



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Clerk

491 East Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-3130

(f) 907-235-3143

Memorandum

Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

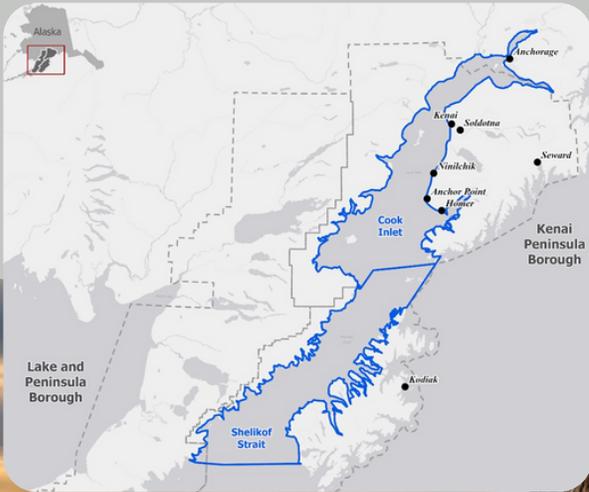
TO: PORT & HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
FROM: ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I
DATE: MARCH 27, 2024
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- D. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management – Study on Rec and Tourism in the Cook Inlet Flyer **Page 1**
- E. Public Comments Received Regarding Harbor Tariff Changes
- Memorandum from Commissioner Pitzman as backup **Page 3**

Study on Recreation and Tourism in the Cook Inlet

This study will inform our understanding of the effects of energy development activities in the Cook Inlet on recreation and tourism, helping guide future analysis and resource management decisions.



The Study Area



Goals of the Study

Map recreation sites in the region

Collect data on activities, levels of use, and expenditures

Discover what people value about recreational opportunities

Gauge attitudes about how offshore energy development could impact recreation and tourism



Activities

2024: Baseline data collection

2025: Site visits and focus groups to inform survey development

Contact us if you have any questions or have information that can help inform the study

BOEM TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE: Jeffrey Brooks
BOEM jeffrey.brooks@boem.gov

PROJECT MANAGER: Maura Flight
IEC mflight@indecon.com

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH LEAD: Leah Cuyno
Northern Economics leah.cuyno@norecon.com

TECHNICAL LEAD: Eric Horsch
IEC ehorsch@indecon.com

From: [Ian Pitzman](#)
To: [Zach Pettit](#); [Amy Woodruff](#)
Subject: Memo for commission discussion
Date: Friday, March 22, 2024 1:03:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Zach and Amy,

I am writing this as a memo for a commission discussion at the next meeting regarding rolling back recent tariff changes. Over the last week, I have had numerous conversations with members of the public about elements of the tariff. In particular, commercial fishermen are frustrated that the tariff increases come at a time when the commercial fishing industry is in an unprecedented value crisis. Most of this commentary revolved around the seine skiff exemption removal because it has a large and immediate impact on that group of harbor users. In a response to member concerns, North Pacific Fisheries Association members plan to testify at the council next week requesting quick action through a resolution, and that group has also requested that I put this discussion before the commission.

Thank you,

Ian

From: [Melissa Jacobsen](#)
To: [Zach Pettit](#)
Subject: FW: Harbor Tariff Changes
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 7:35:47 AM

From: Megan Corazza <megancorazza@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2024 1:55 PM
To: Department Clerk <clerk@ci.homer.ak.us>
Subject: Harbor Tariff Changes

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.
Please forward this to the City Council and the Port and Harbor Commission. Thank you.

To the Homer City Council and the Homer Port and Harbor Commission,

My name is Megan Corazza and I am a lifelong resident of Homer. I have run a commercial salmon seiner out of Homer since 2000, and before that grew up on my parents' seiner.

Recently I became aware of the new tariff changes which would charge us for our seine skiffs. I made a post about this on social media and got an unprecedented amount of traffic on this post and as it became a community conversation, I became aware that we as fishermen and Homer residents have similar feelings about several of the harbor policies and I would like to address them below. I am out of town this week and unable to attend the meetings, so I hope that you will take the time to read this letter.

1. There is great opposition to the new rule regarding additional charges for our seine skiffs. I called the Harbormasters in Valdez, Whittier, Kodiak and Cordova. Here is what each of those ports do regarding seine skiffs.
 - a. Valdez - there is no charge for seine skiffs as long as they are tied to their seiner and not taking up additional dock room
 - b. Kodiak - there is no charge for seine skiffs during the spring and the summer. In the fall and the winter if you have your seine skiff in, you are charged an additional amount.
 - c. Whittier - there is no charge for seine skiffs fourteen feet long and under
 - d. Cordova - there is no charge for seine skiffs but there is movement towards a nominal fee (\$100/year) in order to make sure the skiffs are registered and

insured

Industry standard in the Gulf of Alaska seems to be not charging for seine skiffs during the preparation period for the fishing season and the fishing season itself. Exceptions seem to be when the seine skiffs are taking up room at the dock or blocking a larger vessel from tying up. Homer already has the highest, by far, daily transient fee of any of these harbors. It is excruciating for the commercial fleet to consider paying even more moorage for their skiffs. For lower inlet seiners, which are not built to put skiffs on deck, this fee will be very debilitating. For myself I also choose not to put my skiff on deck - I believe it puts an enormous amount of strain on my rigging and creates an unsafe environment for my crew.

