1 CITY OF HOMER 2 HOMER, ALASKA 3 Aderhold/City Clerk 4 RESOLUTION 20-044(A) 5 6 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA 7 RECOMMENDING THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH ENACT ORDINANCE 2020-24 WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR VOTE BY MAIL 8 9 SYSTEM FOR ELECTIONS BOROUGH WIDE. 10 WHEREAS, In February, 2019, the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) established the 11 Election Stakeholders Group (ESG) to increase voter participation by developing sustainable 12 election processes that maximize accessibility and inclusivity; and 13 14 WHEREAS, The City of Homer was represented on the ESG by Councilmember Donna 15 Aderhold, City Clerk Melissa Jacobsen participated on the ESG as a subject matter expert, and 16 Joyanna Geisler, Executive Director of the Independent Living Center and ADA Compliance 17 Committee member, participated as an advocate for voters with disabilities; and 18 19 WHEREAS, On July 26, 2019 the ESG approved their final report and recommendations 20 to the KPB with six final recommendations that included implementing a vote by mail hybrid 21 structure (VBMS) and an education and outreach campaign, amending the voter pamphlet 22 process, appointing service area board representatives, eliminating proposition statements, 23 and adopting a Borough Resolution regarding ranked voting for run-off elections; and 24 25 WHEREAS, The ESG's number 1 recommendation was for the KPB to transition the 26 election process from the current polling site structure to a VBMS which is consistent with the 27 guiding principles adopted by the ESG, including: maximizing accessibility and inclusivity in 28 the election process; promoting efficient use of public resources; increasing voter satisfaction 29 and confidence in Borough elections; and ensuring the security and integrity of the voting 30 system; and 31 32 WHEREAS, On September 23, 2019 Homer City Council adopted Resolution 19-063, 33 recognizing the recommendations of the KPB ESG and authorizing the Mayor to sign Kenai 34 Peninsula Borough Joint Resolution 2019-001; and 35 36 WHEREAS, The KPB Clerk's Office entered into a contract with Resource Data in 37 December of 2019 for the purpose of preparing a feasibility study and cost analysis, which 38 concluded that the KPB would be able to successfully transition to area-wide vote by mail 39 40 elections; and

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WHEREAS, In December 2019 the KPB Municipal and City Clerks began meeting monthly to consider the VBMS and how to develop a unified process that meets the needs for each municipality; and

WHEREAS, The City of Homer (COH) shares roughly 5,000 voters with the KPB and engaging in a joint effort with the KPB Election process will be a more convenient process for the shared voters; and

WHEREAS, The KPB has been using a VBMS successfully in six of its 28 precincts (Cooper Landing, Hope, Fox River, Moose Pass, Seldovia/Kachemak Bay, and Tyonek) for over 20 years; and

WHEREAS, The Homer City Council supports the transition of the COH Elections to a VBMS, a hybrid system that allows a voter to either vote by mail or in person at a vote center established in each municipality; and

 WHEREAS, KPB Ordinance 2020-24 addresses the ESG recommendations regarding the removal of advocacy statements for or against ballot propositions and also the Borough's restrictive timeline for run-off elections; and

WHEREAS, The current global health pandemic further reinforces the need to implement a VBMS election process, to allow for greater flexibility and voter participation when events make it impractical or difficult for borough residents to safely vote at a traditional polling site.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA that the Homer City Council encourages the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly enact Ordinance 2020-24, which amends the borough election process in ways that are consistent with the recommendations and guiding principles adopted by the Election Stakeholder Group in July, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon the adoption of KPB Ordinance 2020-24 the Homer City Council will take necessary steps to amend the City's election processes to implement a VBMS for the City of Homer in conjunction with the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of Homer, Alaska, this 11th day of May, 2020.

CITY OF HOMER

KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

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ATTEST:

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

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89 Fiscal Note: N/A

