



# Agenda

## Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting

Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 5:30 PM

City Hall Cowles Council Chambers In-Person & Via Zoom Webinar

---

### Homer City Hall

491 E. Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603  
[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

### Zoom Webinar ID: 991 8847 0047 Password: 125016

<https://cityofhomer.zoom.us>  
Dial: 346-248-7799 or 669-900-6833;  
(Toll Free) 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247

---

### CALL TO ORDER, 5:30 P.M.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

### PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

### RECONSIDERATION

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- [A.](#) Unapproved Regular Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2023

### VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

### STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- [A.](#) Library Director Report
  - 2022 Monthly Stats
  - 2023 Monthly Stats
- B. Legislative Report - Boardmember Finn
- C. Fundraising Report - Boardmember Kuszmaul

### PUBLIC HEARING

### PENDING BUSINESS

- [A.](#) Discussion of LAB Goals for 2024
  - LAB Strategic Plan & Goals Approved February 21, 2023
- [B.](#) Homer Public Library Strategic Plan 2025-2030
  - Public Library Current Strategic Plan

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- [A.](#) Items of Interest - News from Around the Country Related to Libraries
- [B.](#) Proposed Legislation from Around the Country
- [C.](#) LAB Annual Calendar 2024
- [D.](#) City of Homer Newsletter January 2024
- [E.](#) Ordinance 24-06, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Amending the FY24 Capital Budget by Appropriating \$25,000 from the Homer Accelerated Roads and Trails (HART) Trails Fund to Contract Engineering Services for Preliminary Design of Non-Motorized Trails and Trailhead Connecting City of Homer Diamond Creek Property to the Proposed Highway Underpass. Davis. Adopted January 8, 2024 Effective January 9, 2024

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE** (3 minute time limit)

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

**COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER** (If Present)

**COMMENTS OF THE BOARD**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Next Regular Meeting is **Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.** All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Session 23-10, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Acting Chair Clark Fair at 5:30 p.m. on December 19, 2023 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS MCKINNEY, FAIR, ASSELIN-MARTIN, CARSSOW AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE MCDONOUGH

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBERS BAILY, KUSZMAUL, FINN (EXCUSED)

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Acting Chair Fair requested a motion and second to approve the agenda.

CARSSOW/MCKINNEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)**

**RECONSIDERATION**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for November 21, 2023

ASSELIN-MARTIN/MCKINNEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2023 AS PRESENTED.

The Clerk provided a brief explanation that the preference is for Boardmembers to call or email the spelling or grammatical corrections to her instead of calling them out in the meeting in response to questions from the Board.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

**STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Director's Report for December 2023  
1. 2023 Statistics

## 2. 2022 Statistics

Library Director Berry reviewed his reports in the packet. He provided input on the following:

- No further developments regarding the letter received from the Attorney General. He did participate in a joint editorial submitted by a group of library directors to the Anchorage Daily News and Fairbanks News Miner which was published. He noted that he did not draft the letter but was responsible for some editing of the document.
- Excellent turnout for the Mary Lou Burton Travelogue on November 30<sup>th</sup>
- Upgrades to the Library WiFi are finished
- Minor Building Improvements are completed
  - o New Tables in the Young Adults Section
- Friends of the Homer Library endorsed the date for the Soiree
- Giving Tree has been doing great
- The Library will be open until 1:00 p.m. on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, closed December 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> for the Holidays
- The author for the Cold Millions will not be able to come to Homer so the schedule is be amended to focus on local authors. He will attend the Zoom event with John Straley.

Library Director Berry responded to questions regarding:

- Giving Tree progress
- Editorial publishing date and responses to that editorial

### B. Fundraising Update – Boardmember Kuszmaul

Acting Chair Fair noted that Boardmember Kuszmaul was not in attendance and opened the floor to reports or questions regarding fundraising.

There were none.

### D. Legislative Update

Acting Chair Fair noted that Boardmember Finn was not in attendance and inquired if other Boardmembers had a topics to report.

Boardmember Asselin-Martin noted that Representative Vance was hosting an Open House Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## **PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### A. Homer Public Library Strategic Plan Review & Update

Memorandum from Library Director as backup.  
Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Acting Chair Fair introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed his memorandum for the Board and stated that the staff will be working on a draft in 2024 and he would like the assistance of the Board with specific areas of the document. He then reviewed the existing document, going through the Priorities table noting the status of the items listed if the priorities needed to be removed and or updated. He explained his goal of refining the Library's role in the community as in the past it has been everything to everybody. He stated his expectations of performing more collaborative partnering with local entities, and continuing with successful programming. Library Director Berry facilitated questions regarding what he will expect from the Board, programming that is offered and what expected changes there will be within the document and data obtained from surveys.

Boardmembers suggested better advertisement of services and amenities provided by the Library since they were not aware of some of the programs and services being offered by the Library and how to find them.

Boardmembers Carsow and Asselin-Martin along with Student Boardmember McDonough will work on drafting a survey to be available at the March meeting for review.

B. Library Advisory Board Goals & Strategic Plan

Acting Chair Fair introduced the item and deferred to Library director Berry.

Library Director Berry noted that annually the Board reviews and updates if desired their Strategic Plan & Goals. He stated that he wanted to have the Board review and familiarize themselves with the document but since several of their members are not present they can bring it back to another meeting for discussion. He added that amendments can be made as desired by the Board or if the document is still current then it can stand as is.

The Board agreed by consensus that they would bring this back for the March agenda when everyone was present.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. City of Homer Newsletter for December 2023
- B. Resolution 23-124, 2024 Council & Advisory Bodies Regular Meeting Schedules
- C. LAB Annual Calendar  
2023 Annual Calendar  
2024 Annual Calendar

Boardmember Asselin-Martin volunteered for the April Report to Council. It was noted that Boardmember Carsow was scheduled to provide the report to City Council at their January 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE** (3 minute time limit)

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Library Director Berry reminded the Board about Ordinance 23-49 that will be coming back before City Council on the January 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting that establishes departments if any members are interested in commenting as members of the public.

Deputy City Clerk Krause thanked the Board for a fun meeting that was way shorter than her last meeting of the Planning Commission. She then shared a message that she received from her daughter’s closest friend who had submitted a piece of her daughter’s artwork for an exhibition. It was accepted and will be a memorial exhibit in her honor. The exhibit takes place in a museum in Florida.

**COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBERS** (if Present)

**COMMENTS OF THE BOARD**

Boardmember Carssow wished everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year she was looking forward to 2024 and the survey.

Boardmember McKinney wished everyone Happy Holidays but he will be taking a trip and won’t be in attendance for the January meeting.

Boardmember Asselin-Martin commented that Acting Chair Fair runs a tight ship and that Boardmember Finn could take some notes. She then commented that’s for you Kate cause I know you will listen to this meeting and read the minutes. Happy Solstice everyone.

Student Boardmember McDonough commented that she has enjoyed these last two meetings and is looking forward to all the survey business next year.

Acting Chair Fair wished everyone Happy Holidays and expressed he was glad to survive his temporary chairmanship. He then stated that he will be absent from the January meeting as his daughter will be visiting from Texas.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board Acting Chair Fair adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

---

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Library Director's Report**

## **December 31, 2023**

### **General Notes**

December was relatively quiet in the library. Staff are working on a new visual design for library cards.

### **Staff Notes**

Director's meetings:

- Staff: 3
- LAB: 1
- FHL: 4
- Council: 0
- Department Heads: 1
- Other: IT and Sister City stuff, SLED databases discussions, vendors for library cards and databases

### **Facility**

The lock on the back door was replaced. New chairs and lighting were added in the teen section.

### **Library Advisory Board (LAB)**

The LAB discussed its goals for the coming year and the process of assembling the 2025-2030 Library Strategic Plan, which will include doing some public surveys. My major focus for the Strategic Plan is on making the library financially, administratively and physically sustainable as an institution. That means some revisions to fundraising, staff organization and the building itself. The LAB also suggested new ways of publicizing library services and collections.

### **Friends of the Homer Library (FHL)**

We've revived the old digital picture frame that displays Homer patrons with their library cards from 2011, and it's out on the table by the front desk. Starting in January, we will have a monthly

writing circle with Richard Chiappone. The key dates for the Celebration of Lifelong Learning have been set: March 22 is the deadline for nominations, April 3 is the decision on the winners and the event is on April 20. The Giving Tree was up all through December but will be coming down shortly.

## Ongoing Events

Mondays, 1:30-4:30: Knitting Club

Wednesdays, 10:30-11:00: Toddler Time

Wednesdays, 12:00-2:00: Community Defined Youth Outreach

Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30: Chess Club

Thursdays, 3:30-4:30: After School at the Library

Fridays, 10:30-11:30: Preschool Storytime

Fridays, 3:30-5:45: LARP

First Tuesday, 6:30-8:00: SPARC Radio Club

First Thursday, 1:00-3:00: Literary Ladies

First and Third Thursdays, 5:30-7:30: Tech Help

Second Wednesdays, 4:45-5:45: Teen Advisory Board

Third Thursday, 10:30-11:30: Radio Storytime on KBBI

Fourth Tuesday, 4:30-6:30: FHL/HPL Book Club

Tuesday following the first City Council meeting of the month, 12:00-1:00: Conversations with a Councilmember (schedule may vary depending on availability)

## Special Events

- **Dec: Revisions to the teen area, including new seating, tables and lighting.**
- Dec. 6, 3:00-4:00: Virtual author talk by Victoria Aveyard on world building.
- Dec. 12, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author talk by Stephanie Land on motherhood, hunger and higher education.



- Jan. 5, 10:30-11:00: Storytime Craft makes suet balls.
- Jan. 9, 6:00-7:45: Kachemak Swim Club.
- Jan. 10, 4:00-5:00: Virtual author talk by Rebecca Serle about multigenerational love stories.
- Jan. 11, 4:00-6:30: Arts Group meeting.
- **Jan. 13, 10:30-12:30: Writing Circle with Richard Chiappone.**
- Jan. 13, 1:00-3:00: Group Landings Condo Association.
- Jan. 16, 1:00-3:00: Homer Hockey Association.
- **Jan. 19, 6:00: Big Read Kickoff at Alice’s Champagne Palace, including a Pier One workshop and live performance.**
- **Jan. 20, 10:00-12:00: Plant Swap (tentative).**
- Jan. 23, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author talk by Rajiv Nagaich, author of *Your Retirement: Dream or Disaster*.
- **Jan. 23, 6:00: Big Read Book Club discusses the Spokane riots.**
- **Jan. 24, 9:00: Big Read Coffee Table on KBBT discusses themes from *The Cold Millions*.**
- **Jan. 25, 6:00: Big Read Historical Homer—Clark Fair talks about his ongoing weekly column with the *Homer News*.**
- **Jan. 27, 10:00-12:00: Plant Swap (tentative)**
- Jan. 30, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author talk with Dr. Robert Lustig on medicine and processed foods.
- **Jan. 30, 6:00: Big Read Book Club discusses the history of unions.**
- **Feb. 1, 6:30: Big Read Zoom with authors Jess Walter and John Straley, exploring their books *The Cold Millions* and *The Big Both Ways*. Hosted at the library.**
- **Feb. 2, 5:30: Big Read Conversation about finding home and the local housing crisis. HCOA hosts the conversation and features an exhibit all through February.**
- **Feb. 4, 12:00: Big Read explores Alaskan cultures in a new high school curriculum, hosted at the Bunnell Arts Center.**
- **Feb. 6, 6:00: Big Read Book Club discusses indigenous perspectives.**
- **Feb. 8, 1:00: Big Read book discussion at the Senior Center, followed by sharing stories about homesteading.**
- Feb. 8, 4:00-5:00: Virtual author talk with Tessa Bailey on writing romantic comedies.

- **Feb. 9, 6:30: Big Read Free Speech Panel, featuring Michael Armstrong, Jeff Meyer, Megan Edge and others.**
- **Feb. 13, 6:00: Big Read Book Club discusses leading women.**
- **Feb. 15, 2:00: Big Read Book Circle invites elders and long-time locals to the Ninilchik Community Library to talk about *The Cold Millions* and share stories from early Ninilchik.**
- Feb. 20, 12:00-1:00: Virtual author talk with Jason Mott on Black America.
- Feb. 28, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author talk with Kim Scott on managing a workplace.
- **Apr. 20: Celebration of Lifelong Learning.**
- **May 10-11: Spring Book and Plant Sale.**

## Equipment

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR CHECKOUT

---

Laptop computers	Overhead projector
Wireless hotspots	16 mm movie projector
iPads	Projector screen
Radon detector	Various kinds of sports equipment
Voltmeters	HappyLight® light therapy boxes
Metal detectors	Sewing machines
Digital projector	Blu-ray player
Carousel slide projectors and extra carousels	Portable phonograph/cassette player

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR ON-SITE USE

---

Photocopier/scanner	ADA-compliant public computer
Internet-capable flat screen TV	Book magnifier
Moveable flat screen TV on a rolling cart	Public phone
DVD/CD player	Vinyl record player/Bluetooth headphones
Headphones	Blu-ray player
Videoconference equipment	
Videophone	
Microform reader	