I would propose that Homer either remove the skiff tariff or create a small annual fee (\$100) to make sure the skiffs are insured (Cordova is requiring their harbor to be listed as additional insured). Another option would be to remove the tariff for seine skiffs under 20 feet long. Skiffs over this length are typically owned by boats large enough to load them on the deck. This tariff unfairly burdens the smaller vessels which cannot safely load their skiffs, and also would encourage people to unsafely load their skiffs in order to avoid the extra fees.

2. The second item that came up in this community conversation is that people are floored by the fact that they can reserve a stall on an annual basis, and then if they choose to put a different vessel in that stall that they own, they get charged additional fees. For an example, if I own a seiner and pay for an annual stall rate, but in the winter choose to put my Kachemak Bay runaround boat in it instead, I get charged for a whole second boat. This has been creating hard feelings in the community for years and years it turns out. As customers at the harbor, it feels extremely unfriendly. There doesn't seem to be any real justification for this unless the new boat is longer than the allowed length for the stall. There is SERIOUS community ire about this fee structure. Many residents told stories about having their main boat break down and having to use a different one to access their homes across the bay and being charged for a second boat even though they were parking in their own stall. I think this policy absolutely needs to change.
3. Overall, I was surprised to learn that everyone else in this community conversation felt the same way about the harbor culture that I do. In our experience, it seems to be the feeling that we are putting the harbor out, somehow, by pulling in with our boats. The culture that is present in Valdez harbor, where you feel welcomed to the port, doesn't seem to exist in Homer. When I come home from a season of fishing, I should be excited to pull into the harbor, but instead it often feels like I am a burden on the harbormasters, and not welcomed. I think this is a culture change that needs to happen. In our conversation, one person mentioned that the Homer harbor culture has always seemed "militant." I think this is a very accurate summary of how I feel when dealing with the harbor.

I want to thank you for reading this letter. I don't often write the city council, but the overwhelming and dissatisfied community conversation regarding Homer harbor policies was enough to prompt me to write. Who is it we want to be as a city? The harbor with the highest rates for moorage in the gulf and simultaneously the least friendly and willing to make situations work for stall owners, commercial fishermen and local residents? I hope that's not what we want to be, but it is what we have become.

Sincerely,

Megan Corazza

From: [Melissa Jacobsen](#)
To: [Zach Pettit](#)
Subject: FW: Harbor Tariff Changes
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 7:34:56 AM

From: Rich Corazza <richsonja1951@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2024 3:00 PM
To: Department Clerk <clerk@ci.homer.ak.us>
Subject: Fwd: Harbor Tariff Changes

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I agree with Megan.
Make Homer a support group for our commercial fisherman
Rich Corazza
907 435 7970

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Rich Corazza <richsonja1951@gmail.com>
Date: March 23, 2024 at 2:54:44 PM AKDT
To: Megan Corazza <megancorazza@hotmail.com>
Subject: Re: Harbor Tariff Changes

Well said, thx for writing
Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 23, 2024, at 1:54 PM, Megan Corazza
<megancorazza@hotmail.com> wrote:

Please forward this to the City Council and the Port and Harbor
Commision. Thank you.

To the Homer City Council and the Homer Port and Harbor
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Sincerely,

Megan Corazza

To the Homer City Council and Homer Port and Harbor Commission

My name is Amy Stonorov my husband and I have been fishing out of Homer for over 20 years. We now own a commercial fishing boat that is moored and operates out of Homer for nine months of the year. The remaining three months we operate in Prince William Sound. The fees we pay to the Homer Port and Harbor are an expected and constant significant expense to our fishing operation.

I would like to address the Homer Port and Harbor's untimely decision to revise the Port of Homer Tariff No. 1 to remove the fee waiver for work skiffs. This change specifically targets fisherman, and is untimely as the commercial fishing industry in Alaska is facing the worst down turn in decades, additionally the Homer Harbor has the highest daily moorage fees per foot in comparable ports. As I referenced above, we pay a significant fee for the yearly rate for our slip, this fee is expected for the convenience of operating out of Homer for nine months of the year: however, it is only for the convenience of the dock space this does not include electricity, parking or crane fees. Ultimately adding another fee this year is extremely tone deaf of the Commission, and demonstrates a lack of consideration for the circumstances of fisherman. As a large boat owner, our operation will not actually be affected by this change as we have the capability to carry our work skiff on the deck of our boat. I am writing this to address the situation of others within the Homer fleet for which this would be unsafe or impossible. For most of the Homer fleet this alteration to tariff No. 1 will be a tiresome inconvenience as they will have to wait to launch their skiffs, and do any maintenance on land with only a quick check in the water before they leave to ports that do not charge for working skiffs, hoping everything checks out. The part of our Homer fleet I'm most concerned about is the Lower Cook Inlet seiners. They must return to the Home Harbor frequently, most of these vessels do not have the capability to carry their working skiffs on deck, and this new policy would be a hard felt financial burden on them. I am hopeful that the Commission will rethink the implementation of this revision for this year. The Commission has certainly captured the attention of the fleet, perhaps this is a time to come together to find a better solution to generate funds for the port that does not unfairly and untimely target the commercial fishing fleet of Homer.

Sincerely,

Amy Stonorov

To the Homer City Council and Homer Port and Harbor Commission

I am disappointed with the changes in policy to start charging seiners moorage fees for their power skiffs. Most seiners are already paying for two months of harbor fees when they are only in the harbor for a week or two at the beginning and end of the seine season. The average seiner with a 20 foot power skiff would pay around \$247 at the beginning and end of the season. I feel that this \$495.00 charge is a undue burden for a fleet that is struggling with the lowest salmon prices in decades. Please reconsider your decision.

Ivan Stonorov
F.V. Hadassah