

# VOL. II - ISSUE II | OCTOBER 2022

# CITY OF HOMER

Monthly Newsletter from the office of the City Manager



## Governor Dunleavy Visits Port & Harbor

On September 7th, Governor Mike Dunleavy paid a visit to the Homer Port and Harbor to meet with Mayor *Ken Castner*, Port Director & Harbormaster *Bryan Hawkins*, City Clerk *Melissa Jacobsen*, Port & Harbor Commissioner *Crisi Matthews*, and Assistant to the City Manager *Christine Drais*. The group sat down with the Governor to talk about Homer and the Port and Harbor Expansion project, followed by a tour. The Governor shared his thoughts on the expansion as well as ideas to consider for future alternative energy sources to protect the environment like electric and hydrogen power.



L-R: Christine Drais, Crisi Matthews, Melissa Jacobsen, Mayor Ken Castner, Bryan Hawkins, Governor Mike Dunleavy

The City has long been working with the State and Corps of Engineers to initiate a joint feasibility study of expanding Homer's harbor to match mooring needs of large vessels. The City set aside \$750,000 to cover half of the local share requirement for the study in 2020. The State of Alaska appropriated the other half in the FY23 State of Alaska Capital budget.

In August, the City learned that the appropriations request for Federal matching funds by Senator Lisa Murkowski made it into the Senate's proposed Federal budget. The City is working our Federal partners and hopes to secure the Federal funds to move the study forward in early 2023. You can read on the City website at: [Homer Port and Harbor Expansion Project](#) where a question and answer page includes a good deal of history about the port and its capacity, growth of the fleet, and how the expansion will strengthen Homer's economy.

## WHAT'S NEW?

- Library News
- Community Corner
- City Clerk's Office
- Community Recreation
- Finance Department
- Fire Department
- Public Safety Notes
- Planning Department
- Port & Harbor
- Public Works
- Meet the Staff
- 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 - <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter>

"where the land ends and the sea begins"

# LIBRARY NEWS & EVENTS <sup>®</sup>

## NEW! Kanopy Streaming Video Service

Check out the new streaming service for access to movies and tv programs online.

## Library Western Lot Project

Come out and learn more about what's happening at HPL to redesign the western lot and trails to optimize and maximize it for community use. For a discussion and opportunity to ask questions, listed on KBBI Coffee Table - October 5 at 9am or attend an in-person event:

### Open House Events:

- October 7: 4:30-6:30
- October 8: Noon-1:30pm

## Lunch with Council Member

October 11 : Noon - 1pm

Zoom in or call in to chat with Council Member Donna Aderhold over lunch. You'll have a chance to ask questions and discuss topics, ideas and more.

## StoryWalk

September 15 - October 15

*The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything* by Linda Williams. Be sure to catch the last story of the season. This fun and inspiring story will be sure to entertain you on your walk.

## Astronomy Anyone?

October 14: 6-7:30pm

Join Stephanie Cortes for a presentation on the fascinating world of astronomy.

## Virtual Author Talks

The author line up is terrific this fall. [Go to Library website](#) for information and Zoom link on how to join the virtual conversation.

- October 13: Dr. Aziz Gazipura, *Not Nice*
- October 18: Zain E. Asher, *Where the Children Take Us*
- October 25: Kate Quinn, *Diamond Eye*



**Homer Public Library**  
500 Hazel Street - (907) 235-3180  
[circ@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:circ@ci.homer.ak.us)  
[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library)

# Community Corner

What's happening around the City of Homer



# HALLOWEEN

in Homer

## Trick or Treat on Pioneer

Get ready to have some fun! The Homer Chamber of Commerce has organized "Pioneer Ave Trick or Treat" where you can walk up and down Pioneer Avenue between Bartlett Street and Heath Street to pick up candy from your favorite businesses. City Hall will have a tent set up with ghouls and goblins handing out candy and other fun stuff!

Activities include:

- Kids costume judging contest
- Candy for kids & parents, refreshments
- Kids games or crafts



## Traffic Closure & One Way Routes for Trick or Treating

The Homer Police Department is working with volunteers to create a smooth traffic flow for cars and pedestrians for safer trick or treating in the Bayview and Mountain View neighborhoods..