Homer Public Library Statistical Summary for 2022

Date: 11-Jan-24

CIRCULATION	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Y.T.D.
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>11,269</b>	<b>10,348</b>	<b>12,360</b>	<b>11,394</b>	<b>9,965</b>	<b>11,919</b>	<b>12,015</b>	<b>13,136</b>	<b>11,843</b>	<b>11,313</b>	<b>10,441</b>	<b>10,467</b>	<b>136,470</b>
*Physical Print/Audio/Video	8,788	8,085	9,856	8,940	7,892	9,717	9,620	10,614	9,583	8,849	8,267	8,163	108,374
*Other Physical Items (n. 2)	93	78	80	109	76	118	122	117	101	92	73	86	1,145
*Alaska Digital Library	2,295	2,112	2,376	2,297	1,974	2,043	2,242	2,367	2,141	2,329	2,033	2,176	26,385
*Flipster e-magazines	93	73	48	48	23	41	31	38	18	25	39	22	499
*Kanopy streaming video	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	29	20	67
<b>INTERLIBRARY LOANS</b>													
Incoming (Borrowed)	59	46	20	14	21	11	18	22	11	20	32	28	302
Outgoing (Lent)	25	21	28	15	18	13	16	19	22	13	27	15	232
<b>BUILDING USE</b>													
Gate Count	4,929	5,120	6,573	7,613	6,719	7,675	8,905	8,794	12,042	9,628	6,919	6,570	91487
Study Rooms (# of group sessions)	102	136	145	147	269	194	160	261	222	161	174	156	2127
Study Rooms (# of people)	152	214	218	219	370	264	203	342	363	302	296	235	3178
Meeting Room (# of group sessions)	13	13	20	19	19	23	28	22	28	30	23	20	258
Meeting Room (# of people)	55	70	144	115	149	217	222	169	286	284	228	132	2071
<b>INTERNET USE</b>													
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>1,414</b>	<b>1,683</b>	<b>2,053</b>	<b>2,265</b>	<b>2,396</b>	<b>2,995</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>3,678</b>	<b>2,399</b>	<b>2,035</b>	<b>1,827</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>27,828</b>
*Wireless Internet sessions	765	951	1,147	1,389	1,560	2,075	2,348	2,548	1,488	1,242	1,176	1,039	17728
*Hardwired Internet sessions	649	732	906	876	836	920	1,035	1,130	911	793	651	661	10100
Website visits (sessions)	4,283	3,558	4,217	4,375	4,640	4,583	4,980	4,931	4,618	4,437	4,300	3604	52,526
<b>PROGRAM ATTENDANCE (n. 1)</b>													
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>1,153</b>	<b>1,006</b>	<b>1,351</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>997</b>	<b>1,154</b>	<b>1,285</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>1,324</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>13309</b>
*Programs for Age 0-5	1130	990	914	1184	665	768	658	983	810	930	748	116	9896
*Programs for Age 6-11	15	19	8	66	329	183	213	80	170	215	137	59	1494
*Programs for Age 12-18	22	1	3	4	2	18	9	0	5	31	3	12	110
*Programs for Age 19+	32	53	49	15	10	3	78	149	143	84	90	81	787
*Programs for All Ages	7	90	32	82	280	25	196	73	122	64	25	26	1022
<b>OUTREACH</b>													
# Events	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	21
# People	6	7	11	8	8	15	6	7	12	21	10	6	117
<b>NEW CARDS ISSUED</b>													
City	14	12	25	27	31	40	32	39	34	21	23	22	320
Borough	20	24	33	33	21	39	34	28	31	20	18	26	327
Temporary	1	0	2	1	2	7	3	3	2	1	0	0	22
Reciprocal	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	3	4	3	1	0	16
<b>VOLUNTEER HOURS</b>													
# of people	60	53	56	39	39	43	46	50	48	47	72	58	611
# of hours	203	206	193	232	159	133	182	183	179	146	288	309	2413
<b>MATERIALS ADDED</b>													
Books	282	207	219	231	277	327	272	285	108	295	147	239	2889
Audio	3	8	33	4	46	11	9	17	1	4	7	9	152
Video	25	23	47	68	73	45	35	43	10	27	20	33	449
Serials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Electronic Resources	79	45	183	93	73	118	68	0	163	252	19	59	1152
<b>MATERIALS REMOVED</b>													
Books	168	304	543	567	531	139	272	157	270	229	329	252	3761
Audio	0	0	1	44	25	2	68	0	0	9	1	0	150
Video	0	0	0	33	131	72	0	4	1	79	116	0	436
Serials	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	0	1	0	0	9
Electronic Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>REVENUES DEPOSITED</b>													
Fines/Fees/Copies	260.00	679.00	504.00	757.00	901.00	1075.00	517.20	1570.00	566.00	908.00	455.00	1378.00	9,570.20
Building Fund (151-)													0.00
Library Gifts (803-)													0.00
Endowment													0.00
Grants								7000.00	8058.00				15,058.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>260.00</b>	<b>679.00</b>	<b>504.00</b>	<b>757.00</b>	<b>901.00</b>	<b>1,075.00</b>	<b>517.20</b>	<b>8,570.00</b>	<b>8,624.00</b>	<b>908.00</b>	<b>455.00</b>	<b>1,378.00</b>	<b>\$24,628.20</b>

Data not available yet or incomplete

Note 1: Program attendance includes all programs sponsored by the library or the Friends of the Library. It does not include meetings of community groups. Programs are sorted by the age of the target audience, but totals include all attendees (i.e. parents as well as toddlers, etc.)

Note 2: Other physical items includes electronic devices, kits, toys, board games, sports equipment and videogames.

Homer Public Library Statistical Summary for 2023

Date: 10-Jan-24

CIRCULATION	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Y.T.D.
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>11,912</b>	<b>11,843</b>	<b>12,613</b>	<b>11,546</b>	<b>11,646</b>	<b>12,422</b>	<b>13,492</b>	<b>15,594</b>	<b>14,813</b>	<b>14,008</b>	<b>14,064</b>	<b>13,681</b>	<b>157,634</b>
*Physical Print/Audio/Video	9,322	9,289	9,449	8,728	8,933	9,900	10,782	12,842	11,907	10,991	10,976	10,352	123,471
*Other Physical items (n. 2)	91	108	116	90	109	111	128	121	115	106	120	122	1,337
*Alaska Digital Library	2,443	2,408	2,984	2,655	2,507	2,327	2,408	2,465	2,665	2,754	2,771	2,938	31,325
*Flipster e-magazines	28	22	36	26	27	32	51	30	20	13	32	29	346
*Kanopy streaming video	28	16	28	47	70	52	123	136	106	144	165	240	1,155
<b>INTERLIBRARY LOANS</b>													
Incoming (Borrowed)	24	14	17	24	13	7	20	21	14	14	14	18	200
Outgoing (Lent)	18	6	22	14	26	11	20	23	30	13	25	9	217
<b>BUILDING USE</b>													
Gate Count	10,232	11,500	12,884	12,022	13,253	12,711	10,327	9,676	9,734	8,109	7,800	7,427	125,675
Study Rooms (# of group sessions)	200	219	244	236	237	224	188	256	220	216	212	158	2,610
Study Rooms (# of people)	336	361	434	426	397	371	283	441	446	414	372	302	4,583
Meeting Room (# of group sessions)	40	28	36	25	16	34	20	18	25	25	21	21	309
Meeting Room (# of people)	282	205	238	229	162	383	220	161	230	166	187	151	2,614
<b>INTERNET USE</b>													
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>1,701</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>2,510</b>	<b>2,224</b>	<b>2,427</b>	<b>2,851</b>	<b>2,695</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>2,612</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>1,913</b>	<b>25,595</b>
*Wireless Internet sessions	1,006	1,055	1,401	1,372	1,533	1,763	1,588		1,553	447	1,112	995	13,825
*Hardwired Internet sessions	695	785	1,109	852	894	1,088	1,107	1,226	1,059	1,080	957	918	11,770
Website visits (sessions)	4,720	3,966	5,143	4,332	5,041	5,442			2,273	2,789	3,026	2,601	39,333
<b>PROGRAM ATTENDANCE (n. 1)</b>													
<b>TOTAL (*Included)</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,149</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>12,854</b>
*Programs for Age 0-5	670	597	725	662	910	854	751	984	952	872	878	201	9,056
*Programs for Age 6-11	176	160	143	63	150	217	170	67	78	41	109	37	1,411
*Programs for Age 12-18	14	26	72	44	34	69	57	36	73	28	12	11	476
*Programs for Age 19+	63	44	161	58	85	80	49	76	84	159	344	49	1,252
*Programs for All Ages	24	106	0	88	27	122	34	37	4	49	142	26	659
<b>OUTREACH</b>													
# Events	2	2	4	2	2	2	1	3	2	5	2	4	31
# People	12	8	14	17	18	11	3	4	11	9	15	11	133
<b>NEW CARDS ISSUED</b>													
City	41	33	27	26	28	38	31	32	30	34	25	23	368
Borough	30	32	25	26	17	30	30	32	33	32	22	17	326
Temporary	0	1	0	0	1	5	3	4	2	1	2	0	19
Reciprocal	0	0	0	0	4	3	2	4	1	0	1	1	16
<b>VOLUNTEER HOURS</b>													
# of people	73	67	55	65	39	58	57	60	63	72	61	66	736
# of hours	312	227	150	233	198	173	157	196	240	163	215	202	2,466
<b>MATERIALS ADDED</b>													
Books	324	180	143	311	265	190	125	303	189	213	127	185	2,555
Audio	7	7	23	11	19	8	6	7	5	12	19	17	141
Video	56	31	26	46	74	20	32	18	15	19	7	38	382
Serials	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Electronic Resources	31	61	32	52	16	0	13	0	0	53	67	136	461
<b>MATERIALS REMOVED</b>													
Books	523	216	326	95	359	412	88	98	51	141	110	52	2,471
Audio	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	8
Video	0	0	3	15	0	78	33	23	93	1	3	0	249
Serials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Electronic Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>REVENUES DEPOSITED</b>													
Fines/Fees/Copies	865.00	1037.00	0.00	1101.00	971.00	915.00	1020.00	1709.00	900.00	906.00	0.00	891.37	10,315.37
Building Fund (151-)													0.00
Library Gifts (803-)													0.00
Endowment													0.00
Grants													0.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>865.00</b>	<b>1,037.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,101.00</b>	<b>971.00</b>	<b>915.00</b>	<b>1,020.00</b>	<b>1,709.00</b>	<b>900.00</b>	<b>906.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>891.37</b>	<b>\$10,315.37</b>

Data not available yet or incomplete

Note 1: Program attendance includes all programs sponsored by the library or the Friends of the Library. It does not include meetings of community groups. Programs are sorted by the age of the target audience, but totals include all attendees (i.e. parents as well as toddlers, etc.)

Note 2: Other physical items includes electronic devices, kits, toys, board games, sports equipment and videogames.

Note 3: Gate count for July may be low due to equipment failure.

**LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD**  
**2023 STRATEGIC PLAN & GOALS**

Approved at the February 21, 2023 Regular Meeting

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Library Advisory Board shall act in an advisory capacity to the City Manager and City Council concerning the Homer Public Library and its programs pursuant to the powers and duties in Homer City Code 2.48.050.

**VALUES, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>General</b>        | Advise the Library Director and the City Council to ensure quality library service.  |
| <b>Administrative</b> | Advise city government to recruit, employ and retain a qualified library director.   |
| <b>Policy</b>         | Work with the Library Director to establish written policies to govern the operation and program of the library for approval by the City Council.  |
| <b>Planning</b>       | Ensure that the library has a strategic plan with implementation and evaluation components.  |
| <b>Fiscal</b>         | Solicit donations of money and/or property for the benefit of the library. Assist in the preparation and presentation of the annual budget in accordance with city code. Oversee fundraising efforts and collaboration between Friends of the Homer Library and the library's Planned Giving Program/endowment fund. |
| <b>Advocacy</b>       | Promote the mission of the library within the community. Advocate for the library to legislators.  |
| <b>Meetings</b>       | Participate in all advisory board meetings. Report on LAB and library activities to City Council at Council meetings.  |
| <b>Networking</b>     | Join United for Libraries national organization and/or Alaska Library Association as a resource for policies, operations and advocacy for libraries.   |

**GOALS**

**1. Advocate for Library Budget**

- a. Ensure the library has a collection development budget sufficient to build and maintain a current and robust collection of materials relevant to the community.
- b. Review needs for library physical plant upkeep and efficiencies.
- c. Promote future funding of library technology needs.
  - i. Scheduled replacement of public use computers.
  - ii. Requests for new or updated technologies (printers, scanners, security, etc.)

## 2. Implement the Planned Giving Program for the Library

- a. Identify and use the tools provided by the Homer Foundation and the American Library Association to learn how to ask potential donors if they would be interested in donating to the Library Endowment Fund.
- b. In the next year:
  - i. Ask a person to donate to the Library Endowment Fund.
  - ii. Get one “Big Fish” donation to the Endowment Fund.

## 3. Explore opportunities with the Library to increase and improve library service to all community members, especially students and underrepresented user-groups.

- a. Work with Library Director to develop a schedule of community partner visitors/presenters, including partners that aid with outreach to students and underrepresented user groups.

## 4. Actively recruit for LAB boardmembers

### DUTIES OF THE BOARD & STAFF

#### Boardmembers

- Attend City Council meetings as assigned.
- Attend worksessions and training opportunities.
- Come to meetings prepared to take action through motions, or ask staff before the meeting for more information.
- Communicate with City Council members to gain support on LAB-related projects that need sponsorship at the Council level.

#### Staff Liaison

- Aid the Chair in setting the agenda.
- Compile packet material from boardmembers, write backup memos, and submit to Clerk.
- Provide information on items the board needs to review annually.
- Inform the board of City Council actions and discussion of library-related issues.

#### Clerk’s Office

- Aid Staff in compiling packet materials and print/distribute them to the board.
- Aid Staff and Chair in setting the agenda.
- Track yearly items such as reappointments and election of officers.
- Advertise any seat vacancies and process new appointment applications.
- Help the board learn to be more efficient and effective in their meetings.
- Support the board’s ability to communicate with the Mayor and City Council (through Memorandums, Resolutions, and Ordinances).

# Homer Public Library

## Strategic Plan 2020-2025

### Executive Summary

Homer Public Library serves a population of roughly 13,000, providing access to information, promoting literacy and facilitating lifelong learning. The library moved into a new building in 2006, but library usage has increased significantly since then. In order to keep up with the shifting demands of library patrons the library has adopted four main priorities for future planning: improving operational efficiency, expanding the library's role as a community hub, promoting lifelong learning, and providing access to materials in a range of formats.

### Our Mission: What We Do

The mission statement was approved by the Library Advisory Board on April 5, 2016, and the entire Homer City Council on June 27, 2016. It appears on the library's website:

The Homer Public Library serves the diverse needs of our community members by providing access to information, promoting literacy, and facilitating lifelong learning. We foster education, personal well-being, cultural creativity, community engagement, and economic development. Our resources are offered without charge to people of all ages and abilities within our service area.<sup>1</sup>

### About the Library

Interest in a public library services in Homer began in the 1940s when the Homer Women's club set up a library in an old school building. By 1950 a simple 600-square-foot cabin was built to house the library. In 1978, the library became a department of the City of Homer, and the following year was replaced by a 3,500 square foot building on Pioneer Avenue.<sup>2</sup> In 2002 the Library Advisory Board, Friends of Homer Library, City of Homer and many volunteers collaborated to begin the Capital Campaign for the New Library, which raised \$8.1 million over the course of several years.<sup>3</sup>

Homer Public Library moved into its current 17,000-square-foot facility in 2006. The facilities include 5 study rooms and a public meeting room, as well as 26 public-use computers and a collection of roughly 45,000 items.<sup>4</sup> Library services include reference and circulation, interlibrary loan, access to a variety of electronic databases and free wifi available throughout the building. The library's service area includes roughly 13,000 people and extends from Ninilchik in the north to the southern shore of Kachemak Bay, and from Cook Inlet in the west to Kachemak Selo in the east.

