Session 22-07, a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Crisi Matthews at 6:04 p.m. on August 24, 2022 in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MATTHEWS, SIEKANIEC, SHADELSON, FRIEND, PITZMAN
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS ZEISET (excused) & ULMER (unexcused)
CONSULTING: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE STONOROV
MAYOR CASTNER
STAFF: PORT & HARBOR DIRECTOR/HARBORMASTER HAWKINS
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

The Port and Harbor Advisory Commission held a worksession from 5:03 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular meeting to discuss the Homer Port Expansion Project – Owner’s Representative Proposal from HDR for the Large Vessel Harbor Expansion Project – Phase 1. It was facilitated by Port and Harbor Director Hawkins and HDR staff Ronald McPherson, Douglas Thiessen, Michael Ott, and Tim Sullivan.

AGENDA APPROVAL
SIEKANIEC/FRIEND 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. June 22, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
FRIEND/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.
Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS
STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS
A. Port & Harbor Staff Report for July & August 2022

Port and Harbor Director Hawkins spoke to his written staff reports and responded to questions from commissioners. Chair Matthews noted that Harbor staff will be adding a Capital Projects Update
section to the Port and Harbor staff report; this will provide a bird’s eye view each month of where we’re at with funding and what still needs to be done.

B. Port & Harbor YTD Budget/Financial Report

There was brief discussion on the financial reports provided and the need for follow-up information from harbor staff for the September meeting.

C. Homer Marine Trades Association (HMTA) Report

Port and Harbor Director Hawkins and Commissioner Friend provided a verbal report on the HMTA’s upcoming Membership Drive event at Northern Enterprise Boat Launch.

D. Transition of Lease Management Duties Staff Report

Deputy City Clerk Tussey noted her written report in the packet. She asked if there were any questions from the commission, which there were none.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan Review & Discussion

Chair Matthews introduced the agenda item by reading the title. She recapped the commission’s work so far on the Spit Comprehensive Plan, shared her input on the document, and facilitated discussion on the sections of the plan.

In response to comments from Commissioner Siekaniec regarding jobs and worker housing, Chair Matthews opined that some of these items, such as job creation or land use, are some of the items they should keep in mind when they’re reviewing the plan. She does not think the City needs to spend a ton of money hiring a consultant to gather some of this feedback when the commission, which is comprised of a variety of harbor users, can provide it.

Chair Matthews clarified with Port and Harbor Director Hawkins that this plan is a Planning document, so staff will coordinate with Planning and Zoning staff on bringing them into the discussion. Chair Matthews reiterated that PHC is scheduled to have their feedback to the Planning Commission in October. She touched base with commissioners on submitting their revisions and feedback to Port and Harbor Director Hawkins before the next meeting.

Commissioner Pitzman commented on the change from when this document was written in 2011, what was perceived then as future land uses, and what the actual uses are today. He noted how the kayak launching moved and how parking was a serious problem then and it’s still an issue today; some improvements have been made but no resolution.

Chair Matthews recapped what commissioners need to think about for homework and bring back to their September meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. City of Homer Draft 2023-28 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
   i. DRAFT 2023-2028 CIP
Chair Matthews introduced the agenda item by reading the title. She spoke to the requested actions outlined Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll's memo, and facilitated discussion on each harbor-specific project that have recommended changes that the commission may want to focus their attention on. She deferred to Port and Harbor Director Hawkins to answer questions regarding the harbor projects and changes to the CIP.

There was discussion on the large vessel haul-out facility. While the bag system is not fully perfect, it meets the needs now and having this project high up on the list may pull from the other higher-priority projects that need to be focused on. At Commissioner Pitzman’s request to have improved power and lighting infrastructure at the haul-out facility, Mr. Hawkins explained how they would utilize an engineer to estimate the costs and Chair Matthews noted it could be on a future PHC agenda. Commissioner Pitzman explained how the Concrete Pad would require significant renovations to accommodate hauling out large vessels, road blocks would hold up traffic for too long, and the Outer Barge Ramp is too steep; the best location is the current lot and beach haul-out area. Chair Matthews clarified that it does not remove the project from the CIP, they are just moving it to the mid-range section of the list.