- **Vehicles:** One way traffic will be directed from Pioneer to go up Main Street, around Mountain View (clockwise), and across Bayview.
- **Pedestrians:** One lane of the road will be reserved for pedestrians only.
- **Park & Walk:** Due to limited parking on the route, plenty of parking is available at the high school and other side streets for you to park and walk the neighborhood.

If you drive, please slow down, be cautious in low lighted areas, and mindful of costumed children who might dart into the road chasing after their friends in excitement. *Happy Haunting!*



## Plexiglass Barriers Removed at Homer Public Library Desk

The check out desk at the HPL looks a little more open these days. The plexiglass barriers were removed. They were installed when public buildings reopened during the pandemic as part of the City's safety protocol to protect staff and the public from transmitting the COVID-19 virus.

Now that the infection rate has been consistently low for several months, the City Manager made the call to have Building Maintenance remove the shields.

The panels will be stored and available should we need them again in the future. Let's hope not!



## Visit with Senator Murkowski - October 6th

Senator Lisa Murkowski is scheduled to be in Homer on Thursday, October 6. Her itinerary includes meeting with City officials and staff about the Port Expansion project followed by a short meeting with members of the Homer Marine Trades Association.

She is hosting a Question & Answer time with constituents to discuss topics of interest. The public is invited:

- **When:** Thursday, October 6, 3:00 - 3:30pm
- **Where:** Homer Port & Harbormasters Office, 4311 Freight Dock Road

## Burning Basket 2022: Breathe

Members of the Homer community gathered recently to take part in the 19th annual Burning Basket celebration at Mariner Park on Sunday, September 11th. Mavis Muller's theme for this year's basket was "Breathe," an expression of a long awaited exhalation of the pressures of the pandemic and all that we've endured; and must let go of.

This year's basket contained an extra special component in remembrance of Anesha "Duffy" Murnane in the form of a basket orb that was present at the dedication of the Loved and Lost memorial bench at the Homer Public Library earlier this summer. Notes were collected in the basket orb at the event, and all of it was burned with the larger basket on the 11th.

Take a moment everyone. *Just breathe.*

-Matt Steffy  
Parks Superintendent



# City Clerk's Office



## Get Out and Vote on October 4th!

Election Day for the City of Homer and Kenai Peninsula Borough regular elections is Tuesday, October 4, 2022. Polls at the following locations will be open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

For more election information, visit [www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/election-information-0](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/election-information-0)

### Questions? Contact the Clerks' Office:

Phone: (907) 235-3130

Email: [clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov](mailto:clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov)

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

## Is Your Voter Registration Info Current?

To be qualified to vote in the upcoming November 8th General Election, registration deadline is Sunday, October 9th. Any changes to your voter registration info such as your residence address or political affiliation will also need to be updated by that deadline.

You can register to vote or update your voter registration information online at the State of Alaska Division of Elections website at <https://www.elections.alaska.gov>. Voter registration paper forms are also available at the City Clerk's Office and the Homer Public Library.



## Long-Time Port Commissioner Cathy Ulmer Recognized for Her 20+ Years of Service

Cathy Ulmer was recognized for her 20 years of continuous volunteer services on the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission at their September 28th meeting, having served from April 8, 2002 to September 15, 2022. Mayor Castner presented Cathy a Certificate of Recognition and appointed her as an honorary member of the commission, a position only held by two other individuals in the history of the Port and Harbor commission.

As Mayor Castner said in his recognition speech, "A healthy community depends heavily on the service of volunteers to help achieve what we can never afford. Your dedication has inspired others to help, and your institutional knowledge has eased their burden."



# Community Recreation



## Cosmic Hamlet Open Pickleball Tournament: Big Fun! Big Success!

Homer Community Recreation recently hosted a competitive pickleball tournament over Labor Day weekend on September 2, 3 & 4. The three days of activities included Women's Doubles, Mixed Doubles and Men's Doubles with different ranking categories from 3.0 to 4.0 for each tournament. Some of the categories filled up quickly and we had to deny some players from participating due to the limited courts and time. This inaugural event attracted 56 players from Alaska, 2 from Hawaii, 1 from Arkansas and 1 from Canada for a total of 60 people.

