## **GREETINGS FROM CITY HALL**

### City Council is Visioning for the Future



City Manager Rob Dumouchel in breakout session.

The Pratt Museum was the stage for the 2022 Council Visioning Session on March 16 and 17. Susie Amundson of Wise at Work facilitated Homer City Councilmembers and the City of Homer leadership team to create a strategic plan and set goals for a vision of the future of Homer.

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Mayor Ken Castner sharing his visions.

During the two day retreat, the group presented their individual priorities, both City-initiated and Council-initiated, followed by a question and answer period. Afterward, Amundson facilitated an indepth conversation to help the group weave their priorities into a set of common goals by identifying potential patterns and partnerships. Break-out sessions helped the group hone common interests and dive deeper into strategies for 2022 and beyond.

These goals will guide both City Council and City Staff as they plan for the future by tracking and monitoring progress on priorities, and they help steer budgetary goals and funding priorities.

Our special thanks to the Pratt Museum & Park for their first class hospitality and support.

# **WHAT'S NEW?**

- Library News
- Community Corner
- Fire Department
- Parks & Community Recreation
- Public Safety Notes
- Public Works
- Police Department
- Port & Harbor
- 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 - <a href="https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter">https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter</a>

"where the land ends and the sea begins"

# LIBRARY NEWS

#### **Children's Library Gets New Seats**

A comfy sectional sofa for the new reading nook in the children's library is being enjoyed by all. What a great new gathering spot for youngsters to dive into story time or cozy up with a good book!



#### Lunch with Council Member Jason Davis April 11 at 12:00 p.m.



Join us for lunch with City Councilmember Jason Davis. This is a great opportunity to learn more about city council, ask questions and share ideas. Join us in person in the library meeting room or virtually over Zoom. Click **HERE** for Zoom link instructions.

#### Friends Book & Plant Sale April 29 & 30





April 29 at 6:00 p.m.

for Friends of the Homer Public Library

April 30 at 10:00 a.m.

for the General Public

The Friends of the Homer Library always has a huge selection of books and plants to sell. You will want to get there early for the best selection. Proceeds benefit the Homer Library. To join the Friends of the Homer Public Library and get first pick at the sale, visit **friendshomerlibrary.org** 

Don't forget about the Seed Library! It's time to sprout seedlings for summer

#### **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

# Alaska DOT Seeks Input on Use of Federal Infrastructure Funds



Do you have ideas for improvements to State transportation infrastructure in or around Homer? Alaska DOT & PF wants to hear what you have to say!

The State has a short, online questionnaire where you can weigh in to give your priorities for how the State should use Federal Infrastructure funding to build resilient transportation infrastructure in Alaska.

<u>Click here https://arcg.is/1G4WPD1</u> to take the survey or visit <u>https://dot.alaska.gov/infrastructureact/</u> to learn more.

Deadline to complete the survey is April 8th!

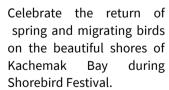
# 28th Annual Winter King Salmon Tournament Saturday, April 9th

The Homer Winter King Salmon Tournament is the premier fishing tournament of Alaska and a Homer tradition. Every Spring, Homer welcomes anglers to take to the waters of Kachemak Bay in search of King Salmon.

The one-day tournament awards tens of thousands of dollars in prize money to the largest Kings caught. Festivities happen at the weigh-in stations near the Homer Port & Harbor's Deep Water Dock, located at 4667 Freight Dock Road, after fishing lines are pulled. Be a part of the fun and see the fish being weighed. There's lots of excitement for everyone!

<u>Click here to register</u>, email <u>wkt@homeralaska.org</u>, or call the Homer Chamber of Commerce at 907-235-7740.

# 30th Annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival May 4-8



Homer is one of the most popular places in Alaska to view the thousands of shorebirds, representing 25 different species that

MAY 4TH - 8TH 2022

SOTH ANNUAL KACHEMAK BAY

SHOREBIRD

FESTIVAL

migrate through the area in early May.

The four-day Festival is a Homer tradition where we welcome the birds back and take the opportunity to learn more through seminars and workshops, children's activities, guided tours and birding opportunities for all ages and skill levels. Whether you're new to birding, or an avid enthusiast, there's something for everyone. Discover more and register for festival events at Kachemakshorebird.org.

# **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 <a href="https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation/weekly-schedule">https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation/weekly-schedule</a> and make plans to participate in the latest programs such as pick up basketball, pickleball, volley ball, youth yoga and so much more!