As a part of the Homer City government, the library is managed by a director in consultation with the Library Advisory Board (LAB), an eight-member body that suggests and molds policy. The LAB advocates for the library before the city council as well as assisting with fundraising and some library programs. The director answers to the city manager and through him or her to the elected city council and the mayor. The city council sets the budget for the entire city and has lawmaking powers.



For FY 2019 the library's total budget was \$925,502, of which \$712,346 went to personnel costs and the remainder to materials and service expenses.<sup>5</sup> The director works with the city manager to define a budget request, which is then amended or approved by the city council in November of each year.

The library offers numerous public programs to support the mission, including many for youth and families. From storytimes and STEM programs to book clubs and author visits, library staff bring families together to support literacy and learning. The Friends of Homer Library (FHL) play a major role in community outreach. FHL manages the library bookmobile, the StoryWalk® outside the building, the *Reading Between the Lines* weekly radio program, a public newsletter and various periodic activities. In conjunction with the children's librarian, FHL staff and volunteers sponsor a large number of events for the Summer Reading and Learning Program. Various community groups make use of the library facilities on a regular basis, including the Knitting Circle, the Ham Radio Club, the Live-Action Roleplaying (LARP) community and the Writers Refuge, among others.

The library has always been heavily used. After the library moved into its then-new building in 1979, usage tripled in ten years.<sup>6</sup> From 2011 to 2018 the library averaged 128,312 annual visits.<sup>7</sup> According to *Library Journal*, during 2018 the library had a per-capita circulation rate of 28.01 and per-capita visitation of 25.89.<sup>8</sup> The library and library staff have won awards on several occasions:

- 2007: Honor Award from the Alaska Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in recognition of the modern design and use of local materials.<sup>9</sup>
- 2011-14 and 2016-18: Annually awarded Star Library status from *Library Journal*.<sup>10,11</sup>
- 2017: Children's Librarian Claudia Haines served on the selection committee for the Caldecott Medal.<sup>12</sup>

The *Homer Comprehensive Plan* was published in 2018 and addresses library services in Chapter 6, Objective G. This plan discusses library objectives at some length:

**Objective G: LIBRARY– Maintain Homer's first-class library facility and continuously build on the high-quality library services to meet current and projected needs.**

**Current Status**

In the ten years since the new Homer Public Library opened in 2006, use of the facility and library services has increased dramatically. Between 2008 and 2015, circulation of library materials grew by 43%, rising to 142,178 items. The number of people using the library's study rooms rose 19%, while use of the meeting room increased 35%. Attendance at children's story times grew by 63%. Fortunately, the library enjoys wide community support, as reflected in the fact that volunteer hours rose as well, by 48%. Since the closure of Homer's Boys and Girls Club in 2013, the library has seen a significant increase in the number of children using the library after school. Tourists and transient workers use the library heavily during the summer months. Winter, traditionally a slower time at the library, has also seen increased activity in recent years, on par with the summer months.

The library building is approximately 17,000 square feet and houses about 45,800 titles with a capacity for up to 47,000. The library offers 26 public computers with internet

access, wireless internet, and cabled connections in study rooms and carrels. The library employs six full-time and three part-time staff. The Friends of Homer Library and numerous other volunteers support library operations.

Resources to support the library come from the City's general fund, the majority of which is from sales and property tax revenue, a small annual grant from the State of Alaska, and extensive local support from the Friends of Homer Library. The Friends of Homer Library is a nonprofit organization which provides resources for many library programs as well as occasional one-time equipment purchases not provided for in the city budget.

When economies tighten, library use increases because individuals are less able to afford to purchase internet connections, computers, books, and DVDs. More people use library computers to seek employment, higher education, and training. Especially during difficult economic times, the public library plays a crucial role in equalizing access to information, government, jobs, and educational resources.

The facility currently accommodates the existing level of usage with moderate conflicting demands for space or services; however, if current trends continue, the ability to provide the access to information, materials, programming, and workspace requested by the community will be challenged. The 2018 library budget for the City of Homer is \$891,814, approximately 7.1%, of the City's overall budget.

### **Short-term Priorities**

**Technology:** The use of computers and other digital devices to access information and reading material continues to expand. The library's public computers and wireless network are used extensively (49,406 sessions in 2015). The current public-use computers, as well as the video conference equipment, are near the end of their useful life span. A depreciation/replacement reserve fund is crucial to replace this essential equipment as it ages.

**Staff:** On-going training is essential to keep current on new technologies as they arise in order to implement best practices regarding technology, as well as to assist the public of all ages.

### **Implementation Strategies**

- Keep current with the demands of new technology

### **Mid and Long-term Priorities**

The library building was intended to provide capacity to serve projected demand for 20 years. With significant increases in library use and demand for services at the ten-year mark, meeting the demand at 20 years may be challenging. Should the demand at the library continue to increase beyond projection, it will be necessary to evaluate options for providing services into the future.

### **Implementation Strategies**

- Consider the strategies to address the demand for library services<sup>13</sup>

In 2016 the library conducted a qualitative survey of patrons regarding what they most liked about the library. Common sentiments included the size and variety of the collection; the helpfulness of the staff; and the ease of accessing electronic materials.<sup>14</sup> In 2018 the library undertook a survey of the local business community to assess how often businesses used the library’s resources. This survey showed mixed results: about half the businesses in town had used the library or some professional organization as an information source, but only 14% of respondents cited “information services” as a major need. Far more respondents expressed interest in face-to-face interactions such as classes and networking.<sup>15</sup>

## About Homer

According to 2017 estimates by the Census Bureau, the city of Homer has 5,697 residents with a median household income of \$59,185. About 94.7% of the population holds a high-school degree or higher. About four-fifths of households (80.6%) have access to a broadband internet connection.<sup>16</sup> The population is 86.19% white and 6.39% American Indian or Alaska Native, with no other single race representing more than 2% of the total.<sup>17</sup> (Note that these statistics apply specifically to the City of Homer.)

The community is served by eight public schools and one small campus of Kenai Peninsula College.<sup>18</sup> The school libraries vary in size.

Homer’s economy includes a range of industries. According to the *Homer Comprehensive Plan 2018*, “educational services, health care and social assistance are responsible for more than 26% of jobs in Homer...additionally, arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services provide another 13% of local jobs.”<sup>19</sup> Commercial fishing also makes up an important component of the community’s tax base.

## Priorities

PRIORITY	SHORT-TERM ACTIVITIES	MEDIUM-TERM ACTIVITIES	LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES
<b>Improve the efficiency of the library by harnessing technology and streamlining procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automate library processes where possible</li> <li>• Update library card registration process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-train staff in multiple capacities and update technology skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider joining the Alaska Library Network as a full member</li> </ul>
<b>Expand the library’s capacity to serve as a community hub</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with the public school system, homeschooling families and Kenai Peninsula College to provide resources for and increase library use with students</li> <li>• Continue working with FHL to develop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase resources and services for the business and entrepreneurial community</li> <li>• Consider hosting a job fair or career day for students and employers</li> <li>• Host open debate forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install a gate between the meeting room and the main floor, allowing the meeting room to be open when the library is closed</li> <li>• Expand the library’s meeting space/add additional meeting rooms</li> </ul>

	programs based on community need		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the library's ability to serve as a disaster response center</li> </ul>
<b>Promote lifelong learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer more activities and resources to support information competency</li> <li>• Continue working with FHL on the Celebration of Lifelong Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with community organizations to promote public safety (Red Cross, Coast Guard, Police)</li> <li>• Workshops on financial literacy</li> <li>• Workshops on health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in resources for all age groups</li> <li>• Partner with library systems in Anchor Point and Seldovia to promote literacy and access to programs</li> </ul>
<b>Provide access to materials in a range of formats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote databases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reorganize and simplify website</li> <li>• Consider building subcollections of physical goods based on community interest and need, such as tools or seeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digitize archival materials, starting with the Top Drawer Collection</li> <li>• Acquire new databases and expand existing ones</li> </ul>

## References

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Homer Public Library. "Library Mission Statement." City of Homer, 27 Jun. 2016. Web. 17 May 2019. <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library/library-mission-statement>.
- <sup>2</sup> Homer Public Library. "About the Library." *Homer Public Library*. City of Homer, 2015. Web. 21 May 2019. <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library/about-library>.
- <sup>3</sup> Homer Public Library. "HPL History Outline." 2010. Print.
- <sup>4</sup> Homer Public Library. "About the Library."
- <sup>5</sup> City of Homer. *2019 Adopted Budget*. City of Homer, 12 Dec. 2018. Web. 10 Jun. 2019. [https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/finance/page/43831/2019\\_adopted\\_budget.pdf](https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/finance/page/43831/2019_adopted_budget.pdf).
- <sup>6</sup> O'Meara, Jan. "A Warm Place to Read—Or to Dream." *Homer News* 8 Mar. 1990. Print. 2B-3B.
- <sup>7</sup> Homer Public Library. "Statistics." 2018. Print.
- <sup>8</sup> Lance, Keith Curry. "2018 Star Libraries By the Numbers." *Library Journal* 30 Oct. 2018. Web. 29 Jul. 2019. <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=lix181101StarsByNumbers#400K900K>.
- <sup>9</sup> Weller, Chris. "The Most Beautiful Library in Every State." *Insider*. Insider, Inc., 29 Jul. 2016. Web. 29 Jul. 2019. <https://www.insider.com/most-beautiful-library-in-all-50-states-2016-7>.
- <sup>10</sup> Lance, Keith Curry. "Every Star Library Ever Named." *Library Journal* 4 Dec. 2017. Web. 29 Jul. 2019. <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=every-star-library-ever-named-2017>.
- <sup>11</sup> Lance, Keith Curry. "2018 Star Libraries By the Numbers."
- <sup>12</sup> Armstrong, Michael. "Homer Children will Play Part in Picking Top Book Illustrator." *Homer News* 8 Dec. 2016. Web. 29 Jul. 2019. <https://www.homernews.com/life/homer-children-will-play-part-in-picking-top-book-illustrator>.
- <sup>13</sup> City of Homer. *Homer Comprehensive Plan 2018*. City of Homer, 2018. Web. 21 May 2019. <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/2018-homer-comprehensive-plan>.
- <sup>14</sup> Homer Public Library. "What Do You Value About HPL?" 2016. Print.
- <sup>15</sup> City of Homer. "Homer Public Library Survey for Small Businesses, Entrepreneurs, and Nonprofits." *Minutes of the Library Advisory Board*. City of Homer, 6 Nov. 2018. Print.
- <sup>16</sup> Census Bureau. "Homer City, Alaska." *Census.gov*. Census Bureau, 2017. Web. 21 May 2019. [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).
- <sup>17</sup> State of Alaska. "Homer." *Alaska Community Database Online*. State of Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs, 2019. Web. 21 May 2019. <https://dcra-cdo-dcced.opendata.arcgis.com/>.
- <sup>18</sup> *Alaska Community Database Online*.
- <sup>19</sup> *Homer Comprehensive Plan 2018*.

# Thank You to America's Librarians for Protecting Our Freedom to Read

I wrote a letter thanking librarians across the country for everything they're doing to protect our freedom to read.

July 17, 2023



Barack Obama



Graphic credit: Ryan MacEachern / Penguin.co.uk

To the dedicated and hardworking librarians of America:

In any democracy, the free exchange of ideas is an important part of making sure that citizens are informed, engaged and feel like their perspectives matter.

It's so important, in fact, that here in America, the First Amendment of our Constitution states that freedom begins with our capacity to share and access ideas — even, and maybe especially, the ones we disagree with.

More often than not, someone decides to write those ideas down in a book.

Books have always shaped how I experience the world. Writers like Mark Twain and Toni Morrison, Walt Whitman and James Baldwin taught me something essential about our country's character. Reading about people whose lives were very different from mine showed me how to step into someone else's shoes. And the simple act of writing helped me develop my own identity — all of which would prove vital as a citizen, as a community organizer, and as president.

Today, some of the books that shaped my life — and the lives of so many others — are being challenged by people who disagree with certain ideas or perspectives. It’s no coincidence that these “banned books” are often written by or feature people of color, indigenous people, and members of the LGBTQ+ community — though there have also been unfortunate instances in which books by conservative authors or books containing “triggering” words or scenes have been targets for removal. Either way, the impulse seems to be to silence, rather than engage, rebut, learn from or seek to understand views that don’t fit our own.

I believe such an approach is profoundly misguided, and contrary to what has made this country great. [As I’ve said before](#), not only is it important for young people from all walks of life to see themselves represented in the pages of books, but it’s also important for all of us to engage with different ideas and points of view.

It’s also important to understand that the world is watching. If America — a nation built on freedom of expression — allows certain voices and ideas to be silenced, why should other countries go out of their way to protect them? Ironically, it is Christian and other religious texts — the sacred texts that some calling for book bannings in this country claim to want to defend — that have often been the first target of censorship and book banning efforts in authoritarian countries.

Nobody understands that more than you, our nation’s librarians. In a very real sense, you’re on the front lines — fighting every day to make the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions, and ideas available to everyone. Your dedication and professional expertise allow us to freely read and consider information and ideas, and decide for ourselves which ones we agree with.

That’s why I want to take a moment to thank all of you for the work you do every day — work that is helping us understand each other and embrace our shared humanity.

And it’s not just about books. You also provide spaces where people can come together, share ideas, participate in community programs, and access essential civic and educational resources. Together, you help people become informed and active citizens, capable of making this country what they want it to be.

And you do it all in a harsh political climate where, all too often, you’re attacked by people who either cannot or will not understand the vital — and uniquely American — role you play in the life of our nation.

So whether you just started working at a school or public library, or you’ve been there your entire career, Michelle and I want to thank you for your unwavering commitment to the freedom to read. All of us owe you a debt of gratitude for making sure readers across the country have access to a wide range of books, and all the ideas they contain.