PITZMAN/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO SUPPORT MOVING THE BARGE MOORING/LARGE VESSEL HAUL OUT REPAIR FACILITY TO THE MID-RANGE SECTION BECAUSE THERE ARE OTHER HARBOR PROJECTS WITH HIGHER FUNDING NEEDS.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECT: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews commented on the Deep Water/Cruise Ship Dock Expansion. At this point there has not been any changes to the cruise market to justify anything more than maintaining the existing facility. She shared her work on a panel for 2027 cruise ship sailings and trying to lobby to get Homer back on the rotation.

SHAVELSON/FRIEND MOVED TO MOVE THE DEEP WATER/Cruise Ship Dock Expansion, Phase 1 TO THE LONG-RANGE SECTION OF THE CIP.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECT: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews requested a motion to move the Cathodic Protection project to the completed list because it has been funded through the Municipal Harbor Grant Program. Mr. Hawkins supported moving it to the completed section and clarified the remaining step is for the City to match the State funds; once this project goes out for bid they can then go to City Council to request the matching funds.

SIEKANIEC/PITZMAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE CATHODIC PROTECTION RECOMMENDATION OF MOVING IT TO THE COMPLETED SECTION.
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There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews requested a motion on moving the Large Vessel Sling Lift Phase 1 project to the long-range section since a haul-out project would be considered during the Large Vessel Harbor Expansion general investigation. Commissioner Siekaniec questioned since the expansion project is to be funded by federal monies, and many of these CIP projects being moved solely benefit Homer, if many of these projects should remain where they are since we’d most likely be paying for them ourselves. Mr. Hawkins clarified that the project remains on the list as a recognized need, it’s just not as highly prioritized as some of the other projects. Commissioner Siekaniec suggested that this project is important enough that it not be moved too far back in case it’s not included with the expansion project and the City has to pay for it ourselves.

SIEKANIEC/PITZMAN MOVED TO KEEP THE LARGE VESSEL SLING LIFT, PHASE 1 PROJECT IN THE MID-RANGE SECTION OF THE CIP.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Mr. Hawkins spoke to staff’s recommendation of moving the Old Main Dock Removal and Disposal project to the long range section and combining it with the Wood Grid as a derelict structure removal project. He explained the severity of the Wood Grid’s disrepair. Until there’s a plan for fully rebuilding it they should assume it’s not something they can afford at this time. Discussion ensued on the commission not being ready to consider the Wood Grid a derelict structure, its popularity and necessity to harbor users, and consensus the Old Main Dock can be considered a derelict facility.

PITZMAN/SHAVELSON MOVED TO MOVE THE OLD MAIN DOCK REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL PROJECT TO THE LONG-RANGE SECTION, RENAME IT A DERELICT STRUCTURE, AND LEAVE THE WOOD GRID REPAIR AS A STAND-ALONE PROJECT IN THE MID-RANGE SECTION.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews requested a motion to add the Fish Grinding Building Replacement project to the CIP.

SHAVELSON/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO ADD THE FISH GRINDING BUILDING REPLACEMENT PROJECT TO THE CIP.

There was discussion on the project being added to the immediate section since funding has already been solicited to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

In response to Commissioner Friend’s questions on building management, Mr. Hawkins provided historical information on the City’s ownership of the building, its condition, how staff became aware of
the funding opportunity given the age of the current building, and how the project will need to be on the CIP list in order for them to apply for the Dingle-Johnson Program funding that is managed by the ADF&G.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews requested a motion for the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon Accessible Ramp and Fishing Platform project. Commissioner Pitzman clarified what the second phase entailed.

