
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
Date: February 9, 2021
Re: City Manager Report

Strategic Planning: The following weeks are currently open for our facilitator. Again, this will be in person with numerous safeguards in place. We plan to keep the general schedule that we already set up, so the dates for Council involvement are outlined as well. If Council can reach consensus on the date, than staff can move forward with making the arrangements.

- Option 1 - Week of July 19 (July 22 & 23)
- Option 2 - Week of July 26 (July 29 & 30)
- Option 3 - Week of August 2 (August 5 & 6)
- Option 4 - Week of August 9 (August 12 & 13)

Upcoming Deadlines: The following filing and application deadlines and events are coming up.

- March 1, 2021 Deadline to submit Business Personal Property Tax declaration form
- March 1, 2021 Deadline to apply for Senior Real Property Tax Exemption
- March 1, 2021 Deadline to apply for Volunteer Fire/EMS Real Property Tax Exemption
- March 15, 2021 Deadline to file Annual Public Official Financial Disclosure (POFD) form
- March 31, 2021 Deadline to apply for Senior Citizen Sales Tax Refund

Vaccine Allocations: The Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, the City of Unalaska, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, and the Iliuliuk Family Health Clinic are working together to advocate for additional vaccines for our community. We are thankful for the vaccines we have received so far, and are grateful for the APIA and IFHS's coordination to administer them. However, the State's allocation is currently based on regional population alone and does not effectively account for our remote location, limited access to health care, seasonal population influx for industry, and significant number of individuals living in close quarters and congregant settings. We hope we can accomplish more as we work together in this effort.

GCI Fiber: The following overview of the City's involvement with GCI project was provided by Planning Director, Bil Homka. This effort supports a long time City Council legislative priority supporting the critical community need of reliable and high speed internet.

Project. Several months ago GCI announced plans to bring fiber to Unalaska. Once fiber arrives, GCI intends to install the fiber throughout the city. The new fiber will be installed sub-grade in city rights-of-way along with numerous vaults that provide switching gear. The city feels this is an opportunity to install its own conduit and fiber to build connectivity and increase bandwidth available for information sharing capacity. This project summary is for the city to work with GCI and agree to a project on the most favorable terms for Unalaska while also providing as much assistance as possible to GCI. GCI is very interested in working with the City and open to the "at cost" scenario. The Planning Department has been tasked to work with GCI and develop a Joint

Trench Agreement (JTA). Bil Homka and Charles Cacciola (City Attorney) have been representing the City in discussions with the GCI Team, which is led by Dan Boyette, GCI Vice President / General Manager.

Permitting. GCI already applied for the permit. Engineering is conducting its review and has shared the application information to the Planning Department. While Engineering has been reviewing the permit application and mapping out the process forward, Planning overlaid the drawings into our GIS system. They are checking historical real estate records for ROW acquisitions, dedications, and/or easements. This will assist the project if there is a need to acquire any land or easements for a contiguous project. Key team members include: Bob Cummings, City Engineer; Mark Kielmeyer, Engineering Tech; Thomas Roufos, Planner; and Cameron Dean, GIS Administrator.

Joint Trench Agreement. For two weeks Charles, Bob and I have been discussing various aspects of a potential Joint Trenching Agreement between GCI and Unalaska. In effect we are working to add about 55,000 lineal feet of conduit and fiber at locations that will connect city buildings and infrastructure. We want GCI to do this work at cost for the city simultaneously with their project. We offer GCI any excess conduit we may have throughout the city as our part of the agreement, as well as assistance in obtaining permission to install conduit across three city bridges including the South Bay Bridge on Airport Beach Road. Key team members include: Bil Homka, Planning Director; Jake Whitaker, Information Services Supervisor; Bob Cummings, City Engineer; and Charles Cacciola, City Attorney.

Future Coordination. Many city employees have institutional information about where existing fiber is located for GCI, TelAlaska, etc and where the city has vacant conduit. Working to schedule a coordination meeting to invite participation of employees with interest / knowledge of the project, conduit, vaults, and other crucial elements.

Next Steps. We just submitted a pre-joint trench agreement (JTA) to Dan Boyette. Once we agree to the basic terms of the JTA, we will begin preparing the formal JTA and bring it to City Council for its review and approval. The permitting will continue on a separate path of review, aside from this JTA.

PCR Facilities: As you know PCR has been developed programming with the City's high COVID risk level and City Council resolutions in mind. Staff worked to address feedback we received about the full closure when we were at high risk level previously. We have also worked to address critical health and wellness needs of community members. This extremely limited opening allows for elders, those with medical conditions, and individuals trying to stay healthy to exercise and manage their stress safely. We continue to receive complaints about not being open more, and not being able to accommodate family or small group outings. I understand the desire to have more access to these facilities, and we look forward to a time when the risk level is reduced and that is able to be accomplished.

PCR Director Roger Blakely has provided the following information and overview. Staff is certainly open to Council feedback and perspective.

- *The Library is open to curbside check out of materials, and to help anyone telephonically desiring to set up e-books and audio books and to offer internet access in your own personal vehicle in the parking area in front of the library. We also offer limited passport services for people that need that assistance.*

- *The Aquatics Center is open at different times during the day with cleaning times between each open time. All time slots are by reservation only. No more than 3 people in the pool at one time and 2 people in the workout area and 1 person in the sauna.*
- *The Community Recreation Center will be open during set times and only by reservation. One person in a room or on the track. Each reservation will be for not more than one hour. With the teen room, multipurpose room and kid's rooms all closed. The most people we can have in the facility during each open period is 7 people.*

We are operating under three main goals during the High-Risk declaration:

1. *Maintain a safe and healthy community by limiting opportunities for COVID-19 spread among PCR patrons.*
2. *Maintain a safe and healthy environment for PCR staff.*
3. *Provide services to meet our mission and to provide recreation, physical and mental health to the community to the best of our ability.*

During the High-Risk declaration it becomes much harder to provide all the services the community wants. We are committed to providing the best service possible during this stressful time, while complying with all the City and State mandates.

Proposed Additional Personnel: Staff is preparing to discuss new staff member requests with City Council at the February 23rd Council Meeting. These potential positions are mentioned in the Council Budget Goals memo, but having a specific time to talk about these positions will be beneficial as we continue to prepare the budget. As mentioned in the last City Manager Report, we are currently looking into what an expanded role of a Resource Analyst might look like if we were to resurrect this staff position. In the past, this position focused on fisheries, but this role could be expanded to include other areas such as geothermal coordination, permitting assistance and grants support. We also plan to bring forward a position to provide administrative support of the Fire Department, and an Emergency Management Coordinator position. The Emergency Management Coordinator position was also recommended in the IRT report.

Directives to the City Manager: One directive to the City Manager remain outstanding:

- *Options for Increased Tobacco Tax (11/27/18). Ongoing.* City Clerk Marjie Veeder has worked with our city attorneys on this complex topic. City Council discussed the Tobacco Excise Tax Ordinance, as well as potential rates and funding dedication approaches at their November 10, 2020 meeting. This is still being worked on and we hope to bring forward the Ordinance in March.