Finally, to every citizen reading this, I hope you’ll join me in reminding anyone who will listen — and even some people you think might not — that the free, robust exchange of ideas has always been at the heart of American democracy. Together, we can make that true for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Barack

In last year's Referenda Roundup, *American Libraries* noted the growing trend of organized groups of voters fighting library levies due to those groups' opposition to libraries carrying materials by and about LGBTQ people. The primary and general election cycles—as well as 2023's special elections—demonstrate that politically driven opponents continue to threaten the library's existence, especially in smaller, rural areas.

Overall, library measures across the US continue to pass at a high rate. However, in many communities, the discourse over what materials can be held in certain sections of their libraries has escalated to people introducing ballot measures seeking to defund, shut down, or weaken the library's authority. Tried and true campaign messaging, like touting a library's return on investment, has been supplanted by issues of free speech and censorship. Razor-thin margins determined the future of many libraries this past year.

One constant is the support from Friends groups, foundations, volunteers, and advocates at the core of successful campaigns. Many libraries are also seeking the support of strategists and legal counsel to navigate these unprecedented times.

## DAYTON, WASHINGTON

# Defunding measure has day in court instead of the polls

An effort to dissolve Columbia County (Wash.) Rural Library District (CCRLD) was decided in court rather than at the ballot box, because of a lawsuit filed by the local political action committee Neighbors United for Progress (NUP). Columbia County Superior Court Commissioner Julie Karl blocked the proposed dissolution measure after finding evidence of fraud in the petitioning process and unconstitutionality in the dissolution process ([bit.ly/columbia-ballot](https://bit.ly/columbia-ballot)).

**POPULATION SERVED:**  
4,042

**REFERENDUM DETAILS:**  
Dissolve the library district

**RESULT:**  
Blocked from ballot in court

CCRLD has faced book challenges, particularly against those with LGBTQ+ content, as well as challenges against its value as a tax-funded entity ([bit.ly/CCRLD-referendum](https://bit.ly/CCRLD-referendum)).

Jessica Ruffcorn, a resident of the library district and mother of two, started a petition to place the dissolution measure on the upcoming ballot. By state law, Ruffcorn needed signatures from 10% of voters from the county's unincorporated areas to put the measure on the ballot. This meant Dayton residents were not included in the signature collection and would not have been allowed to vote in the referendum.

After NUP Chair Elsie Severe enlisted help from an attorney, two issues with the proposed measure quickly came to light. First, the measure had been misrepresented. Five petitioners came forward (anonymously out of fear of retaliation) and stated they thought the petition was for moving or removing

challenged library books, not dissolving the library entirely.

Second, while Ruffcorn ultimately collected more signatures for the petition to compensate for those ruled invalid, Severe's lawyer also argued the measure itself would be unconstitutional. Under the current voting model, only voters in the unincorporated part of the county would be allowed to vote on the measure, even though CCRLD also serves—and is physically located in—Dayton, where three-quarters of county residents live and pay taxes to support the library. In her ruling, Karl sided with NUP, saying, "We did away with taxation without representation a long time ago."

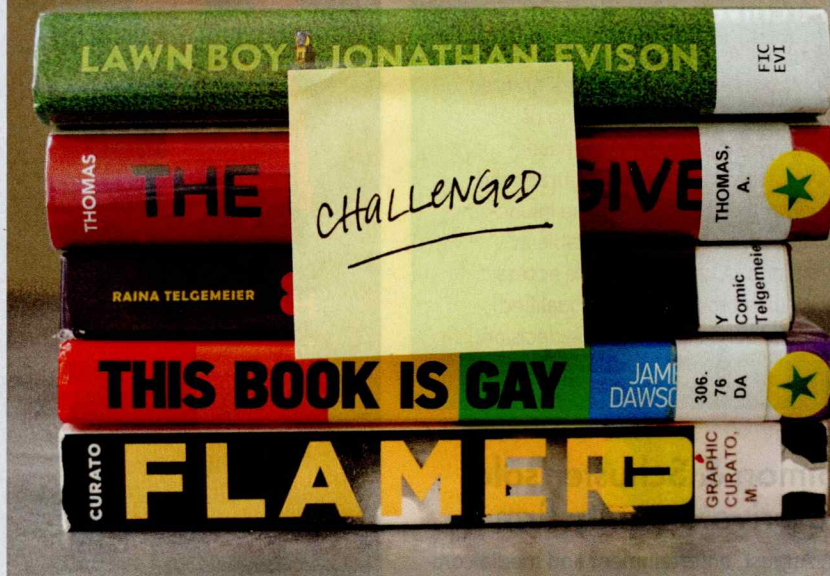
Severe and Lorna Barth, president of Friends of the Dayton Memorial Library, credit their partnership and combined resources for the victory. Barth notes that in addition to Severe's intellect and drive, the optics of one young mother countering the narrative led by another young mother are important. Severe agrees, adding that similar campaigns need to gear their messaging toward conservative viewpoints. "It's never easy to counter their narrative," Severe says. "They say, 'We're saving our children.' And as a mother, I said, 'Enough is enough. You won't tell me how to raise my children.'"

Barth suspects the fight over books was a red herring. "It really was a hope to dissolve [CCRLD] and put the library back into the control of the city where it could be run by volunteers and staff chosen by the city council," she says, adding that she thinks the city council does not have the budget, staff, or plans to adequately take care of the library.

The Washington State Legislature is currently considering raising voter petition thresholds for rural library measures to 25% or greater. The deputy secretary of state is also seeking to include public libraries in existing nondiscrimination legislation to make it easier for groups like NUP to challenge discriminatory actions like the removal of books ([bit.ly/WAthreshold](https://bit.ly/WAthreshold)).



## RISING CHALLENGES, BANS



## Another record year for book challenges

Preliminary data from the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) through August 31 showed a 20% increase in reported book challenges for 2023—surpassing the record set in 2022. The data also showed an increase in challenges that targeted multiple titles, with libraries in 11 states receiving challenges that included 100 or more books. These challenges targeted 1,915 different titles, most of which are books written by or about people of color or LGBTQIA+ people.



## Illinois passes law designed to deter book bans

On June 12, Illinois Gov. J. B. Pritzker signed into law a bill that would withhold state funds for libraries that remove books for partisan reasons or refuse to adopt ALA's Library Bill of Rights or similar language. The law, which goes into effect January 1, 2024, is considered the first of its kind in the nation, although California passed a similar bill covering schools in September.

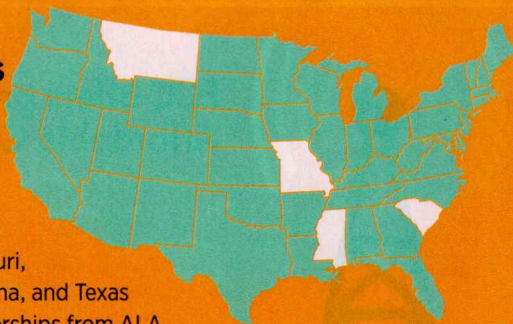
## Freedom to Read Statement turns 70

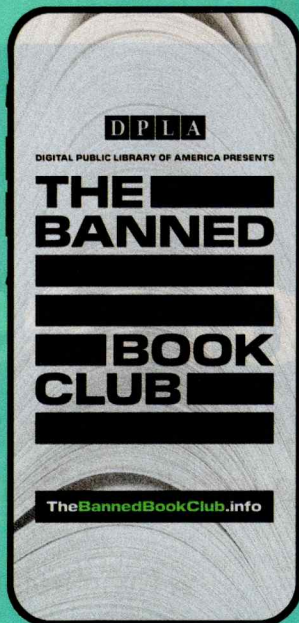
On June 25, ALA celebrated the 70th anniversary of its Freedom to Read Statement by calling on publishers, authors, libraries, and others in the book community to join a list of signatories in affirming their commitment to this guiding document. Hundreds signed on to the statement, which begins:

“The freedom to read is essential to our democracy.”

## State libraries cut ties with ALA

Amid the national fight over book bans, state libraries in Missouri, Montana, South Carolina, and Texas withdrew their memberships from ALA. Conservative lawmakers in several other states have called for the same. Some states cited ALA's stance on book challenges and bans, while others took issue with a 2022 tweet made by ALA President Emily Drabinski.





## Libraries launch book ban workarounds

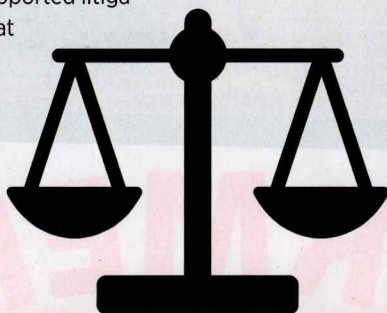
To help circumvent book bans, several libraries made digital titles available beyond their service areas. In 2023, a few joined Books Unbanned, an initiative launched the prior year at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library. The program allows young adults nationwide to borrow ebooks from participating libraries. The Digital Public Library of America debuted its Banned Book Club geotargeted app (left), allowing users to borrow titles banned in their area. And ALA joined the “Books for All” campaign from New York Public Library to offer free digital access to Teen Banned Book Club picks.

## Bomb threats in libraries across the country

A rash of bomb threats against public and school libraries intensified this year, forcing some libraries and schools to temporarily close their doors. These threats included facilities in California, Illinois, Iowa, and Oklahoma, among others. In many cases, these threats appear to be linked to book challenges and objections to programming and displays that reflect the experiences of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people.

## Intellectual freedom enters the courtroom

Many libraries, booksellers, and publishers—as well as ALA’s Freedom to Read Foundation and other advocates—joined lawsuits against book bans, alleging they violate First Amendment rights. They supported litigation efforts in Arkansas, Florida, and Texas that aimed to restrict or remove access to books. One notable decision was in Llano County, Texas, in which several community members sued the local government over book removals and won in district court. A county commission vote to close the library following the ruling was unsuccessful.



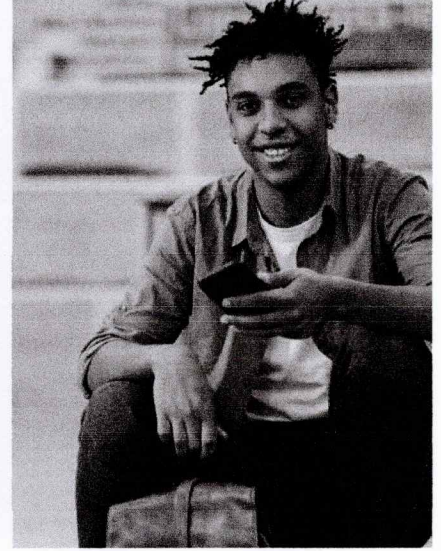
## Obama writes open letter to librarians

On July 17, former President Barack Obama published an open letter to US librarians in an era of increasingly frequent book challenges and sometimes politically motivated, highly personal attacks against those who resist them. The letter, which addressed librarians, read in part:

“In a very real sense, you’re on the front lines—fighting every day to make the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions, and ideas available to everyone.”



Photos: Presidencia de la República Mexicana (Obama); NAMPIX/Adobe Stock (sign)



**Kathi Inman Berens, Ph.D. and Rachel Noorda, Ph.D.**

**Portland State University**

# **Gen Z and Millennials**

## **How They Use Public Libraries and Identify Through Media Use**

### **Executive Summary**

---

**Gen Z and millennials have some surprising attitudes and behaviors regarding media consumption and library use.**

Generational categories like Gen Z and millennials (aged 13-40 in 2022)<sup>1</sup> are an important way to understand book engagement and library use because “an individual’s age is one of the most common predictors of differences in attitudes and behaviors.”<sup>2</sup>

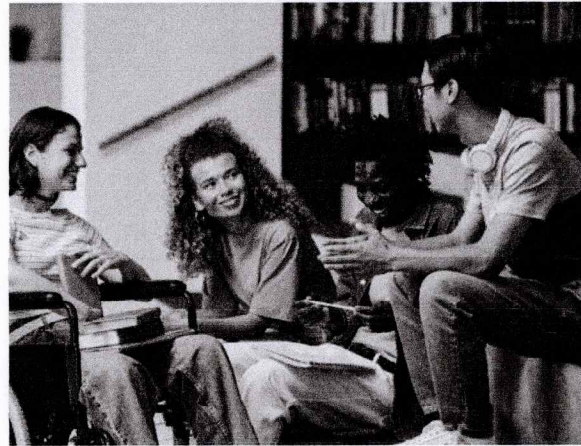
Mobile computing is a key aspect of daily life for Gen Z and millennials. 92% check social media every day; 25% check social media multiple times per hour. The high instance of reading on mobile devices among these groups, particularly of social media and other “walled garden” apps, is a profound shift

from previous generations. This report will explain some implications of that development. It will aid librarians and other stakeholders in examining how libraries currently serve Gen Z and millennials, and how to continue serving them as they age. At times this report considers Gen Z and millennials together; at others, it drills down into generationally-specific behaviors when those behaviors differ sufficiently to warrant attention or explanation.

Based on a nationally representative survey sample conducted by the authors,<sup>3</sup> this report

discusses the following attitudes and behaviors Gen Z and millennials have regarding libraries:

- 54% of Gen Z and millennials visited a physical library within a twelve-month period.
- Libraries attract even Gen Z and millennials who **don't identify as readers**. 23% of Gen Z and millennials had visited a physical library in a twelve-month period AND did not identify as readers.
- Subscription-only and/or mobile-exclusive content provided in apps such as Webtoon (webcomics), Radish (romance e-novels) and Audible (audiobooks) is particularly popular with Gen Z and millennials: 12% of Gen Z & 8% of millennials subscribe to webcomics and 30% of Gen Z & 38% of millennials subscribe to Audible. But subscription content, such Audible-exclusive titles, is mostly unavailable for libraries to license.<sup>4</sup>
- 52% of Gen Z and millennial physical library patrons said they borrowed from library **digital collections**.
- Black (58%) and Latinx (57%) physical library patrons use digital collections more than the general survey population (52%).
- Long wait times for digital books disadvantage Black, Indigenous, and People of Color more than the general population. 47% of Black Gen Z and millennials overall (not just physical library patrons) have used digital collections, compared to 37% of the general population.
- 75% of Gen Z and millennial physical library patrons believe a library wait of one week or less is "long."



**54% of Gen Z and millennials visited a physical library within a twelve-month period.**

- Teen lounges in libraries are safe, comfortable spaces that support:
  - relaxation
  - mental and social well-being
  - learning untethered from school and educational mandates
- Given a choice, 59% of Gen Z and millennials would choose the graphic/manga version of a story rather than a text-only book.
  - Preference for a graphic/manga version instead of text-only book is higher in Black (69%) and Latinx (73%) communities.

