

Session 21-04 a Regular Meeting of the Homer City Council was called to order on February 8, 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

SPECIAL PROJECTS & COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR CARROLL

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR KEISER

FINANCE DIRECTOR WALTON

CITY ATTORNEY GATTI

PORT DIRECTOR/HARBORMASTER HAWKINS

LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR BROWNING

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

The following change was made: **CONSENT AGENDA** Ordinance 21-06 An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing Expenditure of \$142,800 from Public Works Fleet CARMA Account and \$272,200 from HART Road Fund to Purchase a Replacement Grader with Snow Gate and Snow Blade and Two replacement Sanding Trucks. City Manager/Public Works Director. HART Fund Pie Charts depicting appropriations and expenditures as backup **ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS** Planning Commission Written Report

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

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 regular meeting minutes for January 25, 2021. Recommend adoption.

- b. Memorandum 21-025 from City Manager re: Approval of Letter to Governor Dunleavy Expressing the Critical Importance of the Alaska Marine Highway System to the Coastal Communities of Alaska. Recommend approval.
- c. Ordinance 21-06, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Capital Budget and Authorizing Expenditure of \$142,800 from the Public Works Fleet CARMA Account and \$272,200 from the HART Road Fund to Purchase a Replacement Grader with Snow Gate and Snow Blade and Two Replacement Sanding Trucks. City Manager/Public Works Director. Introduction February 8, 2021, Public Hearing and Second Reading February 22, 2021.

Memorandum 21-023 from Public Works Director as backup.

- d. Ordinance 21-07, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the 2021 Operating Budget by Appropriating Funds in the Amount of \$98,700 from the Port Reserves Fund for the Purpose of Haul out and Disposal of the Derelict Vessel *North Pacific* in preparation for Safe Disposal. City Manager/Port Director. Introduction February 8, 2021 Public Hearing and Second Reading February 22, 2021.

Memorandum 21-024 from Port Director as backup.

- e. Resolution 21-015, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Acknowledging the January 2021 Surplus Equipment Sale Results. City Clerk. Recommend adoption.

City Clerk Jacobsen read the consent agenda and it's recommendations.

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS READ.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS

- a. Unified Command Report (20 Minutes)

Public Health Nurse Lorne Carroll, reported briefly that the Public Health Nurses in our area have gone from spending about 80% of their time doing contact tracing down to about 51%, which is great because it makes them available for other things like distributing COVID vaccines and things that can't be put off like mitigation of tuberculosis and other communicable diseases. He provided a case count update for reported cases at 107 million globally, 54,000 in the US, and 648 cases and three deaths on the Southern Kenai Peninsula. As the Public Health Nurses approach one year of full time response, they're making a special effort to hold a celebration of all the efforts this year, to help keep them engaged in the work they're doing.

Derotha Ferraro, South Peninsula Hospital PIO, provided a re-cap from last weekend's vaccine clinic, which is another example of teamwork and everyone pitching in to do whatever needed to be done. They administered 655 COVID 19 vaccinations during the two day event with no major issues or concerns. They were able to administer 60 vaccines per hour, up from 40 at the last event. They are outgrowing the current location and are looking forward to moving to the high school for upcoming events. 135 individuals got their second dose and 520 received their first dose with some reporting the usual side effects and no adverse reactions reported. She provided an update on remaining and upcoming doses, and changes in eligible tiers to receive the vaccine. Between the hospital and community partners well over 2000 first doses of vaccine have been distributed. Regarding COVID testing, SPH administered 668 tests over the last two weeks with 7 positives, putting us at about 1% positivity rate over the last two weeks. Hospital visitation is at the minor risk level, and long term care is still closed to visitors at this time.

Jenny Carroll, City of Homer PIO, reported that until just recently our public health measures have been the main way we've worked to mitigate the bad effects of COVID 19, like masking, social distancing, hand washing, and testing. Those are still important tools, and we have a new tool added with the vaccines. Vaccines help your body recognize the disease and have less severe reactions to it, and much less severity in cases. It's important to understand this isn't the end, but the beginning of the beginning of the end and we still have a long way to go for everyone to reach some kind of immunity against it. With continued masking, social distancing, and vaccinating, there will be a lot less COVID transmitting in the air, less illness, and better ability to get to a herd immunity. She appreciates everyone continuing to follow the mitigation measures we've been following for so long, it's making a difference.

There was a brief question and answer period between Mayor and Council and the Unified Command team.

