an interesting workshop on Gullah and Geechee culture with students in grades K-6.



For more programs & events visit:

Homer Public Library 500 Hazel Street - (907) 235-3180 <u>circ@ci.homer.ak.us</u> www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library

Community Corner

What's happening around the City of Homer

Annual Spit Clean-Up is a Wrap

Thank you to the City of Homer staff and families who showed up on Saturday, May 7th, the most gorgeous day of the year yet to do some clean up around the Spit. The 35 participants enjoyed coffee and donuts, *Matt Clarke* provided maps with a diagram of the area to be cleaned up. Safety vests, gloves, trash bags and pickers were provided. *Christine Drais* helped get everyone registered and on their way and welcomed them afterward with a pizza lunch. It was great to see everyone out with their families (furry friends too) and have a chance to visit while taking care of the environment. Participants earned extra points on the COH Virgin Pulse wellness program and earned steps on the Homer Steps Up Challenge too. A win-win for everyone!



From left to right - Laurel Johnson, Mariah Hendrickson, Pepper (below), Samantha Jacobsen, Melissa Jacobsen, Jordan Raymond and Sean Love.



June 11: Special Primary Election

By now you've received a ballot by mail for the special primary election. You must return your ballot by June 11. Early and absentee in-person voting began May 27 at Homer City Hall.

To find out more about this year's ranked choice election primary, you can call the Clerks office at 907-235-3130 for more information or go to the Alaska Division of Elections <u>elections.alaska.gov</u>. The top four candidates from this Special Primary Election will be on the Primary General Election on August 16.

The City of Homer is committed to educating the public and bringing awareness to residents to increase voter turn out. (Resolution 22-040). Did you know that turn out for state and municipal elections in Homer regularly is less than 30%? Look for banners around town to help in this effort. See you at the polls.



HPL Bookmobile welcomed over 150 people!



HVFD staff fit kids for bike helmets to go through the obstacle course.



Kevin Co demos the vinyl records for the crowd.



Kids had fun being creative at the activity table.

YOUR NATURAL GAS ASSESSMENT WILL BE DUE

Safe & Healthy Kids Fair - Huge Success!

The weather couldn't have been better or the crowd happier for the 29th Safe and Healthy Kids Fair last month for over 300 kids. Everyone enjoyed the sun, played and learned at the 25 local agencies' booths with fun activities and grabbed some great giveaways. It was a great way to learn, play and get connected with friends.

Each year is a reminder of how much people in the Homer community want to make sure it is a safe place to raise a family. The kids fair is a great way to get reacquainted with the organizations and individuals that work to assure Homer's families have the support they need if faced with tough times and to help celebrate joyous times too. Saturday was definitely a time for joy.

The City of Homer and the Safe and Healthy Kids Fair Committee thanks everyone who showed up with their pig lungs, car seats, teddy bears, vegetables, books, bikes, bubbles, play dough, ATV and firetruck to engage, educate and entertain the masses. You all made this event a success!

Mark your calendar for the 30th anniversary of the Safe and Healthy Kids Fair on May 6th, 2023 for the best fair ever! Contact <u>safeandhealthykidsfair@gmail.com</u> for more information and to volunteer.



FRIENDLY MID-YEAR REMINDER

JULY 1



Visit from Senator Sullivan

On Saturday, May 14th, Senator *Dan Sullivan* made a stop at the Harbormaster's office to talk about the future of Homer's Port and Harbor. Mayor *Ken Castner*, Harbormaster *Bryan Hawkins*, City Manager *Rob Dumouchel* and Special Projects Coordinator *Jenny Carroll*, along with representatives from the Homer Chamber of Commerce hosted the Senator and his staff for a tour and informative meeting.

USCGC HICKORY Change of Command Ceremony

The crew of the US Coast Guard Cutter HICKORY bid farewell to Commander Jeannette M. Greene and transferred command to Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) *Shea Winterberger* on May 19 at the Pioneer Pier. Rear Admiral Nathan A. Moore (D17) presided over the ceremony where Mayor *Ken Castner*, City Manager *Rob Dumouchel* and Port Director & Harbormaster *Bryan Hawkins* were invited guests for the event.

HICKORY has served Alaska and its mariners since 2003. This summer, HICKORY will make an 8,200 nautical mile transit to Baltimore, Maryland where she will get ready for her next assignment in Guam. The crew will return to Homer and in 2023 they will return to Baltimore to set sail once again to come back to Homer on another 225' Seagoing buoy Tender, USCGC ASPEN, which happens to be a prior assignment of LCDR Winterberger. Welcome to Homer LCDR.



USCG Rear Admiral Nathan Moore with Mayor Ken Castner at the Change of Command ceremony.