### Getting Ready for Spring: City Parks, Trails & Campgrounds

This time of year, we all take advantage of nice weather whenever we can. Milder days get people out on trails and in the parks to enjoy the great outdoors. The skatepark has seen a lot of activity too. Both half-pipes now have push brooms and squeegees to keep the ramps clear of dirt of debris for better riding. These tools are a welcome addition for skateboarders using the regular skate park areas too.

**Job Alert:** We are currently recruiting two seasonal parks technicians to help maintain the parks, trails and campgrounds in the busy months ahead. If you'd like to join our crew, check out the jobs listings at <a href="mailto:cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs/">cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs/</a>



Push brooms & squeegees were added to both half-pipes at the skatepark to keep the ramps clear



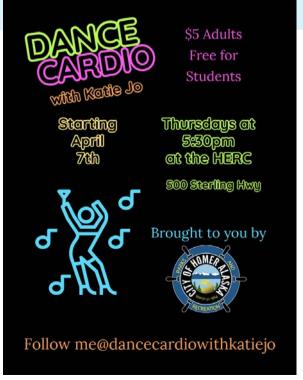
Camping officially opens at Fishing Hole, Mariner Park, and Tent Area II on April 1st. If the weather continues with this nice mild trend, we anticipate a popular early camping season in Homer.

Karen Hornaday Park usually opens mid-May.

To reserve a campsite or to get updates, go to: <a href="mailto:cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation">cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation</a>



**Little Free Libraries** all in a row are ready for installation. The are just awaiting awaiting their posts and brackets. Book donations continue to roll in, including from multiple local authors, and a signed collection from *Tim Easton*.



#### Picnic Tables for Ben Walters Park

Ben Walters Park will have three new picnic tables this spring thanks to a volunteer project by the Homer Rotary Club. Last month, the volunteer crew set up shop at the HERC building in the Parks work space. The picnic tables are kits and the group was enthused to get the project underway despite the snowy weather outside.

First, they cut all of the planks (in an hour and a half). Next, they had a great time painting the planks keeping most of it on the wood (and off themselves). The last photo on the right shows the group assembling one of the tables.

Rotary's goal is to be ready to install the tables by the end of the month so they are available at Ben Walters in time for visitors to enjoying a nice rest or picnic lunch by the lake. Big thanks to Homer Rotary for your









#### National Volunteer Month

**Arn Johnson** is one of the dedicated volunteer EMTs that you may see if you call 911 to request medical help. Arn has provided outstanding medical care service to the Homer community since 2015. As an HVFD volunteer, he has provided basic life support services as an EMT-1, a commitment of over 240 initial training hours followed by an additional 200 hours per year of continuing education to remain certified. In 2018, Arn became an EMT-II, which is an advanced life support technician level.

Notably, Arn responded to over 50 calls in 2021. In addition to his volunteer time in Homer, Arn works on the Slope and is away for nearly 6 months out of the year, so his accomplishments were achieved in about half the time as many others. When he is working on the Slope, he volunteers there as a first responder too.

Not only is Arn a dedicated EMS provider, he is a long standing and respected member of this community, and a dedicated father and husband.

We would like to thank Arn for his selfless dedication and commitment to the community and the time he dedicates to care for others. We also wish recognize and thank his family for the years of personal sacrifice, so Arn can be there when others need him most. Arn truly earns the title of "Dedicated Volunteer Responder."





Arn Johnson, HVFD-EMT-II.

# **PUBLIC SAFETY NOTES**

#### April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

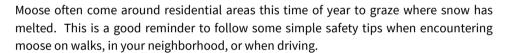
Raising awareness about the dangers of distracted driving is a nationwide effort to eliminate preventable deaths and injuries on our roadways. According to the National Safety Council estimates, our roads are the most dangerous they've ever been because of distracted driving. Any number of things can distract us while driving. Doing things like talking on the phone (even hands-free) or texting puts everyone around you at risk. #JustDrive



We encourage everyone to take the NSC Just Drive Pledge for your own safety and help keep the roads safer for everyone. Click Here to take the Pledge!

#### Safety Tips for Moose Encounters

On Monday February 28th the Alaska Department Fish & Game and Homer Port Maintenance worked together to tranquilize and transport a cow moose off the Spit. She had been hanging out on the spit all winter without incident, but had taken up residence in Coal Point Park at the end of Fish Dock Road, and apparently decided that she owned the place because she become aggressive toward pedestrians and vehicles. We think she will be happy in greener pastures with plenty of browse.





