

Session 21-08, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Steve Zimmerman at 6:03 p.m. on August 25, 2021 in the Cowles Council Chambers, City Hall located at 491 E Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

**PRESENT:** COMMISSIONERS ZIMMERMAN, ULMER, ERICKSON, MATTHEWS, SIEKANIEC

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONERS ZEISET (excused) AND PITZMAN (unexcused)

**STAFF:** PORT DIRECTOR/HARBORMASTER HAWKINS  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY  
DEPUTY CITY PLANNER & SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR ENGBRETSSEN

### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Zimmerman asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

ERICKSON/MATTHEWS MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. July 28, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chair Zimmerman asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

SIEKANIEC/MATTHEWS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 28, 2021.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner & Special Projects Coordinator – Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan Project Update

Chair Zimmerman introduced Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen gave a presentation on where the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan project is currently at. She spoke to what work City staff, the contractor Corvus Designs, and the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) has done so far. She reiterated the goals and purpose of the project and went over the preliminary sign designs that were approved by EDC.

Ms. Engebretsen facilitated feedback from the commission. Discussion ensued on the following:

- Signage issues directing people to Freight Dock Road and the harbor ramps
- Working with Alaska Department of Transportations and Public Facilities to get approval for our preferred signage
- Would like to see a Homer Spit entrance sign the same as the other neighborhoods
- Support for straightforward signs, utilizing road names for directions, and the design concepts
- Signs need to be legible and have big/bold text
- Concerns over the issue of too many signs or visual clutter, and ensuring that the plan addresses the need to keep clear lines of sight at intersections and appropriate informational signage along walkways for pedestrians
- The major need for tsunami signage to show the inundation line and evacuation routes

#### **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Port & Harbor Staff Report for August 2021  
i. Memo from HDR – Homer Spit Parking Update

Port Director Hawkins spoke to his written staff report and facilitated discussion on the following items:

- Parking revenue statistics reflecting the addition of the Ramp 2 pay-to-park area, the feedback staff received on the change, HDR's draft parking study report, and getting permission to use the right-of-ways for additional parking space.
- The earthquake and tsunami evacuation event that occurred on July 29<sup>th</sup>, signage needs, and thoughts for future Homer Spit land planning.

- B. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

Port Director Hawkins provided a verbal report, noting that HMTA will be having a regular meeting early September and their annual meeting coming up in September, which will be located at Salmon Sisters. They have been working on plans for Seattle Fish Expo.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **PENDING BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Port & Harbor Dumpster Usage Ordinance
  - i. Memo from City Manager Dumouchel Re: Port & Harbor Dumpster Usage
  - ii. Draft Ordinance 21-xx

Chair Zimmerman introduced the agenda item by reading the title and opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Ulmer voiced her support for the ordinance and commended City staff for their work.

Commissioner Matthews commented on how the fines and regulations on dumpster use are not posted well, and recommended that the City continue pushing the Kenai Peninsula Borough to contribute as much as possible. She shared her experiences as a business owner in providing dumpsters for her boardwalk and how many long-time residents are not aware that you are not allowed to dump personal garbage in the harbor facility dumpsters.

Chair Zimmerman opined if they should ask City Council to consider establishing a transfer facility within the City to encourage people to not drive out to the Spit to dump their household trash, since right now it's either up on the hill or out to the Spit.

Commissioner Ulmer shared conversations she's had with people who use the Spit like a transfer facility, and voiced her support for the \$300 fine idea.

Commissioner Siekaniec voiced support for the ordinance. He suggested having more informative signage, possibly cameras, and some kind of accountability to prevent that type of behavior.

Port Director Hawkins commented on how this is an informational campaign. He spoke to the purpose and goals of this code change, the benefit of having another transfer facility, and the need to extend the hours at the Baycrest Transfer Facility.

Chair Zimmerman requested a motion.

ULMER/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO SUPPORT THE CITY CODE AMENDMENTS TO ADDRESS PORT AND HARBOR DUMPSTERS AND RECOMMEND ADOPTION TO CITY COUNCIL.

ZIMMERMAN/ERICKSON MOVED TO AMEND TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THEY FIND A PLACE WITHIN THE CITY FOR THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH TO PUT ANOTHER TRANSFER STATION.