PITZMAN/SIEKANIEC MOVED TO KEEP THE NICK DUDIAK FISHING LAGOON ACCESSIBLE RAMP AND FISHING PLATFORM PROJECT IN THE MID-RANGE SECTION AND ADD PHASE 2 TO THE PROJECT LIST.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Matthews asked the commission to nominate any new projects they would like to see added. Mayor Castner shared his idea for the commission’s consideration of having a water taxi stand near the mouth of the harbor, mainly on the other side, to consolidate water taxi traffic in the harbor and move the customer activity/parking to the other side of the harbor. Discussion ensued on how that project would fit into the CIP and what that project would require logistically.

SHAVELSON/FRIEND MOVED FOR CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER A WATER TAXI HUB DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR INCLUSION IN THE CIP TO EASE HARBOR FLOW OF TRAFFIC, SAFETY, AND FACILITATE ADA COMPLIANCE IN ITS DESIGN.

There was discussion on its potential location, the commission’s interest in having a designated dock for water taxis, how nominated projects are deemed eligible for the CIP, and that Port and Harbor staff would work with Ms. Carroll in creating a project sheet for the CIP.

Commissioner Siekaniec suggested this be more of an investigation that could be included with the plans of redesigning the System 4 and Uplands area.

SIEKANIEC/FRIEND MOVED TO ADD INVESTIGATION INTO A WATER TAXI HUB AS A CIP PROJECT.

There was discussion with Deputy City Clerk Tussey on clarifying the main motion and the verbiage being used for the amendment.

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

Motion carried.

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

Motion carried.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey explained the second part of the CIP agenda item is to pass a motion recommending three City-specific projects for Council to consider for the Legislative Priority section.
Ms. Tussey and Port and Harbor Director Hawkins facilitated discussion with commissioners, who each provided their priority preferences:


FRIEND/PITZMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING THREE CITY PROJECTS FOR CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER FOR INCLUSION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY SECTION:

- #1 PRIORITY: PORT OF HOMER: NEW LARGE VESSEL HARBOR PROJECT;
- #2 PRIORITY: WOOD GRID REPAIR PROJECT; AND
- #3 PRIORITY: STEEL GRID REPAIR PROJECT.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Homer Port Expansion Project – HDR Proposal
   i. Letter & Proposal from HDR – Homer Large Vessel Harbor Expansion Owner's Representative

Chair Matthews introduced the agenda item by reading the title and opened the floor for discussion or a motion.

Commissioner Siekaniec suggested the first item they discuss is the two structures lined out in their proposal, and inquired if there is a City staff person that can aid with this project. Commissioners and Port and Harbor Director Hawkins discussed the process for hiring HDR through a contract and which structure they would support: either a City of Homer Program Manager approach or using an HDR Program Manager structure.

SIEKANIEC/PITZMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL ADOPT AN ORDINANCE AWARDING A CONTRACT TO HDR FOR OWNER REPRESENTATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGING THE LARGE VESSEL PORT EXPANSION PROJECT – PHASE 1, AND ALLOCATING THE APPROPRIATE FUNDS FROM THE PORT RESERVES AND TO NOMINATE OR HIRE A CITY LIAISON TO COORDINATE THE PROJECT.

Discussion continued on limited City staff capacities in being able to take on the full role as a project manager, how contracting with HDR to be the project manager would cost more but may prove to be worth it, and the commission’s overall consensus that there needs to be a City liaison that devotes some
of their time to ensuring the plan moves forward. The liaison can be an existing City employee, who is not Mr. Hawkins, or hired part-time to fill the role.

The commission requested the opportunity to see the contract with HDR before it’s finalized/signed.

VOTE YES: FRIEND, SIEKANIEC, MATTHEWS, SHAVELSON, PITZMAN

Motion carried.

C. Homer Port Expansion Project – Planning & Support

Chair Matthews introduced the agenda item by reading the title. She explained how this topic was addressed in earlier discussions both at the worksession and during review of HDR’s proposal, and will carry over to the September meeting.