#### **Safety Tips**

The Alaska Highway Safety Office offers the following tips to help avoid a deadly confrontation with moose:

- Never feed a moose
- Give moose at least 50 feet. If it doesn't yield as you approach, give it the trail.
- If a moose lays its ears back or its hackles (the hairs on its hump) rise, it's angry or afraid and may charge.
- Moose kick with their front as well as hind feet so we suggest not confronting them directly.
- Don't corner moose into fences or houses.
- If a moose charges, there are few options available to you but it has been suggested by many others to simply get behind a tree. A theory stands that you can run around the trunk faster than the gangly moose.
- Never get between a cow and her calf.





# **Public Works**

#### Pothole Hazard Awareness

Road hazards, especially potholes, can be dangerous and cause damage to vehicles. East Hill and West Hill roads, maintained by State DOT, are full of obstacles and are no exception. Currently, the State's crew and funding is limited, which makes patching these holes in a timely manner a challenge.

In the meantime, like all Alaska roads in the winter, driving in response to existing road conditions often means slowing



Pothole damage on East Hill Road

down and being extra aware of other cars. East hill and West hill roads are at least 3 years late for resurfacing, hence their conditions. Resurfacing construction is planned start in the near future, which means that all the road asphalt is going to be removed soon. Meanwhile, DOT is focused to only deal with dangerous situations that, even after caution and slowing down, makes the road unpassable in your lane.

Public Works does it's best to fill holes in the community as needed and assist DOT with their constraints, but we do not have the equipment for miles of pothole repair. We ask that you please be aware of these road hazards, slow down and use caution and be aware of other drivers to avoid potholes.

Please call Public Works at 907-235-3170 to report pot holes. Stay safe!

#### Water and Sewer Treatment Plants Visit

Two engineers from HDR, Inc., John Koch and Eric Packer, performed a condition assessment on the City of Homer's water and sewer infrastructure last month. The condition assessment is part of a larger project that culminates with HDR developing a capital planning software program for the Public Works department. The new program will be used to determine the parts of our water and sewer infrastructure most in need of replacement and approximate when it will need to be done.

The HDR team spent time in the water and sewer treatment plants and examined the water distribution and sewer collection infrastructure in the field. 'Water distribution infrastructure' refers to machines that allow water to smoothly flow from the water treatment plant to your house. 'Sewer collection infrastructure' refers to machines that allow sewage to smoothly flow from



John Koch listens to a mixer in the water treatment plant with a stethoscope. This was done for every machine with a motor.

your house to the sewage treatment plant. Along with water and sewer pipe, other water-sewer infrastructure like fire hydrants, lift stations and pressure reducing valves was included in the assessment. 'Lift stations' are used to lift sewage to a higher elevation, which is important because most sewer pipe systems are gravity fed. 'Pressure reducing valves' reduce pressure in water pipes to prevent them from breaking.

Every machine in the treatment plants was carefully inspected to ensure they were operating properly. The site visit also allowed the City's personnel to learn how to better assess the conditions of the equipment on their own. Fortunately, HDR found that the City's water and sewer operators have been doing an excellent job maintaining our water and sewer infrastructure.

In conclusion, the condition assessment was a flying success, which allowed HDR to collect critical information for the software they will build to provide critical information to City staff about pressing issues as they arise.

#### Water Point of Use Devices

A point of use (POU) device treats water at a specific location within a plumbing system instead of treating the whole system. These often are filters that attach to a faucet, a cartridge filter that is hidden under a sink or reverse osmosis (RO) unit, just to name a few.

Why would someone need to filter water that has already been treated to EPA standards for drinking water? The reasons people use POU devices vary. Everyone has different tastes, some people find the taste of treatment chemicals objectionable, chlorine in particular. Someone may have a health reason for not wanting to ingest chlorine. Maybe you need to change the water in your fish bowl and fish don't do well in chlorinated water.

Like any piece of equipment, POU devices need to be maintained regularly. The main thing to keep in mind is to keep the filter clean. Filters should be changed every six months or sooner. The life of the filter depends on how many gallons have passed through it. Always check manufactures recommendations for filter life. An old filter can become partially plugged, causing a pressure drop at the faucet. A filter by nature, collects "stuff" you don't want in you water. If the filter is not changed regularly that "stuff" you don't want becomes concentrated and can push through the filter.