Commissioner Ulmer opined that the transfer site be located out East End Road or on Kachemak Drive. Chair Zimmerman noted that decision would be up to Council to work out.

VOTE (primary amendment): NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Matthews suggested another amendment to address Mr. Hawkins' recommendation to have a littering fine in City Code. There was brief discussion on how the draft ordinance before them only pertained to dumpsters and did not include verbiage related to littering.

MATTHEWS/ULMER MOVED TO AMEND HOMER CITY CODE 1.16.040 TO INCLUDE A LITTERING FINE IN CITY LIMITS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE (secondary amendment): NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Erickson commented on the heavy \$300 fine just to learn you're not supposed to put your garbage there, and doesn't see where it speaks to signage in the new ordinance. Port Director Hawkins noted that the fine is a graduated amount based on the number of offenses. Commissioner Matthews pointed out that the ordinance does state the use of appropriate signage will help communicate the amendment, and then in the City Manager's memo it explains how they want to increase the signage, didn't have an actual allocation, and are planning to set aside \$3,000 in Port and Harbor reserves for signage under proposed solutions.

Commissioner Erickson acknowledged that information and noted that it still does not address the specifics of what the signage will entail. He assumes we just leave it up to staff to decide on what the signs will say, but felt that it was a key part of all of this since people have come all that way and you need to let them know. Chair Zimmerman clarified with staff that the signage funding amount does not need to be in City Code.

VOTE (main motion as amended): NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- B. Ordinance 21-xx Amending HCC 2.58 Regarding Teleconferencing, Attendance, & Vacancies
  - i. Draft Ordinance 21-xx Amending HCC 2.58
  - ii. Current HCC 2.58

Chair Zimmerman introduced the agenda item by reading the title and opened the floor for discussion.

In response to questions from commissioners, Deputy City Clerk Tussey spoke to the purpose of the code amendments, how it lessens the limitations for commissioners to participate by teleconference, and better clarifies attendance and vacancies. She further explained how once the code amendments are approved by Council, the Clerk's Office will be proposing bylaw amendments for all of the advisory bodies to address any discrepancies between bylaws and City Code.

Chair Zimmerman noted a typo on Line 95 where the word "misses" should be changed to "has". He clarified with Ms. Tussey the next steps of the process and what staff is requesting from the commission.

ULMER/MATTHEWS MOVED TO SUPPORT AMENDMENTS TO HOMER CITY CODE 2.58 REGARDING TELECONFERENCING, ATTENDANCE, AND VACANCIES AND RECOMMEND ADOPTION TO CITY COUNCIL.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- C. Float Repairs for “K” thru “Q” Endcaps
  - i. Bellingham Marine Unifloat Supply Proposal
  - ii. Draft Ordinance to Appropriate Funds for Float Repairs

Chair Zimmerman introduced the agenda item by reading the title and deferred to Port Director Hawkins to begin discussion.

Mr. Hawkins spoke to his memo provided in the supplemental packet. He explained how the conditions of the float ends have worsened since earlier this year and staff strongly feels these docks will not last another season; they either need to be fixed or removed from the harbor. Port and Harbor staff received quotes from Bellingham-Marine, the original float manufacturers, to compare the costs of hiring a crew to come in and build new floats, or having the company construct the floats and harbor staff does the installation. Mr. Hawkins shared how they can do most of the labor in-house, the contingency plan they’re considering, their estimated pay-back plan, and the cost comparison between the project costs and revenue loss from not being able to have vessels moor in those areas.

MATTHEWS/ULMER MOVED TO SUPPORT OF REPAIRING FLOATS “K” THRU “Q” AND RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FROM THE PORT RESERVES FOR THE MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE REPLACEMENT FLOAT PORTIONS THROUGH BELLINGHAM MARINE.

Commissioner Ulmer thanked staff for putting these materials together.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- D. Pier One Theatre Lease Renewal Request
  - i. Pier One Theatre Development Plan
  - ii. Lease Application
  - iii. Draft Resolution & Lease Agreement

Chair Zimmerman introduced the agenda item by reading the title and deferred to Port Director Hawkins to begin discussion.