The events ran very smoothly with a team including volunteers Lin Reid, Janie Leask, Christopher Mullikin and Recreation Manager Mike Illg. Special thanks to the local businesses that donated door prizes including the cloth bags from Story Real Estate. The event also got great assistance from other City Departments. Thanks to the Homer Public Library for providing a chrome book and Mi-fi internet for the event, to Public Works for mowing the grass and providing picnic tables outside.

Feedback from the participants was very positive. We are looking forward to offering this again in the years to come.



## NRPA Conference Celebrates Inclusion

While attending the 2022 National Recreation and Parks Association Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, Recreation Manager Mike Illg had the opportunity to meet and listen to an intriguing presentation by Dr. Temple Grandin, a world-renowned animal scientist and spokesperson for autism. Dr. Temple's presentation titled, *Inclusion for All Types of Minds and Bodies in Parks and Recreation*, provided insight on planning parks to include people with different abilities, but also planning to include diverse groups of people in the programming, design and hiring process. Dr. Temple described her personal experiences of being a person with autism and navigating experiences at work and play while providing examples of innovative recommendations, designs and practices for the parks and recreation field. Truly a powerful and insightful person who continues to make the world better for all!



Community Recreation Manager Mike Illg with Dr. Temple Grandin at the NRPA Conference, September 2022.

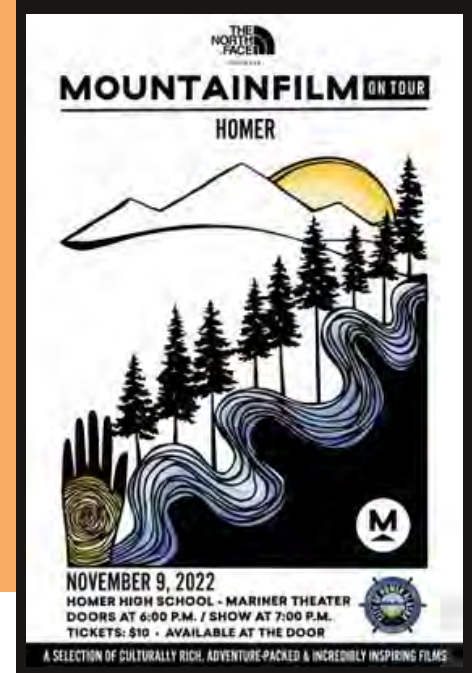
# Community Recreation Program List

Here is a sample of some of the exciting programs being offered this season. Be sure to check the website often as class schedules change.

- **Adult City Basketball League:** Starts October 2
- **Girls Basketball Camp:** Starts October 8
- **Alaska Hunter Education Course:** October 7
- **Pickleball for Everyone!**
- **Buti Yoga**
- **Cuong Nhu & Karate**
- **Dance Cardio**
- **Jewelry Making**
- **Spanish Class**



*Sign up!*



## Finance



### New Water & Sewer Rates Effective November 15

Customers will receive notice of the recent water and sewer rate changes that will go into effect November 15. You will see the new rates on your December statement. Rates were approved by City Council via [Ordinance 22-61](#).



### 4th Quarter Sales Tax Revenues

Sales tax numbers are in from the Borough, and they are strong for the 4th quarter of FY22, which is April through June 2022. We had \$76M in taxable sales which generated \$3.7M in local sales taxes (does not include remote sales tax). This is an increase of 9% over 2021 and 32% over 2019. The total expected sales tax revenue for FY22, per Kenai Peninsula Borough and the Alaska Remote Sellers Sales Tax Commission's reporting is estimated at approximately \$12.3M.

## Fire Department



### October is a busy month for Fire Safety

The Homer Volunteer Fire Department is fired up this month to educate homeowners on the importance of fire safety. As temperatures drop, more folks will start to use their fireplaces, wood stoves and heating units.

- **October 2 - 8: Chimney Safety Week**
  - Have your chimney inspected annually by a CSIA Certified Chimney Sweep. [Click here to read more.](#)
- **October 9-15: National Fire Prevention Week**
  - "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape." [Click here to read more.](#)

**In a home fire, can your family safely escape in just 2 minutes?**

**More lives are lost every year to home fires than to all major disasters.**

You can keep your family safe with 2 simple steps.



