

Session 21-08 a Regular Meeting of the Homer City Council was called to order on March 22, 2021 by Mayor Ken Castner at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBER ADERHOLD, EVENSEN, HANSEN-CAVASOS, LORD, SMITH, VENUTI

STAFF: CITY MANAGER DUMOUCHEL
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR KEISER
FINANCE DIRECTOR WALTON
HARBORMASTER HAWKINS
CITY ATTORNEY GATTI

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 6)

Mayor Castner announced the supplemental items provided: **VISITORS** Homer Drawdown Presentation - Peatlands at a Glance Information Sheet **ANNOUNCEMENTS/ PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS** Planning Commission Written Report

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

Larry Slone, city resident, commented regarding Resolution 21-020 and supports the recommended action to postpone the resolution indefinitely. Providing tax exemption is a function of the Borough, and he's unsure it meets the criteria of public benefit.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA (Items listed below will be enacted by one motion. If a separate discussion is desired on an item, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Meeting Agenda at the request of a Councilmember.)

- a. Homer City Council unapproved Special Meeting Minutes of February 11 and March 9, 2021 and unapproved Regular Meeting Minutes for March 8, 2021. City Clerk. Recommend adoption.
- b. Memorandum 21-044 from Mayor Castner Re: Reappointment of Emilie Springer to the Library Advisory Board and Nicole Arevalo to the Economic Development Advisory Commission. Recommend approval.
- c. Memorandum 21-045 from Deputy City Clerk Re: Liquor License Renewals for Best Western Bidarka/Otter Room, Beluga Lake Lodge, Alice's Champagne Palace, Don Jose's Mexican Restaurant and Liquor License Premise Change for Odin Mead. Recommend approval.
- d. Ordinance 21-15, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing Expenditure of \$49,000 from the Sewer CARMA fund and \$49,000 from the Water CARMA fund to pay for Betterments to the City's Utilities Located in East Hill Road as part of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Repaving Project. City Manager/Public Works Director. Recommended dates Introduction March 22, 2021 Public Hearing and Second Reading April 12, 2021.

Memorandum 21-046 from Public Works Director as backup

- e. Ordinance 21-16, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing Expenditure of \$50,000 from the HART-Road fund and \$50,000 from the Water CARMA fund to pay for Ground Water Research in the City Limits and Bridge Creek Reservoir Watershed. City Manager/Public Works Director. Recommended dates Introduction March 22, 2021 Public Hearing and Second Reading April 12, 2021.

Memorandum 21-047 from Public Works Director as backup

- f. Ordinance 21-17, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing Expenditure of Additional Pass Through Funds for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Lake Street Project. City Manager/Public Works Director. Recommended dates Introduction March 22, 2021 Public Hearing and Second Reading April 12, 2021.

Memorandum 21-048 from Public Works Superintendent as backup

- g. Ordinance 21-18, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing an Additional Expenditure of \$33,185 from the Water CARMA Fund for a Total Expenditure of \$247,585 for the Raw Water Transmission Line

Project – Design. City Manager/Public Works Director. Recommended dates Introduction March 22, 2021 Public Hearing and Second Reading April 12, 2021

Memorandum 21-049 from Public Works Director as backup

- h. Resolution 21-021, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Authorizing the City Manager to Dispose of Used and Surplus Equipment from the derelict Vessel North Pacific Pursuant to HCC 18.30.010-020 and HCC 18.30.040(b). City Manager. Recommend adoption.
- i. Resolution 21-022, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Approving the Updated Regulations Concerning Public Records Inspection. City Manager/City Clerk. Recommend adoption.

Memorandum 21-051 from City Clerk as backup

- j. Resolution 21-023, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Declaring the City's Intended Distribution of a Federal Capitalization Grant in the amount of \$500,000 from Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for Principal Forgiveness of Water Main Extensions. City Manager/Public Works Director. Recommend adoption.

Memorandum 21-052 from Public Works Director as backup

- k. Resolution 21-024, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Provisionally Awarding a Contract for Internet Service at the Homer Public Library to GCI Corporation and Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute the Appropriate Documents. City Manager/Library Director.

Memorandum 21-053 from Library Director as backup

City Clerk Jacobsen read the consent agenda.

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONSENT AGENDA AS READ.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS

- a. Homer Drawdown - Katie Gavenus and Dale Banks (10 minutes)

Katie Gavenus and Dale Banks reported on the Homer Drawdown Peatland Project. Ms. Gavenus shared an overview of what peatlands are and how they benefit local streams, provide important moose habitat, serve as fire breaks, and manage storm water and mitigate flooding. She noted the City's work with the Climate Action Plan and Storm Water Master Plan as efforts toward maintaining and restoring peatlands in our area. The Homer Drawdown Project is a group that recognizes human activities and development can damage peatlands and that



Street, and upcoming pop up events. Testing continues and we're at a 1% positivity rate. Transmission rates are low on the Southern Peninsula which puts the school district in the green with only 9 total cases over the last two weeks. They look forward to working with the Unified Command on a Memorandum of Agreement for Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) community funding that may be coming our way for continued vaccine outreach and rollout.