Overall, social media use, crossmedia identities (readers, gamers, makers, fans and more), and subscription engagement characterize Gen Z and millennials in contrast to other generations.

### **This report is organized into five parts:**

1. Gen Z **library use** and **non-use**.
2. How Gen Z and millennials **use media** and **discover books**.
3. Gen Z and millennials' **identity categories** such as readers, gamers, makers, and fans.
4. **Challenges** libraries face in growing Gen Z and millennials' engagement.
5. **Recommendations** for how libraries can connect with Gen Z and millennials.

EveryLibrary is monitoring state legislation during the 2024 session that would limit Americans' freedom to read and think for themselves. Of most concern are proposed laws that would allow for criminal prosecution of librarians, educators, higher ed. faculty, and museum professionals.

In 2024, we are paying the most attention to state legislative initiatives in eight categories:

1. bills that would criminalize libraries, education, and museums (and/or the employees therein) by removing long-standing defense from prosecution exemptions under obscenity laws and/or expose librarians to civil penalties;
2. bills that change obscenity and "harmful to minors" definitions that preempt established First Amendment rights;
3. bills that would establish book rating systems, leading to segregation or expulsion of materials by topic or viewpoint;
4. bills that mandate restrictive library policies, esp. prescribing collection development or materials challenge policies;
5. bills that would limit access to school library databases;
6. bills that create onerous parental control/notification requirements that lead to segregated materials or limit free speech;
7. bills that limit or outlaw the teaching of "divisive concepts";
8. bills that lead to defunding or closure of libraries

On a positive note, we are also tracking "right to read" bills that offer protections to libraries/

We do more than monitor bills. EveryLibrary is an active and engaged partner with over 75 grassroots groups, many state library associations, and other coalition partners, helping them create and field effective legislative advocacy strategies. We provide partners with free access to a suite of digital advocacy tools including our [Action.EveryLibrary.Org](#) site, [FightForTheFirst.org](#), and [SaveSchoolLibrarians.org](#). If you would like to talk about how EveryLibrary can assist your state library association or advocacy group, please contact our team today.

## 2024 Legislation of Concern

This page is based on a dynamic search of legislation and is being continually updated.

**GA HB338 - Student Technology Protection Act; enact (Crossed Over)**

AN ACT To amend Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to provide for the inclusion of methods for the promotion of the safe and appropriate use of technology and...

01/08/2024: Senate Recommended

**GA SB154 - Sale or Distribution of Harmful Materials to Minors; provisions of Code Section 16-12-103 shall be applicable to libraries operated by schools; provide (In Committee)**

AN ACT To amend Part 3 of Article 3 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to sale or distribution of harmful materials to minors, so as to provide that the provisions of Code Section 16-12-103 shall be...

02/14/2023: Senate Read and Referred

**IL HB4247 - ONLINE AGE VERIFICATION-MINORS (Introduced)**

Creates the Online Age Verification for Material Harmful to Minors Act. Requires any commercial entity that knowingly or intentionally publishes or distributes material harmful to minors on the Internet from a website that contains a substantial...

11/29/2023: Filed with the Clerk by Rep. Jed Davis

**IN HB1221 - Material that is obscene or harmful to minors. (In Committee)**

Material that is obscene or harmful to minors. Defines terms and amends the education and criminal laws related to material that is obscene or harmful to minors.

01/09/2024: First reading: referred to Committee on Education

**IN SB0032 - Tax and fiscal control over libraries. (In Committee)**

Tax and fiscal control over libraries. Eliminates the authority of public libraries to impose an ad valorem property tax as a "taxing unit". Requires a public library to prepare and submit an annual budget in the same manner as other departments...

01/09/2024: Senator Byrne added as second author

**KS SB100 - Removing an affirmative defense for public, private and parochial schools from the crime of promotion to minors of material harmful to minors. (In Committee)**

Removing an affirmative defense for public, private and parochial schools from the crime of promotion to minors of material harmful to minors.

02/08/2023: Senate Referred to Committee on Judiciary

**KY HB191 - AN ACT relating to materials, programs, or events alleged to be harmful to minors. (In Committee)**

Amend KRS 158.192 to require the local board of education to allow parents and guardians an opportunity to orally recite passages from materials, programs, or events subject to appeal; require immediate removal of the material, program, or event...

01/08/2024: to Committee on Committees (H)

**MD HB25 - Public Schools - Sexually Explicit Materials - Prohibited in Libraries and Media Centers (In Committee)**

AN ACT concerning Public Schools - Sexually Explicit Materials - Prohibited in Libraries and Media Centers FOR the purpose of prohibiting sexually explicit materials in public elementary, middle, and secondary school libraries and media centers;...

01/10/2024: First Reading Ways and Means

**MN HF2683 - School liability provisions modified, and civil cause of action created. (In Committee)**

A bill for an act relating to education; modifying certain school liability provisions; creating a civil cause of action; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, sections 617.291, subdivision 2; 617.295; 617.296, by adding a subdivision.

03/08/2023: Introduction and first reading, referred to Judiciary Finance and Civil Law

**MN SF2174 - Certain material prohibition in school libraries (In Committee)**

A bill for an act relating to education; prohibiting certain material in school libraries; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 134.31, by adding a subdivision.

02/27/2023: Referred to Education Policy

**MN SF2434 - Obscenity laws exemption for public schools and postsecondary institutions removal (In Committee)**

A bill for an act relating to education; removing exemptions from obscenity laws for public schools and postsecondary institutions; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, sections 617.291, subdivision 2; 617.295. 03/02/2023; Referred to Education Policy

**MN SF2435 - Certain school liability provision modification (In Committee)**

A bill for an act relating to education; modifying certain school liability provisions; creating a civil cause of action; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, sections 617.291, subdivision 2; 617.295; 617.296, by adding a subdivision. 03/02/2023; Referred to Education Policy

**MO HB1574 - Prohibits the state librarian from disbursing funds to libraries that offer obscene materials to children (Introduced)**

Prohibits the state librarian from disbursing funds to libraries that offer obscene materials to children 01/04/2024; Read Second Time (H)

**MO SB770 - Establishes provisions regarding elementary and secondary education (In Committee)**

Establishes provisions regarding elementary and secondary education 01/09/2024; Second Read and Referred S Education and Workforce Development Committee

**NE LB374 - Adopt the Parentsâ€™ Bill of Rights and Academic Transparency Act (In Committee)**

Adopt the Parentsâ€™ Bill of Rights and Academic Transparency Act 01/03/2024; Title printed. Carryover bill

**NE LB441 - Change provisions relating to obscenity (In Committee)**

Change provisions relating to obscenity 01/03/2024; Murman name added

**NE LB635 - Provide requirements regarding access to digital and online resources provided for students by school districts, schools, and the Nebraska Library Commission (In Committee)**

Provide requirements regarding access to digital and online resources provided for students by school districts, schools, and the Nebraska Library Commission 01/03/2024; Title printed. Carryover bill

**NH HB1419 - Relative to prohibiting obscene or harmful sexual materials in schools. (In Committee)**

Relative to prohibiting obscene or harmful sexual materials in schools. 01/18/2024; Education Public Hearing (09:30:00 1/18/2024 Legislative Office Building 205-207)

**NH SB523 - Relative to the regulation of public school library materials. (In Committee)**

Relative to the regulation of public school library materials. 12/14/2023; To Be Introduced 01/03/2024 and Referred to Education; Senate Journal 1

**OH HB245 - Prohibits certain adult cabaret performances (Introduced)**

To amend sections 2907.39 and 4301.25 of the Revised Code to prohibit adult cabaret performances in locations other than adult cabarets. 11/15/2023; House Criminal Justice Williams, 1st Hearing, Sponsor Testimony (15:15:00 11/15/2023 Room 121)

**OK HB1811 - Schools; prohibiting schools from maintaining certain books or materials; emergency. (In Committee)**

Schools; prohibiting schools from maintaining certain books or materials; emergency. 02/07/2023; Second Reading referred to Common Education

**OK HB2186 - Crimes and punishments; adult cabaret and drag performance; making certain acts unlawful; codification; emergency. (In Committee)**

Crimes and punishments; adult cabaret and drag performance; making certain acts unlawful; codification; emergency.

03/22/2023: House Floor 1 Amendment to Amendment by WEST - 1 Amendment to Amendment by WEST

**OK SB95 - Schools; prohibiting school districts and charter schools from providing certain material to students without written consent. Effective date. Emergency. (In Committee)**

Schools; prohibiting school districts and charter schools from providing certain material to students without written consent. Effective date. Emergency.

02/07/2023: Second Reading referred to Education

**OK SB521 - Libraries; clarifying application of certain digital or online library database resource provisions to institutions of higher education. Effective date. Emergency. (Crossed Over)**

Libraries; clarifying application of certain digital or online library database resource provisions to institutions of higher education. Effective date. Emergency.

04/10/2023: CR; Do Pass Higher Education and Career Tech Committee

**OK SB937 - Schools; creating the School Establishment Clause Act (SECA); prohibiting creation, enforcement, or endorsement of certain policies. Effective date. Emergency. (In Committee)**

Schools; creating the School Establishment Clause Act (SECA); prohibiting creation, enforcement, or endorsement of certain policies. Effective date. Emergency.

02/07/2023: Second Reading referred to Education

**OK SB1208 - Schools; requiring school districts and charter schools to submit certain list of library materials; providing process for reporting violations; providing penalties. Effective date. Emergency. (Introduced)**

Schools; requiring school districts and charter schools to submit certain list of library materials; providing process for reporting violations; providing penalties. Effective date. Emergency.

02/05/2024: Authored by Senator Hamilton

**OK SB1221 - Child pornography; modifying terms. Effective date. (Introduced)**

Child pornography; modifying terms. Effective date.

02/05/2024: Authored by Senator Weaver

**OK SB1221 - Child pornography; modifying definition. Effective date. (Introduced)**

Child pornography; modifying definition. Effective date.

02/05/2024: Authored by Senator Rader

**PA HB209 - In public indecency, further providing for the offense of obscene and other sexual materials and performances. (In Committee)**

Amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in public indecency, further providing for the offense of obscene and other sexual materials and performances.

03/08/2023: Referred to JUDICIARY

**SC H3304 - Transparency and Integrity in Education Act (In Committee)**

A bill to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by enacting the "South Carolina Transparency and Integrity in Education Act"; BY ADDING ARTICLE 5 TO CHAPTER 29, TITLE 59 SO AS TO EXPRESS RELATED INTENTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, TO PROVIDE...

01/10/2023: Referred to Committee on Education and Public Works

**SC H3616 - Defense of Children's Innocence Act (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS by enacting THE "DEFENSE OF CHILDREN'S INNOCENCE ACT" BY ADDING SECTION 6-1-200 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT ANY BUSINESS WHERE DRAG SHOWS ARE HELD IS DEEMED TO BE A SEXUALLY ORIENTED BUSINESS FOR ALL...

01/09/2024: Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Kilmartin, Haddon, Burns, Chumley

**SC H3826 - Protection of Minors from Pornography and Obscenities Act (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS by enacting THE "PROTECTION OF MINORS FROM PORNOGRAPHY AND OBSCENITIES ACT" BY AMENDING SECTION 16-15-375, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS APPLICABLE TO THE ARTICLE REGARDING OBSCENITY LAWS, SO AS TO AMEND...

02/08/2023: Scrivener's error corrected

**SC H3827 - SC Integrity in Education Act (In Committee)**



A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-29-12 SO AS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS IN STATE-FUNDED PLACES OF LEARNING WITH AN EDUCATION FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE AND INTEGRITY, EQUIP THEM TO THINK INDEPENDENTLY AND CRITICALLY,...

01/26/2023: Referred to Committee on Education and Public Works

**SC H4654 - Public school libraries (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-31-5 SO AS TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS; BY ADDING SECTION 59-31-15 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE CREATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY COLLECTION STANDARDS THAT PROHIBIT THE ACQUISITION...

01/09/2024: Referred to Committee on Education and Public Works

**SC H4701 - READER Act (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "RESTRICTING EXPLICIT AND ADULT-DESIGNATED EDUCATION RESOURCES (READER) ACT"; BY ADDING SECTION 59-31-5 SO AS TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS; BY ADDING SECTION 59-31-15 SO AS TO PROVIDE...

01/09/2024: Referred to Committee on Education and Public Works

**SC H4707 - School board review of curriculum (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-1-430 SO AS TO ESTABLISH STATEWIDE POLICIES CONCERNING SEX IDENTIFICATION AND PERSONAL PRONOUN USAGES IN K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TO PROVIDE RELATED RIGHTS OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES,...

01/09/2024: Referred to Committee on Education and Public Works

**SC S0424 - SC Integrity in Education Act (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-29-12 SO AS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS IN STATE-FUNDED PLACES OF LEARNING WITH AN EDUCATION FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE AND INTEGRITY, EQUIP THEM TO THINK INDEPENDENTLY AND CRITICALLY,...

01/15/2023: Referred to Committee on Education

**SC S0433 - Protection of Minors from Pornography and Obscenities Act (In Committee)**

A bill TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS by enacting THE "PROTECTION OF MINORS FROM PORNOGRAPHY AND OBSCENITIES ACT" BY AMENDING SECTION 16-15-375, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS APPLICABLE TO THE ARTICLE REGARDING OBSCENITY LAWS, SO AS TO AMEND...

02/08/2023: Referred to Committee on Judiciary

**TN HB1090 - AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 9 and Title 49, relative to obscenity. (In Committee)**

As introduced, removes the educational justification of a person possessing obscene material if the person is at a school building, bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by...

03/21/2023: Taken off notice for cal in s/c Criminal Justice Subcommittee of Criminal Justice Committee

**TN HB1661 - AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 10, Chapter 1 and Title 10, Chapter 3, relative to accessing or viewing obscene library materials by minors. (Introduced)**

As introduced, enacts the "Restricted Access by Minors to Obscene Library Materials Act." - Amends TCA Title 10, Chapter 1 and Title 10, Chapter 3.

01/09/2024: Intro., P1C.

**TN SB1061 - AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 9 and Title 49, relative to obscenity. (Introduced)**

As introduced, removes the educational justification of a person possessing obscene material if the person is at a school building, bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by...