D. Inquiry on Petro 49 Lease

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

Commissioner Shavelson voiced how he is not prepared to have a more in-depth discussion about it right now; he would prefer to see the lease first and better understand what the requirements are before taking any action.

Chair Matthews referenced Deputy City Clerk Tussey’s recommended motion as a way the commission can take next steps. Commissioner Shavelson clarified that he is not comfortable making any request to staff until he has seen the lease materials.

Mayor Castner recommended that any action the commission takes includes a resolution with each whereas detailing out the reasons for the inquiry into whether or not Petro 49’s lease is an appropriate use of that harbor land.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey explained how the purpose of making a recommendation to City Manager Dumouchel was to request that lease information, or have him look into it further to bring back to the commission, as he is the property manager for the City. She spoke to the section of City Code where it specifies how the commission can direct their recommendations regarding the operation, maintenance, or policy of the harbor to the City Manager, and shared the feedback she received from the City Attorney about maintaining impartiality. Ms. Tussey reiterated that if the commission wants to review the lease information then they need to make that request in a motion to staff – i.e. the City Manager, staff would look into the situation based on your inquiry, and then make the determination on how to proceed from there which can include bringing it back to the commission.

Chair Matthews summarized the raised concerns over the second fuel dock not remaining open for most of the summer. Commissioner Shavelson verified with City staff that he would be able to review the lease at the City Clerk’s Office before determining what action he would take.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Letter from State Re: Award of FY 2023 Legislative Grant for $750,000
B. Letter from State Re: Award for FY 2023 Municipal Harbor Grant for $366,000
C. Port & Harbor Monthly Stats for June & July 2022
D. Water/Sewer Bills Report for June & July 2022
E. Ice & Crane YTD Report  
F. Dock Activity YTD Report  
G. PHC 2022 Meeting Calendar  

There was discussion on the grant award letters from the State of Alaska and the timeline limitations and Commissioner Shavelson’s availability to give the PHC report at the next City Council meeting.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Port and Harbor Director Hawkins commented it was a big meeting, lots of content, and if anyone has questions later to get a hold of staff.

Mayor Castner stated it was an excellent meeting and thanked the commissioners for the time and effort they put into it. He commented on how he tells everyone in town that if they really want to find out what’s happening to attend a commission meeting. It’s the hard work of the boards and commissions that makes the Council’s job easy.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey reminded the commission that at the PHC’s September meeting they will be switching back to the 5:00 p.m. start time. She also shared her personal news of getting married.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Student Representative Stonorov thanked everyone for having her there and that she will be more prepared next time.

Commissioner Siekaniec commented it was a good meeting and congratulated Ms. Tussey.

Commissioner Pitzman echoed the congratulations to Ms. Tussey and commented it was a good meeting. He missed the last two because of the commercial fishing season and shared how in fishery politics they talk about the fishing season and the meeting season because you spend the winter fighting for access. Meeting season has begun so he will be more present.

Commissioner Friend commented it was a very good meeting and congratulated Ms. Tussey. He commented on his experience with joining the commission, how he’s learning a lot, and thinks the group dynamic is very good. He voiced his appreciation for everybody’s support.

Commissioner Shavelson shared his thoughts, with how oceans and fisheries are changing, that we’re going to see radical changes in our fishing fleets in the next 20 to 50 years. That’s always going to be a consideration. So whoever the contractor may be, be it HDR, there’s going to be some complex things to struggle with when coming up with a cost-benefit analysis. He also commented on the Wood Grid and how he did not realize it was in such disrepair; he sees how much it’s used based on the statistic report so he hopes something can be done with that. He noted it was a good meeting and thanked everyone.

Chair Matthews thanked everyone for being there and that after such a long meeting the commission may reconsider cancelling their July meetings. She thanked Commissioner Friend for doing his harbor project wish list homework, and that they will be compiling those projects at the next meeting. She thanked everyone and congratulated Ms. Tussey.
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Matthews adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held 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: ______________________________