City of Homer PIO Rachel Tussey reported the PIO team is focusing a lot on vaccine hesitancy and sharing reasons why vaccines are a smart idea. She noted being done by City PIO Jenny Carroll in coordinating with partners on the DHSS funding opportunity for additional mass vaccine point of dispensing events and drive-thru/pop up vaccine sites.

The team answered questions from Mayor and Council and discussed outreach opportunities to help promote vaccination.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS (5 Minute limit per report)

a. Committee of the Whole Report

Councilmember Lord reported at Committee of the Whole Council touched on almost every item on the Consent Agenda. They passed a large consent agenda at the beginning of the meeting, most items are ordinances being introduced that will come back for public hearing on April 12th.

b. Mayor's Report

Mayor Castner commented it seems we're being ultra-efficient, which he doesn't necessarily agree with, but as Councilmember Lord reported the Consent Agenda items were well discussed. He gets to propose what goes on the Consent Agenda and he typically includes first reading of ordinances there and then they come back at the next meeting for public hearing and discussion.

c. Borough Report

d. Planning Commission

Mayor Castner noted a written report from the Commission was provided in the supplemental packet.

e. Economic Development Advisory Commission

Economic Development Advisory Commission Chair Karin Marks reported the EDC met on March 9th and discussed progress with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). The business and residents surveys are closed and there will be a 30 day comment

period on the draft CEDS in early to mid-May. The Commission discussed helping businesses to create on-line presence, one of their strategic goals. They're learning about the city budget and particularly the general fund economic development. There's a zoom event April 13th by KPEDD Executive Director Tim Dillon on the new workforce website and CEDS. Registration will be available on the City website after April 1st. The Commission voted to support the Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan and have it move forward, and look forward to the selection of a consultant for the Wayfaring Streetscape Plan in early April. She shared appreciation on behalf of the Commission for outgoing members Jeff Johnson and Bill Richardson, and announced there are two openings on the Commission.

f. Parks Art Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission

Parks Art Recreation and Culture Advisory Commissioner Leon Galbraith reported the Commission discussed the James Sherry Pocket Park regarding a drainage issue and potential for a small green infrastructure project there. They also discussed verbiage regarding personal watercraft to help ensure it limits use to the harbor boat ramp only for launching and retrieval, Karen Hornaday Park parking improvements, and potential permitting for mobile food vendors in city parks.

g. Public Works Campus Task Force

Councilmember Venuti reported on the Task Force worked on risk cataloging and evaluation charting where they reviewed and rated level of impact of a tsunami wave into Kachemak Bay to the Public Works Campus. An issue that was noted is that if Public Works staff wasn't busy moving their equipment to either the high school or library, they could assist with notification and moving port and harbor equipment. At their next meeting they'll be addressing refining the chart of risks, considering probability, toxicity of the calcium chloride stored at Public Works if it were washed into the bay, and insurance coverage information.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

ORDINANCE(S)

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

a. City Manager's Report

City Manager Dumouchel highlighted the payoff of the loan from the Borough for the Natural Gas distribution line and an opportunity to refinance the Harbor bond that would produce a savings anywhere in the range of \$114,000 to \$247,000. He touched on the DHSS application for funding for vaccine distribution, as was noted in the Unified Command report, and plan to have an ordinance for that at the next meeting. He provided an update on the Council Chambers upgrades, reported he's happy to have gotten his first vaccine shot, and commented regarding work being done on food trucks in parks and also special events.

Councilmember Venuti commented regarding a possible legislative infrastructure bill that Homer may benefit from and encourage the City to be forward thinking and have a plan in place to use some of that funding toward replacing the HERC building.

There were other comments regarding the status of HERC and brief discussion of the anticipated recovery act money.

Councilmember Evensen addressed personal watercraft legislation timing, and also peatlands. City Manager Dumouchel commented regarding personal watercraft the Commissions are finishing their work that focuses on not being able to launch from the beach. There are other things people are interested in where we aren't likely the correct level of government to enforce. He anticipates having something to Council soon. Regarding peatlands he responded there could be a follow up conversation about some of the things addressed on the planning side when you have a mix of private property and people's right to develop mixed with natural resources and wetlands. He advised of efforts being made to train some City staff regarding wetland delineations.