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

a. Special Meeting Report

Councilmember Lord reported that Council met with the Attorneys in executive session to discuss Van Zant et al vs City of Homer and gave direction to proceed in accordance with pretrial order.

b. Committee of the Whole Report

Councilmember Lord reported Committee of the Whole was only 6 minutes and adjourned after brief discussion of the budget calendar.

c. Mayor's Report

Mayor Castner reported Council will be sitting as Board of Adjustment on Thursday the 11th to hear an appeal of a Planning Commission decision regarding a Conditional Use Permit. He said he's been spending a lot of time looking into the city wide gas service and the \$12.7 million debt we incurred because he's interested in seeing if there's a way to pay this off early and not accrue any additional interest.

d. Borough Report

Mayor Castner reported on behalf of Assembly Member Chesley regarding the Borough's efforts to address the leaking roof at the high school in phases.

e. Library Advisory Board

Library Advisory Board Chair Kuszmaul reported on the Board's recent meetings where they met with representatives of the Friends of the Homer Library to collaborate on planned giving, identified their four goals for the year including developing and initiating a planned giving program for the library endowment, review the library budget as part of the budget process, explore opportunities to increase library card registration and use by students, and improve services across the library service area. They reviewed the library fee schedule and recommend no changes at this time, and also the internet usage in the parking lot. In the first five months starting in April there were 1789 internet sessions, but in the five months from September through January there were 3988 internet sessions. They recognize this as a great service to ensure public internet access, especially while the library is closed to public access due to COVID. Curbside pick-up is still available at the library.

f. Planning Commission

Planning Commission Chair Smith provided a written report for the packet.

g. Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

Port and Harbor Advisory Commissioner Mike Stockburger reported at their last meeting the Commission discussed the budget transition, deferred maintenance and infrastructure replacement in the Harbor, rules for personal watercraft, and subleasing. Mayor Castner attended their meeting and helped them understand the budget transition, which was very helpful and the Commission appreciates Council's amending the truncated budget to use the general fund admin fees to cover the port and harbor deficit. He explained the Port and Harbor's reliance on their reserves to address maintenance of the facility and efforts they've taken to adjust moorage and other fees to be sustainable and avoid borrowing large amounts of money for maintenance.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

- a. Ordinance 21-04, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the FY21 Capital Budget and Authorizing the Expenditure of an Additional \$19,700 for the Airport and Library Security Camera Replacement Project. City Manager. Introduction January 25, 2021, Public Hearing and Second Reading February 8, 2021.

Memorandum 21-017 from Library Director as backup.

Mayor Castner opened the public hearing. There were no comments and the hearing was closed.

LORD/ADERHOLD MOVED TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 21-04 BY READING OF TITLE ONLY FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

- b. Ordinance 21-05, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Amending the FY21 Capital Budget and Authorizing an Expenditure in an Amount up to \$79,000 for Payment of the Water and Sewer Assessments for Lot 4, Hodnik Subdivision KPB Parcel No. 17936032 when Property Ownership Transfers to Kachemak Bay Moose Habitat, Inc and a Deed Restriction has been Recorded Regarding Conservation and Public Access on the Property. City Manager. Introduction January 25, 2021, Public Hearing and Second Reading February 8, 2021.

Mayor Castner opened the public hearing.

Larry Slone commented in opposition to Ordinance 21-05. Homer is surrounded by accessible moose habitat and if a choice is to be made between human habitation and moose habitation he believes humans should have priority in the City. It's his understanding approximately 40% of the value of the city's property is exempt for one reason or another and he doesn't agree with adding this to the citizen's tax burden.

There was no further testimony and the hearing was closed.

LORD/ADERHOLD MOVED TO ADOPT ORDINANCE BY READING OF TITLE ONLY FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING.

Councilmember Evensen commented in support of the ordinance. He addressed the benefits of conservation in the City and the value that green spaces bring to the economy. He noted the inconsistency of taking this action regarding the ecosystem related to the noisy nuisance related winter activities happening on Beluga Lake.

Councilmember Aderhold commented this wetland area is contiguous and this lot is almost contiguous with the moose critical habitat area. She explained how the moose move through the area when they come down from the hillside because of the snow, and the critical habitat area is the quietest place they have to go. It's important to remember too, that in the fall these moose are elsewhere throughout the Lower Peninsula and that we are relying on them for people to harvest. It's important that we provide habitat for moose. She also shared about the wetland value of the property as it's peatland that holds a lot of the water that would otherwise overflow onto road and create other problems.