Summer is Here Along with More Traffic

In case you haven't noticed, the speed limit on Spit Road has been changed back to 25mph for the summer months. We know those fish are biting, but please plan your travel time accordingly to avoid a costly speeding ticket.

Homer welcomes thousands of visitors during the summer months. More people are out enjoying the great outdoors on foot, bicycles, motorcycles and more in our roadways. So while you're out doing your thing, please remember to slow down, allow extra space, be patient and aware of who is on the road with you. Happy Summer Everyone!

Police Department



HPD's Persistence Pays Off in Missing Person Case

Since the 2019 disappearance of Anesha "Duffy" Murnane, the Homer Police have investigated hundreds of leads and tips, and interviewed dozens of people to find a suspect. Their persistence and that of the community, lead to an arrest in the case. Although a suspect has been apprehended, the investigation is still ongoing. If you have any relevant information to the case, please contact the Homer Police Department at 907-235-3150.

If you are in need of support, the South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services would like to remind the community that their professional counselors are available to listen and support folks to provide help. Please call them at 907-235-7701.

Memorial Bench Dedication - June 12: The Murnane family, along with support of the "Bring Duffy Home" community, will dedicate the Loved & Lost Memorial Bench on June 12 with an event from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Homer Public Library. The bench, designed by artist Brad Hughes, recognizes all the missing and murdered persons across Alaska. Donations can be made online at Go Fund Me.



Artist, Brad Hughes, carves design.

Fire Department



Joint Extrication Training on the Spit

Fire Departments from the Southern Kenai Peninsula gathered on April 27th to hold a joint extrication training on the Homer Spit. Exercises like these strengthen relationships among the departments and help build skills for the crews that could respond to emergency extrication calls like this one day.

Homer Volunteer Fire Department, Western Emergency Services Area, and Kachemak Emergency Services Area all participated in the training. Crews from the three departments worked together seamlessly to practice the art of removing a wrecked vehicle from around a trapped patient and removing the patient from the vehicle afterward.

A special thanks to Jake Richter from HVFD for coordinating this event, and Deputy Chief Joe Kahles from HVFD for the demonstration. If this looks like the kind of thing you want to be part of, we'd love to hear from you.





PUBLIC SAFETY NOTES



Burn Ban in Effect Until Further Notice

It's that time of year for all of us to be extra careful about protecting our community from wildfires. Lack of rain and windy conditions in much of our area makes us highly susceptible to the chances of burns escaping and spreading from their intended area. Warming or cooking fires and barbeque grills are acceptable under three feet in diameter while under supervision

A burn-suspension prohibits all burning requiring a permit, both large and small scale. This includes the use of burn barrels, lawn burning, and burning of brush piles.

If you have questions, please contact the Homer Volunteer Fire Department at 907-235-3155 or call the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Soldotna Forestry office at 907-260-4200.



Stay Strong this Summer!

Stay strong! Second boosters are available for people over age 50 and some immunocompromised individuals may receive a second mRNA booster (Pfizer and Moderna) four months after their first booster dose. Additionally, people who have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine for both their primary and booster dose may receive a second booster dost using the mRNA vaccine. For more vaccine and testing information you can go to: <u>sphosp.org/covid-19-information/</u>

Free Test Kits Available at the Homer Public Library

Invasive Tree Replacement Project

The City will be engaging in a partnership with Homer Soil & Water Conservation District to eradicate invasive European Bird Cherry (Prunus padas), aka Mayday or Choke Cherry, trees around town and replace them with less harmful alternatives. The replacement project is important to our native ecosystem because they take over forests and streamside habitats by forming thickets where native plants grow. They are also toxic to moose and other wildlife that depend on vegetation to survive.

The locations of the invasive trees have been mapped and identified over the last few years. There will be a public notice at each location to explain what the project is about and provide links for the community to learn more information. The schedule for removal is still being set, but we expect Triangle Park to be the first location for removal. Locally sourced Weeping Birch trees being planted as replacements.

For more information on invasive species in Alaska, go to <u>kenaiinvasives.org/</u>or scan the QR code, right, to go to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources page on European bird cherry.







PARKS & COMMUNITY RECREATION



The City of Homer offers terrific indoor programs at the HERC Gym and Activity Room, Homer High School and Homer Middle School. Bookmark <u>https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation/weekly-schedule</u> and make plans to participate in the latest programs such as pick up basketball, pickleball, volley ball, youth yoga and so much more!

Summer Activity Guide

Your summer is about to get busy! Community Recreation presents fun programs for all age groups.

From flag football, to pick up soccer, pickleball to tai chi, dance cardio to the community kids program, there is something for everyone to stay active and have funthis summer.

Scan the QR code to see the Activity Guide or go to <u>cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation</u> to find out more and register for your favorite program.







Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Ben Walters Park

The Rotary Club of Homer-Kachemak Bay has been making great progress on transforming Ben Walters Park to make it more colorful and user-friendly. The "yellow brick road" pavers lead the way to all the fun. Thank you to all the volunteers who shared their time and talents to make this happen. First, new picnic tables, now pavers. What's next? More benches.



Time to get out and enjoy the park with family and friends this summer! Ben Walters Park is located off Ben Walters Lane adjacent to Beluga Lake (next to McDonalds) and has all the conveniences for a great outing. Enjoy wildlife or float plane watching while enjoying a picnic lunch while the kids play are busy on the playground.

Port & Harbor



Fishing Hole Ramp Clean Up

Fishing Hole walkway ramps are now clear and accessible for folks with mobility issues. Thanks to volunteers, *Bob Norberg, Kevin Walker, Bill Hague, Chris Kelley and Dave Brann*, who attacked the project April 10th to clear dirt and gravel from the walkway ramp so folks could walk safely to fish.

The Fishing Hole is one of the most popular destinations for locals and visitors alike to catch King Salmon and other fish to bring home.

Spit Parking this Summer

Don't be a parking ticket statistic! Knowing where to park and if a parking permit is required will save you a lot of money and time. Look out for the new parking areas that were created this year to accommodate visitors.

Seasonal passes are valid from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Weekly, monthly and annual parking passes are also available. Call the Port & Harbor office at 907-235-3160 for more information or visit: <u>cityofhomerak.gov/port/port-homer-parking</u>.



Volunteers clearing gravel to make ADA sidewalk/ramp accessible and safe for everyone.



ADA sidewalk/ramp at the Nick Dudiak Fishing Hole.

Public Works



Training at the Water Treatment Plant

For the first time since the lockdowns Homer Water/Sewer hosted a training class at the Water Treatment Plant. The class was open to operators from all over the state. Besides Homer, attendees came from Soldotna, Palmer and as far away as Talkeetna.

The focus of the 3 day class was Wastewater Microbiology. It was taught by *Toni Glymph*, an expert in the field of micro biology, author and a certified wastewater operator as well. This was definitely one of the best of classes we've ever hosted! The huge success of the class was partially due to the Vicki Lowe, a science teacher at Homer high, loaning the City enough microscope for everyone in the class so we didn't have to share. We would like to thank Mrs. Lowe for her contribution and to *Mike Illg* as well for brokering the deal.

Operators are required by the State of Alaska to receive continuing education in order to maintain their certification. Hosting classes like this one in Homer allows all our operator to get the same training together, maintain their certs and stretches those training \$\$. Mrs. Glymph also teaches an activated sludge class. We are anxiously awaiting her return to Homer for another excellent training session.



Climate Risk Hazard Mapping Assessment

The Woodwell Climate Research Center (WCRC) recently completed a Climate Risk Hazard Mapping Assessment for the City of Homer to examine potential risks involved with climate change. This information is useful in developing the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan, and in considerations for development projects.

WCRC is an affiliate of ICLEI, the City's advisor and consultant for greenhouse gas emission tracking and community outreach. WCRC works closely with ICLEI to provide climate risk research customized to a local scale. This service was offered to Homer free of charge and took a year and a half to complete.

Early consultations between Homer and Seldovia, local stakeholders, and WCRC focused the scope of risks in relation to increases in temperature, precipitation and sea level between years 2021-2050. Baseline data range for these projections was used from years between 1971 – 2000.

Key areas of concerns for Homer are:

- <u>Temperature</u> Breaching of 1.5°C 2°C of warming above current temperature expected to happen between years 2025-2030. An average of 18 days per year between years 2021-2050 expected to exceed maximum temperature between years 1971-2000.
- <u>Drought</u> During projected time frame, Homer will experience extreme drought conditions around 20% of the time
- <u>Wildfire</u> Wildfire danger days expected to increase by at least 5 days with peak of extreme fire weather shifting to August
- <u>Precipitation</u> Inundation from a 1-in-100 year rain event will increase from present day to 2080. Most susceptible area to flooding are the banks of east Beluga Lake.
- <u>Storm Surge</u> Risk of 1-in-100 year storm event limited almost entirely to the Spit. Largest inundation of 2 meters could occur halfway down the Spit. Inundation threat offset by ongoing process of isostatic rebound.









Change in Wildfire Danger Days





The City of Homer gives a warm welcome to our newest staff members:

- Chelli Billings Finance, Utilities
- Tim Roberts Public Works
- Andrew Williamson Public Works
- Devan Wilson Police Department Dispatcher

Visit our Job Listing for open positions with the City of Homer, *cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs*.