PENDING BUSINESS

- a. Resolution 21-020, A Resolution of the City Council Exempting Kachemak Moose Habitat, Inc. from City Property Tax; Declaring that the Organization Satisfies the Criteria of Kenai Peninsula Borough Code 5.12.100, Real Property Tax-Exemptions-Community Purposes Property – Conditions, for Lot 4, Hodnik Subdivision, Kenai Peninsula Borough Parcel Number 17936032, Retroactive to January 1, 2021 and Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute the Appropriate Documents. Aderhold. (Postponed from March 8th)

Memorandum 21-050 from City Clerk as backup

Mayor Castner announced there's a motion on the floor to adopt Resolution 21-020 that was postponed from March 8th and opened the floor for discussion.

ADERHOLD/LORD MOVED TO POSTPONE RESOLUTION 21-020 INDEFINITELY.

There was brief discussion supporting this avenue since the Borough no longer requires a resolution from the City and recognizing that voting no on the resolution could give the appearance that the City doesn't support the exemption.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Ginny Espenshade, city resident, thanked Council for the distribution of CARES funds into the community and shared regarding its benefits to The Exchange program and to SPARK. She updated that The Exchange program continues to be committed to overdose prevention these days as isolation and service interruptions caused by the pandemic have raised overdose numbers across the nation. They still have Narcan overdose prevention kits available for free, along with other harm reduction supplies. Anyone listening who wants more information can connect by email at homerexchange@gmail.com and she said they're very proud to have had uninterrupted service since the pandemic began. Regarding SPARK, they've managed to keep their activities COVID wise while still offering users the physical, social, mental, and emotional benefits of activity. They're carefully reinstating some of their youth activities and through a grant from the Youth Advisory Committee of the Homer Foundation they have funds available to help pay rental fees for groups who want to use the space for activities for community youth. If anyone has a great idea for a way to engage youth in play contact them at sparkhomer@gmail.com.

Larry Slone, city resident, shared his appreciation for the efforts of Homer Drawdown and is pleased they're amenable to allow the general public to have access to the peatland through trails. Regarding working toward resolution for the HERC, he noted his and others work on the HERC Task Force final report and about the importance of continuing that effort.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

Mayor Gatti had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY CLERK

City Clerk Jacobsen announced openings on the Library Advisory Board and Economic Development Advisory Commission.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Dumouchel had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Castner commented regarding a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce where they informed him things are looking optimistic for this summer season. He also noted as we work

to define the projects we need to do, a reason he's a proponent for a capital budget, we need to plan for capital projects for the City.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Councilmember Venuti expressed her sadness regarding the mass shooting today in Boulder, and reminded listeners that we have excellent mental health services available in town and anyone in need can call 235-7701. She thanked local and state police officers for all they do in our community. The anniversary of the 1964 Earthquake is approaching and she shared about her experience as a teenager when it hit and she lived in Kodiak. She encouraged people to be prepared and have an emergency kit.

Councilmember Aderhold wished everyone happy Spring, even though it doesn't quite feel like it outside yet. She shared about the pheasant in her yard.

Councilmember Smith shared his appreciation for the longer days and sunshine, he's looking forward to a great summer. Following up on Ms. Espenshade's comments on how are youth are struggling because of limitations to their coping mechanisms, he expressed his concerns about the up-tick in usage of vape pens by our youth and the way the industry is targeting young people. The tobacco industry was slapped back in 1998 for \$209 billion for marketing to young people and concealing the harm of smoking, second hand smoke, and the addictive nature of nicotine. E-cigarettes/vape pens are unregulated and have flavors like circus cookie, cotton candy, glazed donut, etc. It's reprehensible what big tobacco has done in investing in the e-cigarettes and there's no doubt who they're targeting. He wants the community to know that smoking may have declined, but you aren't smelling it because now it smells like candy and it may not set off any alarms that your kid might be vaping. History has already shown the nature of nicotine and how addictive it is. He's working with others in the community to put together a program for the high school to help get people informed.

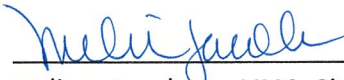
Councilmember Evensen had no comments.

Councilmember Lord thanked Councilmember Smith for sharing that and for the efforts going in to it. Her daughter went to her first day of in person school, it felt good to walk in with her and thanks to all the teachers and families doing all forms of school and making it through. She, her husband, and all the adults in her family have gotten at least one vaccination dose so far and she thanked the Unified Command, the hospital, and the Tribal Health Clinics for their work. She encouraged everyone to get their questions answered and get vaccinated. She thanked the Snomads and the others who groom the trails up north. She had the opportunity to go snow machining in Caribou Hills and go dog mushing in Ninilchik and the trails are incredible and beautiful.

Councilmember Hansen-Cavasos is grateful for everyone taking steps with vaccines and continued masking. There have been health issues with an elder family member and it's been nice that one person has been able to go in and be with them during this time. She can't imagine that we couldn't before. She reminded listeners that the Shorebird Festival is coming up May 6th - 9th.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council Mayor Castner adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Monday, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., Committee of the Whole at 5:00 p.m. and Worksessions Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. and April 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.



Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk

Approved: April 12, 2021