03/22/2023: Assigned to General Subcommittee of Senate Judiciary Committee

**US HR5303 - NOT in Our Schools Act of 2023 No Obscene Teaching in Our Schools Act of 2023 (In Committee)**

A BILL To prohibit the disbursement of Federal funds to schools that violate any State law relating to materials that are harmful to minors, and for other purposes.

08/29/2023: Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently...

**UT HB0029 - Sensitive Material Review Amendments (Introduced)**

Sensitive Material Review Amendments

01/10/2024: House/ received bill from Legislative Research in Clerk of the House

**VA SB154 - Advance Health Care Planning Registry; amendment of regulations. (In Committee)**

Advance Health Care Planning Registry; amendment of regulations. Amends the list of documents that may be submitted to the Advance Health Care Directive Registry to include any other document that supports advance health care planning. The bill...

01/05/2024: Referred to Committee on Education and Health

**WA HB2244 - Improving retirement security for Washingtonians by establishing Washington saves, an automatic enrollment individual retirement savings account program, and updating the Washington retirement marketplace statute. (In Committee)**

Improving retirement security for Washingtonians by establishing Washington saves, an automatic enrollment individual retirement savings account program, and updating the Washington retirement marketplace statute.

01/09/2024: First reading, referred to Consumer Protection & Business.

**WA SB6069 - Improving retirement security for Washingtonians by establishing Washington saves, an automatic enrollment individual retirement savings account program, and updating the Washington retirement marketplace statute. (In Committee)**

Improving retirement security for Washingtonians by establishing Washington saves, an automatic enrollment individual retirement savings account program, and updating the Washington retirement marketplace statute.

01/09/2024: First reading, referred to Ways & Means

**WI AB15 - Pupil or minor access to harmful material in public libraries and to harmful material or offensive material in public schools. (FE) (In Committee)**

An Act to amend 119.04 (1); and to create 43.75 and 118.073 of the statutes; Relating to: pupil or minor access to harmful material in public libraries and to harmful material or offensive material in public schools. (FE)

02/21/2023: Fiscal estimate received

**WI A Protection from prosecution for employees of libraries and educational institutions possessing obscene materials. (In Committee)**

An Act to repeal 944.21 (8) (b) 1. and 944.21 (8) (b) 2. of the statutes; Relating to: protection from prosecution for employees of libraries and educational institutions possessing obscene materials.

12/12/2023: Representative Michalski added as a coauthor

**WI AB309 - Prohibiting the use of common school fund income distributions for the purchase of obscene material. (In Committee)**

An Act to amend 43.70 (3) of the statutes; Relating to: prohibiting the use of common school fund income distributions for the purchase of obscene material.

07/11/2023: Representative Gundrum added as a coauthor

**WI SB10 - Pupil or minor access to harmful material in public libraries and to harmful material or offensive material in public schools. (FE) (In Committee)**

An Act to amend 119.04 (1); and to create 43.75 and 118.073 of the statutes; Relating to: pupil or minor access to harmful material in public libraries and to harmful material or offensive material in public schools. (FE)

02/21/2023: Fiscal estimate received

**WI SB304 - Prohibiting the use of common school fund income distributions for the purchase of obscene material. (In Committee)**

An Act to amend 43.70 (3) of the statutes; Relating to: prohibiting the use of common school fund income distributions for the purchase of obscene material.

05/24/2023: Read first time and referred to Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families

**WI SB305 - Protection from prosecution for employees of libraries and educational institutions possessing obscene materials. (In Committee)**

An Act to repeal 944.21 (8) (b) 1. and 944.21 (8) (b) 2. of the statutes; Relating to: protection from prosecution for employees of libraries and educational institutions possessing obscene materials.

12/12/2023: Representative Michalski added as a cosponsor

**WI SB597 - Parental notification related to school library materials. (FE) (In Committee)**

An Act to amend 43.30 (1m) and 119.04 (1); and to create 120.12 (29) of the statutes; Relating to: parental notification related to school library materials. (FE)

11/28/2023: Public hearing held

## LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD 2024 Calendar

	AGENDA DEADLINE	MEETING	CITY COUNCIL MEETING FOR REPORT*	ANNUAL TOPICS/EVENTS
<b>JANUARY</b>	Wednesday 1/10 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 1/16 5:30 p.m.	Monday 1/22 6:00 p.m.	
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Wednesday 2/14 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 2/20 5:30 p.m.	Monday 2/26 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Review of Library Fees, Policies, Rules &amp; Regulations</li> <li>• Annual Review of Board’s Bylaws</li> <li>• Celebration of Lifelong Learning</li> </ul>
<b>MARCH</b>	Wednesday 3/13 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 3/19 5:30 p.m.	Tuesday 3/26 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reappointment Notices Sent Out</li> </ul>
<b>APRIL</b>	Wednesday 4/10 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 4/16 5:30 p.m.	Monday 4/22 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms Expire April 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• Advisory Body Training Worksession</li> <li>• Election of LAB Officers</li> <li>• National Library Week, Library Workers Day, &amp; Library Legislative Day</li> </ul>
<b>MAY</b>	Wednesday 5/15 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 5/21 5:30 p.m.	Tuesday 5/28 6:00 p.m.	
<b>JUNE</b>	No Regular Meeting			
<b>JULY</b>	No Regular Meeting			
<b>AUGUST</b>	Wednesday 8/14 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 8/20 5:30 p.m.	Monday 8/26 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Budget Review *may not be applicable during non-budget years</li> <li>• Library Policies Revision</li> <li>• CIP Draft Recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Wednesday 9/11 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 9/17 5:30 p.m.	Monday 9/23 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Card Sign-up Month</li> </ul>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	Wednesday 10/09 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 10/15 5:30 p.m.	Monday 10/28 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve Meeting Schedule for Upcoming Year</li> </ul>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Wednesday 11/13 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 11/19 5:30 p.m.	Monday 11/25 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Friends of Libraries Week</li> </ul>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	Wednesday 12/11 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 12/17 5:30 p.m.	1/13/2025 6:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Review of Strategic Plan/LAB Goals</li> </ul>

\*The Board’s opportunity to give their report to City Council is scheduled for the Council’s regular meeting following the Board’s regular meeting, under Agenda Item 8 – Announcements/ Presentations/ Borough Report/Commission Reports.

# CITY OF HOMER NEWSLETTER



VOL. III - ISSUE V | JANUARY 2024

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

# Happy New Year

From Homer City Hall

## HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

This year, the City of Homer celebrated the Holiday Season at the Elk's Lodge. We enjoyed the time together, relaxing and catching up over a delicious dinner catered by The Tickled Pear. Adding excitement to the evening, we had a prize drawing, with lucky winners leaving with smiles and surprises. Rob and Ralph showcased their stylish sneakers, adding an extra touch of flair to the holiday festivities. We are thankful for our team and look forward to what's to come in the New Year!



City Manager Rob Dumouchel and Ralph Skorski



Officer Tyler Jeffres and Erica Jeffres



Cheryl and Mike Illg



Sarah Baldus and Sara Cunningham

- Holiday Celebration
- Library Events
- Community Corner
- Homer Public Library
- Community Recreation
- City Hall
- Port & Harbor
- Harbor Expansion Study Update
- Hazard Mitigation – Risk Assessment
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Public Safety Corner
- Meet City Staff
- Municipal Art Collection
- Stay Connected with City Council

Discover something new today and see the latest City project updates information! Learn about ways community members can get involved at City Hall and in the Homer community.

## Follow us on Social Media

- City Hall: [@cityofhomerak](#)
- Parks & Recreation: [@homerparksandrec](#)
- Homer Public Library: [@homerpubliclibrary](#)
- Homer Police: [@homerpolice](#)
- Fire Department: [@HomerVolFireDept](#)

Subscribe to the Monthly Newsletter

[Click Here to Subscribe](#)

# LIBRARY EVENTS

## VIRTUAL AUTHOR TALKS

Zoom in and listen to your favorite authors talk about their latest books. For a complete list of Upcoming Speakers, go to [libraryc.org/homerlibrary/upcoming](http://libraryc.org/homerlibrary/upcoming).

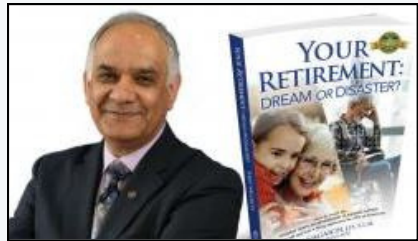
**January 10 at 4 pm**

Embrace Love in the New Year: A Heartfelt Conversation with **Rebecca Serle**



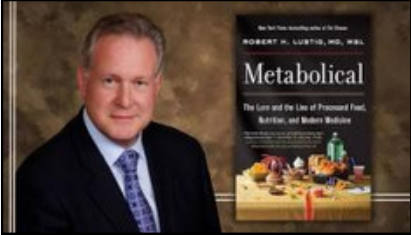
**January 23 at 10 am**

Your Retirement: Dream or Disaster? How to Avoid the Hidden Traps in Retirement Planning Advice  
**Rajiv Nagaich**



**January 30 at 10 am**

The Lure and the Lies of Processed Food, Nutrition, and Modern Medicine: An Author Talk with **Dr. Robert Lustig**



## SPECIAL & ONGOING EVENTS



### Councilmember Conversations

Noon to 1 pm, the second Tuesday of each month, September - May, at the Homer Public Library.

**January 9: Shelly Erickson**

CHECK OUT MORE LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



**Homer Public Library**  
500 Hazel Street - 907-235-3180  
[circ@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:circ@ci.homer.ak.us)  
[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library)



# COMMUNITY CORNER

*What's happening around the City of Homer*

## Community Resource Connect

*A one-day event with help for those facing financial instability, homelessness, or at risk of being houseless.*

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 30 • 11AM-3PM**

### Community Resource Connect - Located at SPARC

Anyone in need of resources is invited to this **FREE** one-day event! All are welcome. FREE emergency gear, backpacks, comfort packs, food-to-go, sleeping bags, menstrual kits, winter gear, and more.

Get connected with over 20 local vendors offering resources related to food, employment info, health care and mental health, health screenings, and more.

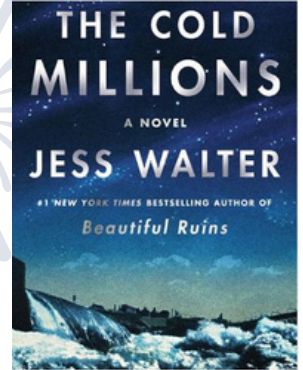
[Click Here for More Information](#)

### The Big Read

#### Kick-Off Event for the NEA Big Read 2024!

**Where: Alice's Champagne Palace**  
**When: January 19th, 6pm**

[Click here for more details!](#)



### Community Recreation

Do you want to stay active and connect with others in the community during the winter months!? There are a lot of options available through our Community Recreation programs. Short on gear? The Homer Public Library has a sports gear lending program. Find more info [here!](#)

- Soccer
- Youth Tumbling Classes
- Pickleball
- Cuong Nhu and Karate Program
- Basketball
- Community Inlet Winds Band
- Volleyball
- Volunteer Opportunities

[Click here to explore all that Community Recreation has to offer!](#)

# LIBRARY

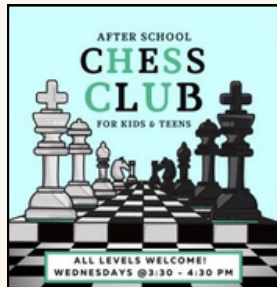
## AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AT THE LIBRARY

### Stop Motion Animation with Legos!

Searching for a creative after-school activity for your child? Join us weekly at the Homer Public Library for engaging and educational activities designed for elementary-aged kids every Thursday from 3:30 to 4:00 pm.

**Next Event: Thursday, January 11, 3:30pm to 4:30pm**

**January/February:** Intro to Stop Motion Animation! In this series, you'll create a scene, then animate it using Legos. Learn to use Stop Motion Studio on the library's iPads. Please email Cinda if you have any questions: [cnofziger@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:cnofziger@ci.homer.ak.us)



### After School Chess Club for Kids & Teens

Meet your friends at the library to play chess! Improve your strategy, learn from mentors, and have fun. All skill levels welcome!

Ages 5 and up  
Homer Public Library  
Every Wednesday, 3:30 - 4:30 pm

**Next Event: Wednesday, January 3, 3:30 - 4:30pm**

# COMMUNITY RECREATION

## COMMUNITY INLET WINDS BAND 2024



The Inlet Winds Community Band is restarting this spring. Don't forget to **sign up by February 6th!**

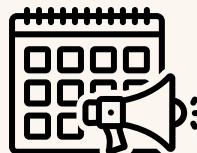
Who can be involved: Inlet Winds is geared for two groups of people.

- Adults with previous experience playing in band (to at least a high school level) who know how to read music. It's ok if you are a little rusty- We'll get into shape together!
- Advanced high school students by invitation or with director approval.

FOR MORE INFO

Sign up through the link below  
by **February 6, 2023!**

[Community Inlet Winds Band 2024](#)



### LOOKING AHEAD

Spring Concert  
**Saturday April 13 7:00 PM**  
Homer High School Mariner Theatre

# CITY HALL

## HOMER, THE BABY OPOSSUM, ARRIVES AT OREGON ZOO

Last month, a baby opossum named Homer arrived at the Portland Zoo in Oregon, safe and sound. Homer has been on quite the adventure in his short life!

Earlier this year, Homer's mom, an opossum known as Grubby, stowed away in a cargo container bound for Homer, AK. When the container was being unloaded, Grubby made a run for it and escaped the crew who tried to trap her. She was able to evade wildlife officials for a couple of months. During that time, she gave birth to at least 5 babies (joeys), whom residents affectionately referred to as 'grublets.'

Finally, in May, Grubby and her joeys were captured and re-homed to the Alaska Zoo in Anchorage. Homer and his siblings will be sent to different zoos, and Grubby will remain at the Alaska Zoo.

Homer is adjusting to his new home and the caring staff. As he acclimates, he will soon have the opportunity to meet visitors. This interaction aims to educate and connect children with an animal they may not encounter in their daily lives, creating a deeper appreciation for wildlife.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Opossums are considered invasive in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest as they are a threat to native species.



Lori Pond delivering donations to Homer High



Zach Pettit delivering donations to Homer High



Renee Krause and Lori Pond wrap gifts



City Hall Christmas Tree

## SHARE THE SPIRIT

City Hall spread some holiday cheer this year through the Share the Spirit Adopt-A-Family program! We were honored to make a family's wishes come true by providing them with food, warm clothing, toys, and essentials.