Most filters use carbon to remove "taste and odors." The carbon depletes with use, so if the taste of your water has changed or you can smell the chlorine, most likely the carbon is gone and you need to change your filter.

Not all filters are created equal. Filters are made to remove different things from the water. Make sure the filter you use will remove what you want it to. Be sure to install correctly to prevent any unfiltered water from bypassing the filter.

City of Homer's treatment and distribution operators work very hard to ensure our drinking water not only meets EPA requirements for potable water, but is also pleasing to our customers.



## **Port & Harbor**

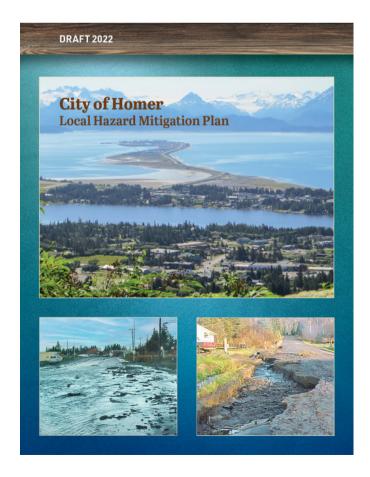
## Harbor's Ice Plant is Open for the Season

The Ice Plant staff have been hustling to get the winter shutdown maintenance list knocked out in time for the March 6th opening of the Black Cod/Halibut commercial fisheries. On February 28th the ice compressors started for the season and fishing boats have "iced up" and headed out for the opening. The Ice Plant will remain open through November, selling ice to fishermen and providing cold storage for bait. There's a lot of speculation about the price of fuel, price of fish and run time, but in the end fishermen fish and the rest will play out as we go. We're happy to have the temperature warm up a bit, which will help keep our fishermen safer out on the ocean.

Maintenance is key to keeping the Ice Plant & Fish Dock Cranes operating around the clock. Crane 4 is back from a total rebuild. The crane was sandblasted, painted inside and out, its AC Motor was cleaned and balanced, and new valving put in place. Stainless steel hardware will prevent any hydraulic fluid leaks to protect the Harbor from contamination. It was installed at the end of March and is part of a continuous maintenance plan to rebuild and maintain the Fish Dock's eight public-use cranes. We also took delivery a new-to-us scissor lift that help harbor maintenance staff access Ice Plant equipment like augers, cranes, and help them maintain security cameras.



Jededia Gautier aboard the Man Lift



#### 2022 City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Our community has completed a public draft of the 2022 City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Over past few months, we have worked with a consultant to assess risks posed by natural disasters and develop strategies to protect life and property in Homer from future hazard events.

Hazards addressed in the plan include climate change, earthquake, erosion, flood, landslide, severe weather, tsunami, volcano, and wildfire.

Once the plan is finalized and approved by FEMA, the community will be eligible to apply for and receive certain types of nonemergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects identified in our plan.

To learn more about hazard mitigation planning, please visit: https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/hazard-mitigation-planning

The 2022 Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is available for review until April 15th. You may view the plan and submit comment at: <a href="https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/2022-city-homer-local-hazard-mitigation-plan">https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/2022-city-homer-local-hazard-mitigation-plan</a>

#### Spring Cleaning in the Clerks Office

The City archives, or keeps records of City business according to the Records Retention Policy. Once the retention period has been met, documents can be destroyed. The City Clerk's office maintains the retention schedule and facilitates the destruction documents from all departments each year in line with this policy. At the beginning of the year, Clerk Renee Krause sends notices to departments for collection of expired records to be submitted according to the records retention schedule. Once approval is received on boxes scheduled for destruction, she creates a list and tags them and makes arrangements for them to be shredded.

On the morning of the scheduled shredding, all three Clerks are needed to stage the boxes in Cowles Chambers for ease of access to the parking lot where the commercial shredding truck parks. Due to the increase of other businesses requiring shred services for their documents, the Clerk's Office had to split the annual documents destruction into two sessions. Pictured below is the Clerk's crew with 65 boxes for phase one. Whew!



Left to right: Deputy Clerk Renee Krause, City Clerk Melissa Jacobsen and Deputy Clerk Rachel Tussey.

boxes by hand truck to be destroyed.



Meet the Staff

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

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#### **March Anniversaries**

This month we recognize City staff members with March 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.