Mr. Hawkins spoke to the lease renewal request and recapped the discussions that took place between City staff and Pier One Theatre’s board and executive director. Pier One is in the process of coming up with a long-term plan for their facility. They requested an additional 5-year lease to give them time to facilitate feedback from the community and the City on their development plan, and that we work together on a plan of what the next Pier One will look like in Homer.

Discussion ensued on the proposal and the potential locations. Commissioner Ulmer strongly supported the need of a convention/conference center in Homer. Commissioner Matthews commented that given her time on the HERC Task Force she does not believe that is a viable location but was interested in the idea of Pier One developing a portion of the harbor overslope.

ULMER/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL TO AWARD PIER ONE THEATRE A FIVE YEAR LEASE WITH NO OPTIONS FOR RENEWAL, FOR A PORTION OF TRACT 1-A, WITH AN ANNUAL BASE RENT OF \$1.00.

In response to a question from Commissioner Matthews, Commissioner Siekaniec clarified that their lease request was for just five years to give them time to figure out their 20-year plan and whether they’re going to rebuild/improve the current location or move to a more permanent location.

Commissioner Ulmer opined that she sees Pier One being happier uptown in a convention center scenario.

Chair Zimmerman clarified with staff the meaning of “no options for renewal” and voiced his concerns with what will happen to Pier One if they’re not ready by the time the five years are up. Deputy City Clerk Tussey noted that they have been running on short-term, no renewal option leases for some time, and that at the end of that five years they would just have to request another short-term lease if they weren’t ready.

Commissioner Erickson commented that the space is inadequate for the construction of a conference center that Homer needs, both for the building and parking, and he wouldn’t want to overly encourage Pier One that they’re going to be the beneficiaries of that kind of project. He suggested that if they rebuild in the same location that something be done to improve the parking layout.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. Port & Harbor Monthly Statistical Report for July 2021
- B. Water/Sewer Bills Report for July 2021
- C. Crane & Ice Report
- D. Dock Activity Reports
- E. PHC 2021 Meeting Calendar

Chair Zimmerman opened the floor for questions on informational materials. Discussion ensued on the fish carcasses found under charter vessels, fine implementation and the loss of revenue due to lack of enforcement, the PHC calendar and City Council report, the Stall Wait List statistics, and the removal of a derelict vessel.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

Charles Evans thanked the commission for how prepared they were and to keep up the good work, especially the Clerk.

Mako Haggerty, non-city resident and water taxi business owner, voiced his strong appreciation for Port and Harbor staff. He thanked the department for tolerating the pandemonium of the water taxi business and shared the high level of activity their industry is experiencing, which has a significant impact on the harbor. Mr. Haggerty answered questions from Port Director Hawkins regarding State Park permit statistics.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Deputy City Clerk Tussey voiced her appreciation for everyone as she works through the hybrid logistics on top of her clerk duties. She reminded the commissioners to provide the Clerk's Office advance notice, no later than two hours before the meeting time, on if they plan to participate by Zoom or will be absent. She emphasized the more communication with the Clerks the better.

Port Director Hawkins thanked the commission for their time and support; we're making a difference. He noted that he will have a report on where we're at with the large vessel expansion project, primarily regarding funding and when would be good to reach out to our elected officials.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE CITY COUNCILMEMBER**

#### **COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Zimmerman thanked everyone for participating in this hybrid meeting. He commented on how there is a slight lag and encouraged members to shout out if he misses their raised hand.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Ulmer commented that it was a great meeting and commended Deputy City Clerk Tussey. In response to Mr. Haggerty's comments, she noted that Alaska is on the map and we are estimated to continue growing; we're going to continue being busy in the parks and on the trails. She thanked everyone and staff.

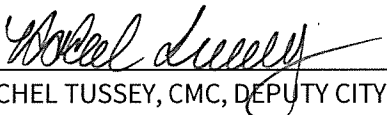
Commissioner Erickson commented on the possibility of using a reader board at the base of the Spit during tsunami evacuation events, and the importance of utilizing both lanes to move traffic. He thanked everyone for a good meeting and noted the mixed meeting style worked out pretty well.

Commissioner Siekaniec thanked everyone for a good meeting.

Commissioner Matthews had no additional comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

  
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RACHEL TUSSEY, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: September 22, 2021