May Anniversaries

This month we recognize City staff members with April anniversaries. Thank you for the dedication, commitment and service you've provided the City and taxpayers of Homer over the years. You all are an integral part of what makes the City of Homer a great place to work and the community.

> Mark Whaley - Port - 17 years Pike Ainsworth - Port - 14 years Don Huffnagle - Port - 14 years Mike Gilbert - Public Works - 8 years Jackie McDonough - Library - 8 years Sean McGrorty - Port - 6 years Ryan Johnson - Police - 5 years Ralph Skorski - Public Works - 2 years Christine Drais - Admin - 1 year Taylor Crowder - Police - 1 year Susan Jeffres - Library - 1 year Sean Love - Public Works - 1 year



The 4th of July Parade is one of the largest community events of the year. You can be a part of it too! The deadline to submit an application to be a part of the parade is June 20th. Contact the Homer Chamber of Commerce at 907-235-7740 or go to <u>homeralaska.org</u> for more information and to register online.

Meet the Staff



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

Pike Ainsworth, Port Maintenance Tech II

Meet *Pike Ainsworth* who, like a lot of other people, moved to Alaska after high school to fish with his friends. He followed his dream and worked throughout the state, living in the Aleutian Islands, Hatchers Pass, Seward, and worked as a Cannery Engineer. Pike liked to visit Homer in the off season to take classes and spent his off hours skiing, so he decided to settle here.



In addition to raising Emu and engineering better ways to grow food using science, he is a self-proclaimed avid adventurer of gold, free diver, farmer, and fisherman. The exploration adventure that began when he first moved to Alaska has never really ended. Pike says, "there is literally way too much to learn about or see in Alaska in one lifetime." How true! *Pike Ainsworth* is celebrating 14 years with the City of Homer. Thank you for all you do, Pike. Congratulations!



BBQ pitmaster, *Paul Raymond*, smoked chickens for the crew while Director *Jan Keiser* shows off the cake and crew awaits the dinner bell for the luncheon celebration. National Public Works Week Celebration





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 and IT Director Nick Poolos, Info. Technology Manager Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager Julie Engebretsen, Economic Development 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 , Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

Standing Committees

ADA Compliance Committee

STAY CONNECTED WITH CITY COUNCIL

Go to: <u>cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council</u>. Here you will find instructions on how to listen, provide testimony and participate in the meetings via Zoom.

Upcoming Meetings

	JUNE	UNE	
Upcoming	1	5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
		6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
City	6	4:00pm	City Council Worksession
-	6 9	4:00pm	ADA Compliance Committee
Council	13	5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
•		6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting
&	14	6:00pm	Economic Development Advisory Commission
Commission			Regular Meeting
Commission	15	5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
Montings		6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Meetings	16	5:30pm	Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory
for			Commission Regular Meeting
101	22	6:00pm	Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
June 2022	27	5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
		6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting

MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION

Learn more about the municipal art collection at: <u>https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/</u> <u>prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection</u>



Above the public entrance, the Homer Volunteer Fire Department welcomes visitors with a 75"x26" stained glass window by *Vic Hiles* that was acquired in 1979.

Below is a 8'x4' mural by *Lovie Englishbee*, 1979, of a horsedrawn fire engine that is located in the west side fire truck bay.





JOIN OUR TEAM

The City of Homer has current Job Openings. Sign up for Job Alerts or Apply Online at <u>cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs</u>

CURRENT JOB LISTINGS

- Water & Wastewater Utilities Tech I, II or III
- Temporary/Seasonal:
 - Firefighter/EMT-Basic
 - Parks Technician I
 - Port Maintenance Technician I
 - Recreation Specialist
 - Parking Enforcement Aide

City of Homer

491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska 99603 907-235-8121 <u>www.cityofhomer-ak.gov</u> Page 11

SUMMER



Reading & Learning Program for Kids, Teens & Adults at the Homer Public Library



Summer Recreation

https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation

CITY OF HOMER COMMUNITY RECREATION: PICK UP AT HHS TURF SOCCER SUMMER 2022

Pick Up Soccer at the Homer High artificial turf starting on Sunday May. 1! For youth and adults (6th graders and older). \$3 per visit or \$20 for entire summer.

> <u>Schedule:</u> Syndays, 6:30-8:30pm; Wednesdays & Fridays, 8-10pm (May 1-20) Syndays, 6:30-8:30pm; Wednesdays & Fridays, 7-9pm (May 23- July 17) Sundays, 6:30-8:30pm; Wednesdays & Fridays, 8-10pm (July 20-August 4) Sundays, 6:30-8:30pm; Wednesdays & Fridays, 7-9pm (August 7--September

> No Soccer on Friday 5/6, Friday 5/13 and Wednesday, 5/18 due to HHS activities. For more information: contact Ginny at 1-907-398-4027