#### <u>MARCH</u>

Matt Clarke - Port - 21 Years
Elton Anderson - Port - 16 Years
Renee Krause - Clerks - 15 Years
Mike Parish - Public Works - 8 Years
Angie Kalugin - Finance - 7 Years
Elizabeth Walton - Finance - 5 Years
Kurt Read - Port - 5 Years
Matt Smith - Library - 4 Years
Matt Steffy - Public Works - 4 Years
Mike Pettit - Public Works - 3 Years
Jan Keiser - Public Works - 2 Years

# Congratulations!

#### JACLYN ARNDT 2022 Women's Iditarod Trail Invitational Ski Champion!



This was Jaclyn's first ITI 350 and she finished in **7** days, 22 hours and 20 minutes! The Iditarod Trail Invitational is the world's longest running winter ultra-marathon. Qualified athletes brave extreme physical, environmental and mental challenges as they travel along the historic Iditarod Trail on bicycle, foot or skis. Jaclyn skied the 350-mile route carrying minimal survival gear, stopping at only six checkpoints with food and minimal sleeping quarters offered prior to reaching the finish line in McGrath, Alaska.

Jaclyn was active in High school and had the goal to do an IRONMAN competition before she was 30. She signed up to do one at 29 and then COVID hit. "I trained consistently for 2 years before I was able to race," Jaclyn explains, "I kept finding these unique races to do and a friend told me about the ITI two years ago." She loves to challenge herself to discover what she is capable of doing. While nothing 'too crazy' is on the horizon as of now, Jaclyn and her sister are planning to do a marathon relay in June.

We are all so proud of your accomplishment, Jaclyn. Way to go!

If you'd like to nominate someone who has done something outstanding or inspiring, please let us know! Email: newsletter@ci.homer.ak.us



#### **Tim Yarbrough Retirement**

Tim Yarbrough began his service to the Homer community in 1997 on the volunteer ranks of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department as an EMT-1. In response to the need for more firefighters in the community, he enrolled in Firefighter-1 Academy to complete both the EMT-1 and Firefighter-1 classes. During this time, Tim volunteered more than 400 hours to become certified by the State of Alaska to protect and serve the residents and property of the Homer area.

Tim's commitment was quickly noticed by his Company Officers and Chief, which earned him a Senior Firefighter rank in July of 2000. With this new position, Tim accepted more responsibility in the department including teaching and leadership roles earning the respect of his peers. He remained an active volunteer until 2002 when he was hired as a full time employee by the City.

Tim took a leave of absence for a short time to serve his country as a National Guardsman during the Gulf war. Upon returning Tim picked right back up as an active employee and member of the department. He continued to learn all aspects of providing fire and EMS services and became an integral part of shaping the future of the department by mentoring and leading newer members.

In 2005, Tim was appointed by the Director of the Alaska State Troopers to the Southern AST SERT Team as a medic and traveled with the team as needed. He soon became a Company Officer at a Captains rank, which meant fulfilling the responsibility of an incident commander in the Chief's absence.

For years, Tim has been instrumental in teaching firefighting and EMT classes to hundreds of department and community members. Even though Tim has retired from his City employment status, he will remain an active volunteer with the department. Tim, Thank you for your exemplary service to the City of Homer and the State of Alaska.

# **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

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** 

# **MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION**

Learn more about the municipal art collection at:

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



Next time you're strolling down Pioneer Avenue, be sure to stop and take a look at the artwork on the public restroom near the corner of Pioneer and Bartlett Street. Melissa Reichman's art adorns the exterior of the building with two pieces, "Roaming the Land," above and "Beings of the Bay," below, which depict mammals and sea creatures found in our area. Both pieces are constructed of fortified cement over carved foam and are approximately 48 x 26 inches in size. They were purchased by the City in 2014 as part of the 1% for the Arts program.



#### 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**

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APRIL	
6th 5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
11th 5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting
12th 5:00pm	Economic Development Advisory Commission Worksession
6:00pm	Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
14th 4:00pm	ADA Compliance Committee
19th 4:30pm	Library Advisory Board Worksession
5:30pm	Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting
20th 5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
21st 4:30pm	Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Worksession
5:30pm	Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
25th 5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting
27th 5:00pm	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
<a href="mailto:cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs">cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs</a>

#### **CURRENT JOB LISTINGS**

- Heavy Equipment Operator I or II
- Police Officer
- Temporary/Seasonal Parks Technician
- Temporary/Seasonal Library Aide
- Temporary/Seasonal Harbor Assistant I
- Temporary/Seasonal Parking Enforcement Aide

#### **City of Homer**

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