Councilmember Lord noted for clarification that the City isn't purchasing the property and taking it off the tax rolls, it's being purchased by a private entity for the purpose of conservation.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

ORDINANCE(S)

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. City Manager's Report

City Manager Dumouchel addressed the City of Homer COVID Risk status update from Red to Orange for city facilities and staff.

Council commented on items in his report specific to ongoing slash burning and its ongoing impacts to the air quality for residents, Public Work's quick response to recent the Lucky Shot water main break and erosion in a ditch on Ben Walters, and the remote sales tax update.

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Memorandum 21-026 from Finance Director re: FY22/23 Proposed Budget Schedule.

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY22/23 BUDGET SCHEDULE.

Councilmember Lord commented in support of the schedule, she values the opportunity for the Council, Commissions, and public to have opportunities along the lines to participate as the budget is being drafted.

Mayor Castner commented briefly regarding the tariff and fee schedule resolutions, and shared his idea that Council separate the operating budget from the capital budget. He thinks the capital budget gets overlooked and swept in with the operating budget. There isn't a lot of public participation regarding the capital budget and he would like to see them handled as separate ordinances.

Councilmember Lord asked to please make sure they have ample worksessions to ensure they have time for ample time for discussion and feedback. She doesn't know that she agrees with the notion of the capital budget being separate and she'd like more back up information regarding that. She feels over the last few years, they've received a lot of information regarding the capital budget with spreadsheets and narratives from administration, and then Council tends to make their changes.

Councilmember Aderhold and Smith also encouraged more worksession discussions throughout the budget process.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

- a. Resolution 21-014, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Awarding a Contract to Sherman Technologies, LLC, of Wasilla, Alaska, In the Amount of \$76,100.00 for Upgrades to the Video Security Systems at the Homer Public Library and Homer Airport and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Appropriate Documents. City Clerk.

Memorandum 21-027 from Library Director as backup.

LORD/VENUTI MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 21-014 BY READING OF TITLE ONLY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Larry Slone commented regarding the good work of Public Works in dealing with the water main break on Lucky Shot. He also commented regarding the noise on Beluga Lake on Sunday afternoons and the noise from the machines on the lake impact him more negatively than the moose. That's one of the better benefits of the City in that the City has the capacity to monitor and control that type of activity and that noise, and the noise is one thing that would drive him out of the City. He noted his comments regarding referring to the Mayor's veto as brutal. It was too harsh of a word, and he should have said blunt, as in a blunt instrument. He doesn't agree with a veto and sees it as an unwillingness to do the hard work of communicating or reflecting an extreme partisanship. In this case it was done in an effort to take care of something that slipped through the cracks.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Gatti had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY CLERK

City Clerk Jacobsen commented regarding an opening on the Library Advisory Board and for the Economic Development Advisory Commission Student Representative.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Dumouchel commented regarding the opening for the Assistant to the City Manager position and encouraged interested parties apply.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Castner thanked Councilmember Aderhold for penning the letter to the Governor regarding the ferry system that was approved on the Consent Agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Councilmember Hansen-Cavasos wished everyone a great week.

Councilmember Lord thanked the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club for their efforts in keeping the trails groomed and a successful COVID safe Junior Nordic Program. She encouraged citizens to stay engaged, Mayor and Council contacts are available on the City website, and she noted the City Manager's report is a great place to find information on what's happening in the City.

Councilmember Aderhold also encouraged citizen input, it's an important piece of the process. She share that the past weekend's weather was stunning and it was great to get out to bike and see all the skaters on the lake. She's happy that the daylight is returning.

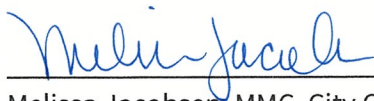
Councilmember Smith concurred on the importance of public input and that he's available for open and constructive dialog.

Councilmember Venuti thanked residents who spent time on retail therapy, shoppers who pay sales tax and businesses who collect and remit it, and to online shoppers. She was happy to see the sales tax information in the Manager's report and appreciated the Mayor's comment about the service fee to the City from AML. She noted several celebrations happening in February like President's Day and Love your Pet Day. She also encouraged citizens to contact Councilmember.

Councilmember Evensen wished everyone a great evening.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council Mayor Castner adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Monday, February 22, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole at 5:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held via Zoom Webinar in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.



Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk

Approved: February 22, 2021