**Practice your 2-minute drill.**



**Test your smoke alarms monthly.**

**Learn more at [redcross.org/homefires](https://www.redcross.org/homefires)**

# AUTUMN UPDATE

*from the Homer Animal Shelter*

Hello, friends!

The Homer Animal Shelter is finally starting to slow down a teeny, tiny bit after a very, very busy summer – just in time to make room for Autumn kitten season! We’ve seen so many animal surrenders and abandoned animals in the past few months, but, silver lining, we are able to find them all great, new homes! Our longest-ever stay – Lily, the white and black husky-mix – just got adopted in mid-September (see photo) and we are beyond thrilled with her new family. As well, a big black cat named Saka was at the shelter for six weeks and finally found his perfect home. Sometimes, it just takes a little longer for the right people to come along and see the diamond in the rough!



The Homer Animal Shelter, run by Homer Animal Services, LLC, currently staffs two full-time and two-part employees, plus several volunteers who have been with the shelter for years. We have opened up our volunteer program for high school seniors who need service hours toward graduation and have started our Feline Friend Finder (FFF) program once again! The FFF is for kiddos who come in to socialize with shy cats. They are given a worksheet and can fill out as little or as much information as they want about the cats they visit to provide shelter staff with more insight when looking for the cat’s new home.

Meanwhile, the Homer Animal Shelter partnered with Kenai Peninsula Animal Lovers Rescue to host several dog and cat spay/neuter clinics over the past couple of months. Dr. Christine Marlowe performs the surgeries in our own medical room with assistance from shelter staff and volunteers. Members of the community have been grateful for this low-cost option, and with the all the unwanted pets on the Southern Kenai Peninsula, to get to the source of the overpopulation issue and help us immensely in the long run.

Of course, we still work closely with our local nonprofit Homer Animal Friends for help with some of the shelter pets spays and neuters. Along with all our rescue and nonprofit friends, the Homer Animal Shelter continues to save, shelter and rehome more than 100 animals a year, as well as help keep pets in homes by providing supplies, food, and vaccines. Our live-release rate remains around 98 percent, which puts us firmly in the “no-kill shelter” category. We invite everyone to come down and see what’s new at the shelter!

Happy trials,

*Jillian*

Jillian Rogers  
Shelter Director

# PUBLIC SAFETY NOTES

**Join Us**  
in the  
**World's Largest  
Earthquake Drill.**



**Shake  
Out**

Register at [www.ShakeOut.org](http://www.ShakeOut.org)

