
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

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

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

Strategic Planning: Strategic Planning meetings are now planned occur the week of August 9-13, 2021. The facilitator will meet with the Mayor and City Council on Thursday, August 12 (9:00-3:30) and Friday, August 13 (9:00-1:00). This will be after the facilitator works with the Director Team earlier in the week. Calendar invites will be sent to each of you. This process will help Council set goals and focus areas that best address community needs and your vision for the future. With added focus, this will help us use our resources more effectively and sustainability.

CAPIS Funding Requests: We have submitted Unalaska's project funding requests into CAPIS, the state legislative Capital Project Submission and Information System. This is a way to communicate capital project priorities for consideration by the legislature during the capital budgeting process. Last year, accounts were closed to the public on February 14, 2020, and legislative offices the following week, February 21, 2020. No deadline has been set for this year, but we submitted ours on February 15, 2021. After talking with Dianne Bloomer, we kept our projects the same as last year. We requested varying levels of funding assistance for the following projects: Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements (an identified funding priority), Bobby Storrs Boat Harbor A & B Float (an identified funding priority), General Hill Booster Pump, Pyramid Water Treatment Plant Micro Turbines, and the Cruise Ship Terminal.

FY22 Budget Process: When preparing the FY21 budget, the Covid-19 pandemic was beginning. As a result of the uncertainty, we budgeted for significantly decreased revenues, and staff cut operating expenditures accordingly. With uncertainty remaining for FY22 and operational needs continuing, this year will more challenging than last to present a balanced budget. Additional revenues may need to be sought or consideration may be given to using reserves. Alternately, services may need to be limited, operational improvements requiring funding may need to be paused, projects and purchases may need to be postponed. Or, our approach could be somewhere in between. There are no easy answers. Over the course of the last few meetings, including this one, staff is presenting what some of the budget related requests and needs that are included in the CMMP, for rolling stock, for personnel. Your feedback is greatly appreciated as staff continues the process in developing the FY22 budget.

Innovative Readiness Training (IRT): Chris Salts with OC, Chris Price with the Q-Tribe and I continue to meet monthly, in keeping with the MOU that all parties signed in August. We are developing a presentation to summarize the report, key recommendations and action items, and some ideas for future IRT support applications. We now plan to share this with City Council, Tribal Council and OC's Board to garner their input and identify opportunities to work together in March. As previously noted, the Tribe has submitted a request for IRT support in a feasibility study for a local military presence. This concept was referenced in the IRT Community Assessment from this past fall, and will provide additional information that we all may find useful.

Geothermal PPA: We have a meeting planned with OCCP on February 26 and hope to receive an update on the project status at that point. OCCP is working through the permitting process with the Army Corps of Engineers, in hopes to begin access road construction this spring. We have been invited by the Corps to be a signatory on a Memorandum of Agreement for the project. The Corps has been selected as the lead federal agency, and the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office has determined that the project will have an adverse effect on the Makushin Valley WWII Historic District, particularly the runway. After consulting with the City Attorney I let the Corps know that we are interested in signing, but noted that the Council will have the ultimate authority to approve signing. Being a signatory on the MOA would allow for the City to be engaged in defining how the Makushin Geothermal Project's adverse impacts might be mitigated. The Tribe and OC have also agreed to be signers of the MOA.

Vaccine Rollout: The Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, the City of Unalaska, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, and the Iliuliuk Family Health Clinic have started meeting on a regular basis so we can help support each other in our shared goal of getting vaccines into arms. We can accomplish more as we work together in this effort. We are thankful for the vaccines we have received so far, and are grateful for the APIA and IFHS's coordination to administer them. City Departments are assisting when possible with vaccine events at the Community Center in coordination with APIA and IFHS.

Covid-19 Emergency: Unalaska remains in a state of emergency, regardless of the status of the State's declaration. Our community currently has more confirmed local cases than ever. All are being asked to continue doing their part to protect themselves and others from this contagious virus. From the City perspective, staff is focused on continuing to provide critical public services, safely adjusting operations, responding to outbreaks and adapting to pandemic related regulatory changes. This includes not only our regular duties but also: coordinating regular news releases with IFHS; assisting vessels with Covid related issues; participating in calls with the State and other agencies addressing outbreaks, response measures, and updates; managing the isolation site; assisting with vaccine clinics; and monitoring and testing waste water samples for the virus. Incident Commanders (Melanee representing the Clinic and I representing the City) meet together weekly with the Mayor. City staff meets on a weekly basis to discuss any necessary updates. Unalaska Unified Command Stakeholder group meets on a monthly basis. We have now added a vaccine coordination committee discussed elsewhere in this memo that includes representatives APIA, the Tribe, IFHS and the City.

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.