You can also bring joy to our community through similar programs and by supporting local charities, helping build a more compassionate and connected community not just during the festive season but throughout the upcoming year!



# HOMER HIGH GOVERNMENT CLASS VISITS CITY HALL

The Homer High School Government Class visited City Hall on Tuesday, December 12th for a guided tour, followed by a Q&A session in the Council Chambers with Mayor Castner and Council Members Aderhold, Lord, Venuti, and Erickson. The students had an hour to explore the inner workings of local government, gaining insights into the daily operations of City Hall.



Ryan Foster, City Planner, speaks to students about the city planning process.

The Q&A session aimed to provide a firsthand understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local leaders, allowing students to ask questions and engage in meaningful discussions. The goal of this experience was designed to bridge the gap between classroom learning and practical civic engagement. Mayor Ken Castner emphasized, “Homer High grads are dispersed throughout the City. You need to participate, and that begins with talking and communication.” The teens were encouraged to care about the community and be aware of what is being discussed, as they are the future of Homer.

The goal of this experience was designed to bridge the gap between classroom learning and practical civic engagement. Mayor Ken Castner emphasized, “Homer High grads are dispersed throughout the City. You need to participate, and that begins with talking and communication.” The teens were encouraged to care about the community and be aware of what is being discussed, as they are the future of Homer.



Homer High students attend a Q&A session with Mayor Castner and Council Members Aderhold, Lord, Venuti, and Erickson.

## 2024 ELECTIONS

As we step into the new year, it's never too early to start preparing for the upcoming elections! Stay informed about key dates, such as voter registration deadlines and election days.




Register to vote or update your voter registration!

- Visit the Homer City Clerk’s Office at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue to fill out a registration form, or
- Conveniently register online at <https://voterregistration.alaska.gov>.

For additional details, contact the Clerk’s Office at (907) 235-3130.






In 2024, we gear up for THREE upcoming elections!

 Save the dates:

- Alaska State General Election : **November 5**
- 2024 Kenai Peninsula Borough Regular Election: **October 1**
- 2024 City of Homer Regular Election: **October 1**

Polls open at 7 am, close at 8 pm

### Important Deadlines

-  Voter registration/update: September 1, 2024
-  Absentee In-Person Voting: Starts September 16, 2024
-  Absentee By-Mail App Deadline (City): September 27, 2024
-  Absentee App Deadline (Borough): September 24, 2024
-  Absentee by Electronic App Transmission Deadline: September 30, 2024



# PORT & HARBOR

## PACIFIC MARINE EXPO IN SEATTLE

Port Director Bryan Hawkins recently attended the Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle, sharing a booth with Homer Marine Trades. The expo spotlighted Alaskan coastal communities. The Homer booth stands out because it represents our thriving marine commercial support industry.

During his visit, Bryan joined the Cordova Harbormaster for a day trip to Anacortes, touring the Transpac float manufacturing operation. Witnessing the floats during their various stages of construction, physically interacting with the materials, and acquiring knowledge about the intricate engineering involved in these harbor float systems was truly remarkable and helps us in our planning for future float replacement projects.



Bryan Hawkins and Jen Hakala of the Homer Marine Trades Association working Homer's Pacific Marine Expo booth.

Events like the Pacific Marine Expo highlight local industry strengths, foster community collaboration, and address crucial topics such as vessel maintenance and sustainability. Attending these expos is an important investment in the growth and success of the marine trade sector.

## ANNUAL BOARD MEETING FOR THE MARINE EXCHANGE OF ALASKA



Bryan Hawkins, Port Director, attended the Marine Exchange of Alaska annual board meeting.

Port Director, Bryan Hawkins, serves as the President of the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators (AAHPA) and represented AAHPA on the Marine Exchange of Alaska (MXAK) board this past month. Both organizations collaborate closely to support maritime transportation in Alaska.

The Marine Exchange of Alaska (MXAK) tracks commercial vessels in Alaskan waters. One of their primary functions is the exchange of vessel information, which serves as a critical resource for vessel owners, fleet managers, families, and state and federal authorities. The Exchange acts as a 24-hour vessel safety and security watch keeper, ensuring the timely availability of accurate and relevant information including vessel tracking, communication services, and weather and ice information.

Attending their annual board meeting offered valuable insights. The collaboration opportunities allowed for the exchange of information and the advancement of Homer's critical projects and priorities.



# HOMER HARBOR EXPANSION



## STUDY UPDATE



**Join us Monday, January 22 at  
City Council's 4 pm Worksession!**

Ronny McPherson and KC Kent of HDR will provide an overview of the Baseline Conditions Report they are completing. The report uses new and existing field data along with existing studies, to model the waves, tides, storm surge and analyze sediment transport in the study area.

Understanding the existing marine and coastal physical processes is one of the important first steps to get done before moving into alternatives development. This information, together with data from the geophysical investigation and environmental review, is instrumental in informing the design process; it allows the project development team to tailor designs to the specific conditions of the proposed site to best meet project objectives. The information also serves as a reference point to compare the relative effectiveness of the alternatives harbor design.

Homer City Council will also discuss the progress of the study and introduce an Ordinance to commit additional match funds at their Regular meeting on January 8, 2024, which begins at 6 pm.

Mark your calendar

6 pm Monday, January 8, 2024



4 pm Monday, January 22, 2024



Cowles Chamber, Homer City Hall  
491 E. Pioneer Avenue in Homer



or via [Zoom!](#)

For more information go to: [www.homerharborexansion.com](http://www.homerharborexansion.com)



**QUICK TIP**

## PORT & HARBOR BILLING ABBREVIATIONS

What does that stand for? Are you looking at your harbor bill or receipt and can't figure out what the description means? Here's a breakdown of those cryptic abbreviations that will make you a pro in no time. Click this link to see a list of abbreviations and what they mean. [Port & Harbor Billing/Charges Info](#)



# FIRST RESPONDERS CLASS



Sammantha Cunningham leading the ETT training class.

During the final week of November, Port & Harbor staff from operations, maintenance, and the fish dock participated in a 40-hour Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) training and certification. The training was led by Homer EMS coordinator Samantha Cunningham and organized by Deputy Harbormaster Aaron Glidden.



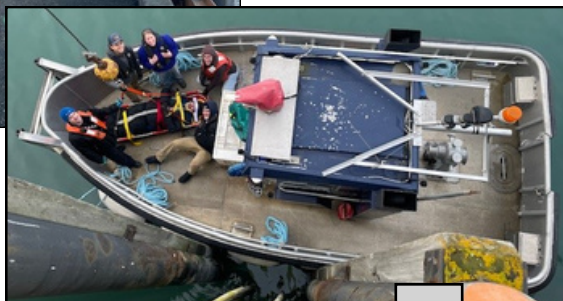
Isaiah Nevak, Kurt Read (as the 'patient'), and Rose Riordan

The ETT course is primarily for professionals requiring advanced medical skills beyond basic first aid and is specifically designed for those without immediate access to professional emergency services. This training equips individuals with essential skills for a rapid response in critical situations.

Successful completion of this training course is mandatory every two years. The training provides our Port & Harbor staff with essential skills to respond effectively to emergencies when necessary.



Del Masterhan and Thomas Gilbert participate in rescue training, which involves loading a stretcher onto a pulley and lowering it down into a boat.



### RISK ASSESMENT

The City of Homer has thoroughly evaluated natural disaster risks and devised strategies to safeguard lives and property. A hazard impact risk assessment predicts how hazards may affect the community, aiding in prioritizing risk reduction actions.

The 2022 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) specifically assessed risks in Homer, focusing on land, the population center, and critical facilities like emergency services.

With a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved plan in place, the community is eligible for nonemergency disaster assistance, including funding for risk reduction projects outlined in the plan.

As a resident of Homer, we want you to be aware of the potential risks and inform you of the plan in place to ensure everyone's safety.

**Risks Assesed**

- Climate Change
- Earthquake
- Erosion
- Flood
- Landslide
- Severe Weather
- Tsunami
- Volcano
- Wildfire



Find the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan on the City's website: [City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

# POLICE DEPARTMENT

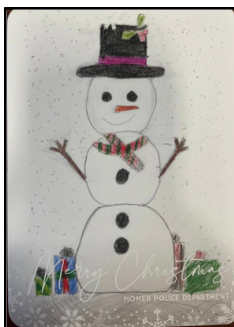


## CHRISTMAS CARD CONTEST 2023



Homer Police Department with Christmas Card Contest participants, Aubrey and Kyra.

The Homer Police Department (HPD) was thrilled to host a Christmas Card Contest again this year. Young Homer artists had the opportunity to submit vibrant Christmas card designs. The 2023 winner was Kyra (11), who drew a beautiful snowman! The runner up was Aubrey with a festive 'Crismis' scene showing a police officer with K-9 dog next to a Christmas tree. Great job girls!!



Snowman, by Kyra

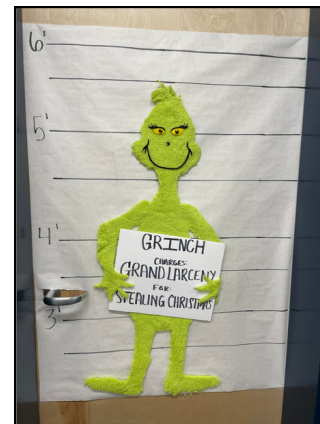


Crismis, by Aubrey

## DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

We saw a whole new side to our police officers and staff at HPD this year! They brought out their creative side with a door decorating contest. Winner gets bragging rights!

Our newest hire, Kaitlyn Dawson, won with the Grinch Door that leads into the jail.



The Grinch Door, by Kaitlyn Dawson



# FIRE DEPARTMENT

## NEW FIRE HOSES AT HVFD

The Homer Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) recently acquired upgraded fire hoses. A total of 147 boxes, weighing 5,638 pounds, were unboxed by our awesome crew: Jaclyn Arndt, Paige Jones, Galina Orlova, and Barrett Moe!

This new supply replaced outdated hoses that no longer met National Fire Protection Association safety guidelines. The old hoses were made of extruded nitrile rubber, which would easily ice up in cold weather, making them slippery to handle and heavier. The new style of hoses performs better in cold weather and is easier for firefighters to maneuver. They have a rubber-lined polyester double jacket that does not freeze up and is two pounds lighter than the old hoses, enhancing grip, maneuverability, and reducing the risk of injury and fatigue for our firefighting crews. This significant improvement ensures that HVFD maintains a safer and more efficient fire response.



Barrett Moe and Paige Jones



Galina Orlova



In this section, we aim to keep readers informed about the latest developments in public safety in the community. Whether it's news about crime prevention, emergency preparedness, or updates on local law enforcement activities, we've got you covered. Our goal is to promote a safe and secure environment for all community members and visitors of Homer, and we believe that staying informed is a crucial part of achieving that. Read on to learn more about what's happening in public safety in Homer.

## HEATING YOUR HOME SAFELY

The cold weather has arrived, and we all want to stay warm! Remember to take a few simple steps to keep yourself and your family safe while heating up your home. Using heating systems safely is crucial in preventing accidents, fires, and health hazards.

### FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO STAY SAFE!

#### Heating Systems



**Keep the area around fireplaces, wood stoves, and space heaters clear, at least 3 feet around.**



**Schedule regular inspections and cleaning of heating unit and replace air filters regularly.**



**Ensure proper ventilation to prevent the buildup of carbon monoxide.**



**Never leave a heating unit unattended while in use.**

LEARN MORE

[StaySafe.org](https://www.staysafe.org)

[Red Cross Home Heating Safety Tips](#)



#### Be Prepared



**Educate family members, especially children, about fire safety.**



**Have an escape plan and practice the route.**



**Keep a working fire extinguisher in an accessible location, and make sure everyone knows how to use it.**



**Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors on every floor of your home and test them monthly.**



# December Anniversaries

Thanks to the following staff members for your dedication, commitment and service to the City and to the taxpayers of Homer!

Mark Robl	Police	39 Years
Bryan Hawkins	Port	24 Years
Todd Cook	Public Works	14 Years
Sean Perry	Police	9 Years
Mike Zelinski	Public Works	9 Years
Josh Mershon	Port	4 Years
Regina Johanos	Library	3 Years
Jenna Luchaco	Public Works	2 Years
Del Masterhan	Port	2 Years
Matt Dominquez	IT	1 Year

# WELCOME



Greg Trail

Welcome aboard, Greg Trail! Greg is a Maintenance Tech I at Public Works who began his journey with us in July. Hailing from Homer and the surrounding area, he brings valuable experience from his previous work in the fishing industry.



Wesley Breshears



Welcome to Wesley Breshears, our Heavy Mechanic at Public Works, who joined us in November. Having relocated to Homer about a year ago to be closer to family, we are thrilled to have him as part of our team.

# EMPLOYEE HIGH FIVES!

## WAY TO GO ANDREW!

Andrew Williamson just got his CDL license! He joined the Public Works crew as a seasonal employee for the operators from May to October 2022. He was rehired in 2023 as a full-time employee, starting out as an apprentice. With his newly acquired CDL license and on-the-job training, he has now become an Equipment Operator. Andrew is a valuable addition to the team, and we are glad to have him on board.



Andrew Williamson

## KUDOS TO SNOW PLOW CREWS



Snow Removal- Lead Mike Gilbert and operator- Jenna Luchaco

Kudos to the City crews who have been working hard to keep Homer roads clear and safe this winter season! These dedicated teams work tirelessly to clear the snow and ice, ensuring our safe travels.

Be sure to give them your support and be patient while they work through the snow clearing process, especially during heavy snowfall. They are an essential part of our community, and we are very thankful for them!

