

1 **CITY OF HOMER**
2 **HOMER, ALASKA**

3 Erickson/Lord

4 **RESOLUTION 24-048**

5
6 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA,
7 REQUESTING THE PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
8 DISCUSS AND CONSIDER CRUISE SHIP CAPACITY AND POLICY
9 ADOPTION FOR THE PORT AND HARBOR OPERATIONS AND THE
10 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION DISCUSS
11 AND CONSIDER BROADER COMMUNITY EFFECTS AND POTENTIAL
12 CITY CRUISE SHIP POLICIES.

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14 WHEREAS, The City of Homer has been a port of call for numerous cruise ships over the
15 years; and

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17 WHEREAS, The City should expect continued interest in cruise ship calls in the coming
18 years; and

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20 WHEREAS, The City's Deep Water Dock can accommodate cruise ships up to certain
21 sizes, but larger ships cannot dock there and must anchor out and tender, or lighter,
22 passengers to harbor floats to disembark; and

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24 WHEREAS, The City operates the Port and Harbor under written policies that may not
25 fully encompass the considerations for cruise ships, especially larger vessels that have to
26 lighter passengers; and

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28 WHEREAS, In addition to effects on the City, large cruise ships also influence the
29 business community and the community-at-large; and

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31 WHEREAS, Cities around Alaska and the country have addressed cruise ship tourism
32 through the implementation of different policies.

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34 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Port and Harbor staff will engage the Port and
35 Harbor Advisory Commission (PHC) in discussion around cruise ship calls to the Port, including:

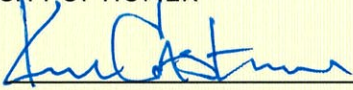
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- 38 • The capacity of our current docks for different size classes of large vessels;
 - 39 • Passenger lightering considerations, including moorage and safety;
 - 40 • What responsibilities and potential liabilities the Port and Harbor has for accepting
41 cruise ships of any size, including what amenities we advertise as available as a City
42 for cruise ship companies looking to make a call at our public Port;
 - 43 • What the emergency response plan is for potential tsunami evacuation;
 - What are the costs and impacts of cruise ship landings on our HVFD and HPD staff;

- 44 • What increased staffing considerations are made by Harbor operations staff to
45 address additional trash and restroom cleaning needs;
- 46 • What criteria are used currently for deciding capacity to accept a cruise ship,
47 including when there is passenger lightering required, and are those criteria
48 adequate;
- 49 • How this topic will be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan;
- 50 • Revenue and expense considerations surrounding cruise ship business at the Port;
- 51 • The broad legal landscape of local policies around the cruise ship industry.

52
53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC)
54 should develop an understanding of City/Municipal cruise ship policies from other
55 communities, and engage in a conversation with the Chamber of Commerce and other
56 stakeholders about the effects of the Cruise Ship industry on the local businesses and the
57 community to help inform any potential City policy development.

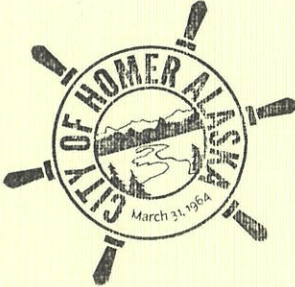
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59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Both the EDC and the PHC will provide reports back to the
60 City Council with summaries of their conversations, noting where further discussion may be
61 needed, and any immediate policy recommendations by:
62 Port and Harbor Advisory Commission: July 22, 2024 Council Meeting
63 Economic Development Advisory Commission: September 23, 2024 Council Meeting
64

65 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this 22nd day of April, 2024.

66
67 CITY OF HOMER
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69 _____
70 KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

71
72 ATTEST:
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74 _____
75 RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, ACTING CITY CLERK

76
77 Fiscal Note: NA





MEMORANDUM

Resolution 24-048, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Providing Direction to the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission and the Economic Development Advisory Commission Regarding Cruise Ships in Homer

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
Date: April 22, 2024
From: Council Members Erickson and Lord

The 2024 cruise ship season is quickly approaching, and with it will come a large ship to Homer that cannot tie up to our deep water dock. Other cruise ships had requested coming to Harbor earlier in the season, and they were told we do not have the operational capacity to safely accommodate them. This has highlighted a number of issues that the Port & Harbor Advisory Commission (PHC) can consider, and additional broader issues that the City should better understand when considering any policy making from the business and overall community.

There is potential for additional cruise ships, including larger cruise ships, to have interest in docking in Homer in the future. As itineraries are developed early, it is prudent for the City to understand our infrastructure and staffing capacity, and the community to broadly understand their interest and appetite for cruise ships sooner rather than later. We understand the turnaround time on these requests to the PHC and the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) may feel tight, but we'd encourage the Commissions to engage in this dialogue and provide a summary of what they are able to cover - including where more time and information may be needed, and/or any immediate policy recommendations for the Council to consider.

To facilitate a dialogue, we are asking the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission to engage in this topic with staff to understand:

- The capacity of our current docks for different size classes of large vessels
- Passenger lightering considerations, including moorage and safety
- What responsibilities and potential liabilities the Port and Harbor has for accepting cruise ships of any size, including what amenities we share with companies requesting these services
- What the emergency response plan is for potential tsunami evacuation

- What are the costs and effects of cruise ship landings on our EMS and HPD staff
- What increased staffing considerations are made by Harbor operations staff to address additional trash and restroom cleaning needs
- What criteria are used currently for deciding capacity to accept a cruise ship, including when there is passenger lightering required, and are those criteria adequate
- How this topic will be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan
- Revenue and expense considerations surrounding cruise ship business at the Port
- The broad legal landscape of local policies around the cruise ship industry

Additionally, we would like to encourage the Chamber of Commerce to engage with Homer-area businesses to better understand the limitations and opportunities within the private sector around cruise ship tourism in Homer. We believe this conversation needs to be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan process, and would like the Economic Development Advisory Commission to begin having conversations with stakeholders to better inform the City Council on policy options and the pros/cons of different City cruise ship policies.

For an interesting reference, look up Bar Harbor, Maine and their long-standing and recent municipal policies surrounding cruise ships. They see much higher passenger counts than Homer does, similar to Juneau and other Southeast communities, but news articles and documents from the Town of Bar Harbor are interesting to review.

The City and Borough of Juneau reached an agreement with CLIA (Cruise Lines International Association) to limit the number of ships to no more than five per day starting this year. An article in the Petersburg Pilot from January 2024 is titled: "*Wrangell assembly raises rates for lightering cruise passengers to shore.*" These are offered as references of conversations other municipalities have been having around cruise ship impact.