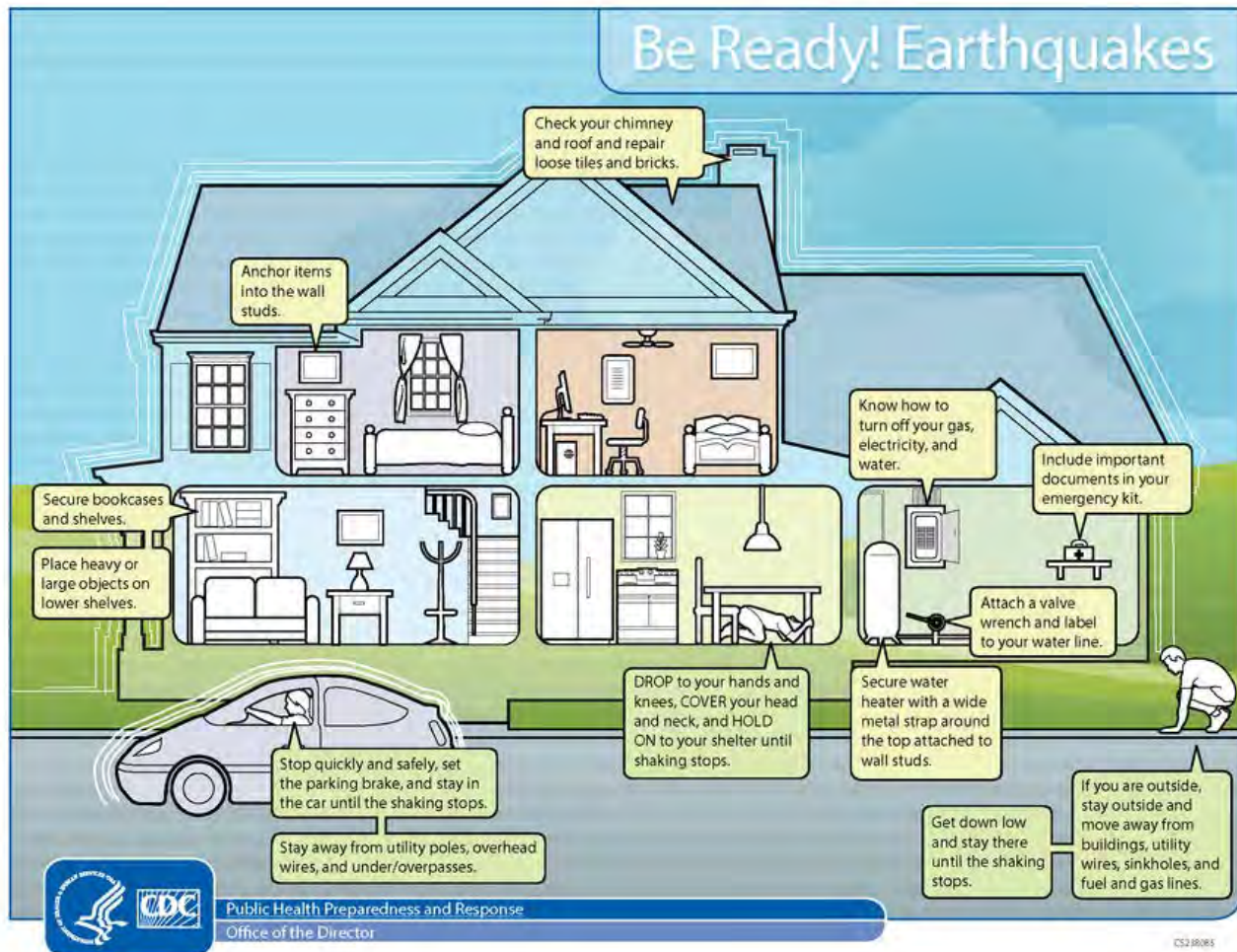
## October 20th is the Great Alaska ShakeOut

**What is the ShakeOut?** It's a worldwide earthquake drill and a great way for your family or business to practice being prepared to survive and recover quickly from a big earthquake.

**When is the ShakeOut?** The ShakeOut drill is set for 10:18 am on Thursday, October 20th. At 10:18 am, practice how you will *Drop, Cover, and Hold On* during a large earthquake, which only takes about one minute out of your day.

**The main goal of ShakeOut** is to help Alaskans be prepared for major earthquakes, so use the ShakeOut as an opportunity to learn and do more to be safe before, during, and after an earthquake.

1. Know the signs of an earthquake
2. Learn the safe spots in your home to drop, cover and hold on
3. Create an evacuation plan for your family and business
4. Create an emergency supply kit
5. Prepare your home as illustrated below.



[Click here & learn more](#)



**Preparing for an Earthquake |  
Natural Disasters and Severe  
Weather**

[edc.cdc.gov](http://edc.cdc.gov)



[https://www.cityofhomerak.gov/  
emergency-information/  
earthquake-preparedness](https://www.cityofhomerak.gov/emergency-information/earthquake-preparedness)



## Know your Hazard: Earthquake

As we know, earthquakes happen quite often in Alaska. The City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan covers the scientific nature of earthquakes, location of where they are most likely to occur, history of them in Alaska, their extent or severity, and probability of recurrence. You can dive deeper into the subject by reading the [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#).

According to the 2018 State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan, on average, Alaska has one "great" earthquake (magnitude 8 or higher) every 13 years, one magnitude 7-8 every year, and six magnitude 6-7 earthquakes every year. Homer has a 5% probability of severe shaking in the next 50 years. Folks in Homer still talk about the March 27, 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake, which had a magnitude of **9.2!** Locally, the shaker caused the Homer Spit to drop about six feet and flooding during high tides.

## Know Your Tsunami Hazard in Homer

If you are a water and sewer customer you have received this helpful brochure that was included with your City of Homer utility bill. The brochure is a great resource to know how to stay safe, where the high risk areas are located, and has a map that shows the evacuation line designated by the City of Homer along with the designated assembly area and tsunami shelter.

Brochures are available at City Hall and will be distributed locally as part of the TsunamiReady program with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the Alaska Earthquake Center.