# CITY OF HOMER ROSTER

**Mayor** - Ken Castner (2024)

## City Council

Donna Aderhold (2024)

Jason Davis (2025)

Shelley Erickson (2024)

Storm P. Hansen (2025)

Rachel Lord (2026)

Caroline Venuti (2026)

## City Staff Leadership

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager

Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk/Deputy Director of Administration

Mark Robl, Chief of Police

Bill Jirsa, Chief Technology Officer

Julie Engebretsen, Economic Development Manager

Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director

Mark Kirko, Fire Chief

Dave Berry, Library Director

Andrea Browning, Personnel Director

Bryan Hawkins, Port Director

Jan Keiser, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Ryan Foster, City Planner

Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager

## Commissions and Boards

ADA Advisory Board

Economic Development Advisory Commission

Library Advisory Board

Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission

Planning Commission

Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

# MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION

Learn more about the municipal art collection at:

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection)



“Horses in a Winter Storm”  
Watercolor by Diana Tillion  
City Hall

## STAY CONNECTED TO CITY COUNCIL

Go to [cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council](http://cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council) to find instructions on how to listen, provide testimony, and participate in the meetings via Zoom.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

#### January

- |    |         |   |
|----|---------|---|
| 3  | 5:30 pm | <b>CANCELLED - Planning Commission Worksession</b>                              |
| 3  | 5:30 pm | <b>Planning Commission Special Meeting</b>                                      |
| 9  | 6:00 pm | <b>Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting</b>                 |
| 16 | 5:30 pm | <b>Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting</b>                                   |
| 17 | 5:30 pm | <b>Planning Commission Worksession</b>  |
| 17 | 6:30 pm | <b>Planning Commission Regular Meeting</b>                                      |
| 18 | 5:30 pm | <b>Parks, Art, Recreation &amp; Culture Advisory Commission Special Meeting</b> |
| 24 | 5:30 pm | <b>Port &amp; Harbor Advisory Commission Regular Meeting</b>                    |



## JOIN OUR TEAM

- Find current job listings for the City of Homer
- Sign up for Job Alerts
- Apply Online at: [cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs](http://cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs)

### ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The City of Homer Newsletter is published monthly. For questions or comments, please contact the Office of the City Manager at [citymanager@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:citymanager@ci.homer.ak.us).

## City of Homer

491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska 99603  
907-235-8121

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

1 CITY OF HOMER  
2 HOMER, ALASKA

3 City Manager  
4 Erickson/Davis

5 ORDINANCE 23-49(S)  
6

7 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA  
8 AMENDING HOMER CITY CODE TITLE 2, CHAPTERS 2.32  
9 DEPARTMENTS AND BOARDS, 2.44 DEPARTMENT OF  
10 ADMINISTRATION, 2.48 PUBLIC LIBRARY, AND ENACTING  
11 CHAPTERS 2.46 DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
12 AND 2.57 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.  
13

14 WHEREAS, The City's organizational design changes over time to meet the needs of the  
15 Council, the organization, and the administration; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, The City Manager has identified a series of modifications to the current  
18 organizational design which would result in the creation of a Department of Information  
19 Technology, a Department of the Library, and a Department of Community Development.  
20

21 NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF HOMER ORDAINS:  
22

23 Section 1. Homer City Code Title 2 is hereby amended to read as follows:  
24

25 Title 2  
26 ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

27 Chapters:

- 28 2.04 City Manager  
29 2.08 Mayor and Council  
30 2.12 City Clerk  
31 2.16 City Attorney  
32 2.20 City Treasurer  
33 2.24 Health Officer  
34 2.28 Public Officials and Employees  
35 2.32 Departments and Boards  
36 2.36 Department of Finance  
37 2.40 Department of Port and Harbor  
38 2.44 Department of Administration  
39 **2.46 Department of Information Technology**  
40 2.48 Public Library  
41 2.52 Police Department  
42 2.53 Fire Department  
43 2.56 Department of Public Works

[**Bold and underlined added.** Deleted language stricken through]



- 44 **2.57 Department of Community Development**
- 45 2.58 Boards and Commissions
- 46 2.60 Parks, Art, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Commission
- 47 2.64 Port and Harbor Advisory Commission
- 48 2.68 *Repealed*
- 49 2.70 Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Board
- 50 2.72 Planning Commission
- 51 2.76 Economic Development Advisory Commission
- 52 2.78 *Repealed*
- 53 2.80 *Repealed*
- 54 2.84 Public Release of Record
- 55 2.92 Public Records Management
- 56 2.96 *Repealed*

57  
58 Section 2. Homer City Code Chapter 2.32 Departments and Boards is hereby amended  
59 to read as follows:

60  
61 Chapter 2.32  
62 DEPARTMENTS AND BOARDS<sup>1</sup>

- 63 Sections:
- 64 2.32.010 Departments – Directors.
  - 65 2.32.020 *Repealed.*
  - 66 2.32.030 Designation and function of departments.
  - 67 2.32.040 Departmental administrative fee schedule.
  - 68 Prior legislation: Ords. 1-100.4 and 73-8.

69  
70 2.32.010 Departments – Directors.  
71 There shall be principal subdivisions of the City government known as departments. Each  
72 department shall be headed by the City Manager until such time as the ~~Council~~ **City Manager**  
73 shall approve the appointment of a “director” who shall then head the designated department.  
74 The director shall be appointed by and be responsible to the City Manager. These departments  
75 are the functional units under which all matters of an administrative, organizational or  
76 utilitarian nature shall fall and shall be all-inclusive of every City function as defined in this  
77 chapter. Each department may be further subdivided into divisions for operational purposes.  
78 [Code 1967 § 3-400.1; Code 1981 § 1.40.010].

79  
80 2.32.020 Boards and commissions.  
81 *Repealed by Ord. 18-38(S). [Ord. 92-30(S)(A), 1992. Code 1967 § 3-400.2; Code 1981 § 1.40.020].*

82  
83 2.32.030 Designation and function of departments.  
84 The City departments are designated in this section and their functions set forth:

Chapter 2.36 HCC	Department of Finance
Chapter 2.40 HCC	Department of Port and Harbor
Chapter 2.44 HCC	Department of Administration
<b><u>Chapter 2.46 HCC</u></b>	<b><u>Department of Information Technology</u></b>
<b><u>Chapter 2.48 HCC</u></b>	<b><u>Department of the Public Library</u></b>
Chapter 2.52 HCC	Police Department
Chapter 2.53 HCC	Fire Department
Chapter 2.56 HCC	Department of Public Works
<b><u>Chapter 2.57 HCC</u></b>	<b><u>Department of Community Development</u></b>

85  
86 [Amended by City in August 2017; Ord. 91-7 § 2, 1991; Ord. 85-35 § 2, 1985. Code 1981 §  
87 1.40.030].

88  
89 2.32.040 Departmental administrative fee schedule.  
90 Unless established by ordinance or resolution of the City Council, the director of each  
91 department of the City shall have the authority, subject to the approval of the City Manager  
92 and ratification by the City Council, to promulgate and maintain an administrative fee  
93 schedule for services provided by that department. Fees for identical services shall be uniform  
94 throughout all departments. A current copy of the departmental administrative fee schedule  
95 shall be available for inspection by any person at the front reception area of the department  
96 and at the office of the City Clerk. Unless otherwise provided by ordinance or resolution, all  
97 fees collected under this schedule shall be forwarded to the Finance Department for deposit  
98 into the general fund. [Ord. 92-07(S)(A), 1992. Code 1981 § 1.40.040].

99  
100 <sup>1</sup> For Alaska Statute provisions authorizing municipalities to establish and prescribe the  
101 functions of departments, officers and agencies, see AS 29.35.010.

102  
103 Section 3. Homer City Code Chapter 2.44 Department of Administration is hereby  
104 amended to read as follows:

**[Bold and underlined added. Deleted language stricken through]**

105  
106 The Department of Administration is created which shall be headed by the City Manager or his  
107 designee. Within this Department will be the City Clerk and such other personnel as may be  
108 necessary to provide such services as personnel administration; ~~City-wide planning; zoning~~  
109 ~~and platting; permitting and inspection; services such as parks, recreation, Community~~  
110 ~~Recreation Program, and library programs;~~ administration of the Homer Advisory Planning  
111 Commission, the Homer Advisory Parks, ~~Art, and Recreation,~~ **& Culture Advisory** Commission,  
112 the City of Homer Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, **Americans With Disabilities Act**  
113 **(ADA) Advisory Board** and the Library Advisory Board; major capital projects administration;  
114 ~~economic development and City enhancement programs and such other services or programs~~  
115 as designated by the City Manager or requested by the City Council. The Department may be  
116 subdivided into divisions with their own supervisors as deemed necessary. [Ord. 10-16 § 1,  
117 2010; Ord. 85-35 § 4, 1985. Code 1981 § 1.43.010].

118  
119 Section 4. Homer City Code Chapter 2.46 Department of Information Technology is  
120 hereby enacted to read as follows:

121  
122 **Chapter 2.46**  
123 **DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**  
124  
125 **2.46.010 Department of Information Technology.**  
126 **The Department of Information Technology is created which shall be headed by the**  
127 **Director of Information Technology, also known as the Chief Technical Officer of the City.**  
128 **The Director shall be appointed by the City Manager for an indefinite term and shall be**  
129 **removable by the City Manager. The Department may be subdivided into divisions with**  
130 **their own supervisors as deemed necessary.**

131  
132 Section 5. Homer City Code Chapter 2.48 Public Library is hereby amended to read as  
133 follows:

134  
135 Chapter 2.48  
136 **Department of the PUBLIC LIBRARY<sup>1</sup>**  
137 Sections:  
138 **2.48.005 Department of the Library**  
139 2.48.010 Library functions.  
140 2.48.020 Library Director – Appointment.  
141 2.48.030 Library Director – Duties.  
142 2.48.040 Board – Creation and membership.  
143 2.48.050 Library Advisory Board – Powers and duties.  
144 2.48.060 Library Advisory Board – Vacancies.  
145 2.48.070 Use of library.

146  
147 **2.48.005 Department of the Library.**

[**Bold and underlined added.** Deleted language stricken through]

148 **The Department of the Library is created which shall be headed by the Library Director.**  
149 **The Director shall be appointed by the City Manager for an indefinite term and shall be**  
150 **removed by the City Manager. The Department may be subdivided into divisions with**  
151 **their own supervisors as deemed necessary.**

152  
153 2.48.010 Library functions.

154 The major functions of the library are the operation of the Homer Library, including control  
155 and supervision of library use, acquisition of library property and other related matters.  
156 [Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 1, 1980. Code 1981 § 1.48.010].

157  
158 2.48.020 Library Director – Appointment.

159 The head of the Homer Library is the Library Director, who shall be appointed by the City  
160 Manager. **The Library Director must hold a master’s degree in library or information**  
161 **science, or other relevant credential, as required for library grant eligibility by the State**  
162 **of Alaska** [Ord. 09-28(S) § 1, 2009; Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 2, 1980. Code 1981  
163 § 1.48.020].

164  
165 2.48.030 Library Director – Duties.

166 The Library Director of the City shall be responsible for and shall have supervision and control  
167 of the library and hold responsibilities as denoted in the job description for the position.  
168 [Ord. 09-28(S) § 1, 2009; Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 3, 1980. Code 1981 § 1.48.030].

169  
170 2.48.040 Board – Creation and membership.

171 There is created the City of Homer Library Advisory Board, referred to in this chapter as the  
172 Board, which shall act in an advisory capacity to the Library Director and the City. The Board  
173 shall consist of seven members comprised as follows:

- 174 a. At least five members of the Board shall reside within the corporate limits of the City.  
175 b. Members shall serve for three years with initial appointments to be made for staggered  
176 terms as follows: Two one-year terms; two two-year terms; and three three-year terms.  
177 c. Members shall serve without compensation. [Ord. 09-28(S) § 1, 2009; Ord. 98-7, 1998;  
178 Ord. 95-5, 1995; Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 4, 1980. Code 1981 § 1.48.040].

179  
180 2.48.050 Library Advisory Board – Powers and duties.

181 The Library Advisory Board shall:

- 182 a. Establish operational policies for the library program, and submit same to the City Council  
183 for approval. There shall be an annual review of policies and revisions may be recommended  
184 by the Board.  
185 b. Assist the Librarian in preparation and presentation of the annual budget request to the City  
186 Council.  
187 c. Adopt bylaws and regulations for internal operations governing the proper and orderly  
188 discharge of its responsibilities.  
189 d. Make recommendations through the City Manager to the Mayor and City Council concerning  
190 the library and its programs.

**[Bold and underlined added. Deleted language stricken through]**

191 e. Solicit donations of money and/or property for the benefit of the library. Any money  
192 donations shall be deposited to the City treasury in a reserve fund designated for public library  
193 use. If property, it shall be accepted by deed or other conveyance subject to approval by the  
194 City Council. Such property shall be held or disposed of for public library purposes as the  
195 Council may direct. The Board may make recommendations for disposition of money or  
196 property so received and such recommendations shall be considered and acted upon by the  
197 Council. [Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 5, 1980. Code 1981 § 1.48.050].

198

199 2.48.060 Library Advisory Board – Vacancies.

200 a. In the event of a vacancy on the Library Advisory Board, the Mayor shall appoint a person to  
201 fill such vacancy for the unexpired term, subject to confirmation by the City Council.

202 b. If any Library Board member is absent for three consecutive meetings (unless a majority of  
203 the other members have previously granted a leave of absence, not to exceed six months), the  
204 seat of that member shall be declared vacant and a new member appointed by the Mayor  
205 subject to confirmation by the City Council. [Ord. 85-35 § 5, 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 6, 1980. Code 1981  
206 § 1.48.060].

207

208

209 2.48.070 Use of library.

210 All persons shall be extended the use of library privileges subject to observing the rules and  
211 regulations established for the use thereof. The Library Director may prohibit any person from  
212 using the library who willfully or persistently violates any rule or regulation prescribed for the  
213 operation of the library. No person shall fail or refuse to leave the library when ordered to do  
214 so by the Library Director or other person in charge. [Ord. 09-28(S) § 1, 2009; Ord. 85-35 § 5,  
215 1985; Ord. 80-2 § 7, 1980. Code 1981 § 1.48.070].

216

217 Section 6. Homer City Code Chapter 2.57 Department of Community Development is  
218 hereby enacted to read as follows:

219

220

### **Chapter 2.57**

221

### **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

222

223 **2.57.010 Department of Community Development.**

224 **The Department of Community Development is created which shall be headed by the**  
225 **Director of Community Development. The Director shall be appointed by the City**  
226 **Manager for an indefinite term and shall be removable by the City Manager. Within this**  
227 **Department will be the City Planner and such other personnel as may be necessary to**  
228 **provide services such as city-wide planning; zoning and platting; permitting and**  
229 **inspection; economic development; City enhancement programs and such other services**  
230 **or programs as designated by the City Manager or requested by the City Council; services**  
231 **such as parks, and community recreation. The Department may be subdivided into**  
232 **divisions with their own supervisors as deemed necessary.**

233

[**Bold and underlined added.** Deleted language stricken through]