For more information on how to Be Tsunami Aware - [click here](#).  
[Click here](#) for the brochure: *Know Your Tsunami Hazard in Homer*.



## REMEMBER WHEN...



### 7.0 quake shakes peninsula, brief tsunami warning for Homer

By Megan Pacer • November 30, 2018 10:00 am  
Tags: Local News

A car belonging to Homer resident (and City of Homer employee) *Tom Sulczynski* is trapped on a collapsed section of the offramp of Minnesota Drive in Anchorage, Friday, Nov. 30, 2018. Back-to-back earthquakes measuring 7.0 and 5.8 rocked buildings and buckled roads Friday morning in Anchorage, prompting people to run from their offices or seek shelter under office desks, while a tsunami warning had some seeking higher ground. (AP Photo/Dan Joling)



# Welcome Aboard

The City of Homer welcomes **Kathy Vogl** as a seasonal Recreation Specialist for the City Community Recreation Division. Kathy has years of experience in the exercise/fitness industry in addition to her well known success in the local restaurant scene owning and operating numerous successful business in Homer. Kathy has hit the ground running with learning about the unique operations of offering educational and recreational programs in the local schools and the HERC facility. She has already provided some great insight for current programs in addition to ideas for some potential new opportunities. Her years of experience in the hospitality industry is a perfect fit for Community Recreation as it is always our goal ensure everyone is having a safe, fun and enjoyable experience while participating in any of our programs.



## September Anniversaries

We would like to recognize City staff members with anniversaries this month. 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.

Aaron Glidden	Port	18 years
Ryan Browning	Police	12 years
Nick Poolos	IT/Admin	12 years
Tracie Whitaker	Police	8 years
Lisa Linegar	Police	7 years
Jakob Richter	Fire	3 years
Charles Benson	Police	1 year
Andrew Cranley	Public Works	1 year
Samantha Cunningham	Fire	1 year
Jed Gautier	Port	1 year

**The City of Homer  
has current Job Openings!**

Sign up for Job Alerts or Apply Online at:  
[cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs](http://cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs)

## Meet the Staff

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



## Jenna Luchaco Obtained a CDL license!

In 2021, after working in the Parks division in many capacities since 2016, *Jenna Luchaco* made a career move within the Public Works Department to become an Apprentice Operator. This move has provided the on-the-job-training and number of hours behind the wheel required to sit for the Commercial Drivers License(CDL) test. As an apprentice, Jenna has learned to operate a variety of vehicles, trucks and heavy equipment under the guidance of seasoned Public Works Road Maintenance operators and gained the confidence she needed to succeed. She is definitely learning from the best!

Jenna is living proof that having a positive attitude and a desire to learn a new skill can turn into a new career, which makes her an invaluable member of the City of Homer Public Works team! So, next time you're out and about and spot Jenna, give her a high-five!

*Congratulations!*

# City of Homer Roster

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager  
Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk/Deputy Director of Administration  
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/City Engineer  
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

# 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 at the Homer Public Library, look up! This large *Crane* hangs from the ceiling of the Southeast atrium. Artist, *Tamara Schmidt* created the sculpture from Alder branches and it is approximately 5.5 feet by 3.5 feet in size. This piece was made for the 2006 opening of the Library and soars above the heads of patrons to welcome them.

While in the atrium, you'll also find *Wave* by Adele and Victor Hiles. This 47 inch diameter framed stained glass originally hung at the old library and was donated by the artists to the new HPL for the 2006 opening.



## STAY CONNECTED WITH CITY COUNCIL

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

### October

5	5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
	6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
10	5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
	6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting
11	6:00pm	Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
13	4:00pm	ADA Compliance Committee
17	5:30pm	Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting
19	5:30pm	Planning Commission Worksession
	6:30pm	Planning Commission Regular Meeting
20	5:30pm	Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
24	5:00pm	City Council Committee of the Whole
	6:00pm	City Council Regular Meeting
26	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:

[cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs](http://cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs)

## CURRENT JOB LISTINGS

- Public Safety Dispatcher I, FT
- IT Support Specialist, FT
- Firefighter/EMT-I or II, Basic or Temporary
- Building Maintenance Tech I - FT, Seasonal



## City of Homer

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

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