
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
Date: April 13, 2021
Re: City Manager Report

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

- April 30, 2021 Deadline to submit property tax appeals
- May 11, 2021 Board of Equalization hearing on property tax appeals
- August 12 & 13, 2021 City Council Strategic Planning Sessions (Thursday, August 12 planned for 9:00-3:30 & Friday, August 13 planned for 9:00-1:00)

Regional Military Activity: Unalaska Trilateral Group has extended an invitation to General Johnson and the 351 Civil Affairs Command, welcoming them to Unalaska and requesting their collaboration with the Military Base Feasibility Study. After presenting to and hearing from our respective Boards and Councils the week of March 22, 2021, it was clear that there was much support for this effort. We are awaiting a reply.

Separate from that, the City has been contacted by staff of Commander Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. They are sending a team of about 10 military and civilian personnel to conduct a site assessment in Unalaska from May 2 – 4, 2021. This assessment is in support of potential future submarine force operations. The last visit conducted like this to Unalaska was in 2019, and they revisit periodically in order to update their information. They have scheduled meetings with the Ports Department as well as with the Mayor and me on May 3, 2021. Additionally, I have worked to set up a meeting with Unalaska Trilateral Group on that same day.

Finally, we have been informed that the U.S. Navy is planning a joint training exercise with the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Air Force in the Cold Bay, Alaska over a two week time period in May of 2021. Focus seem to be on the Cold Bay area, but I am not sure of this exercise's level of impact to Unalaska. Seems to be minimal. Even so, I have ensured that Port and Public Safety Departments are aware.

Airport Master Plan: The State's Airport Master Plan update is still underway, and the focus at this point is on a refined alternative chapter addressing financials and implementation. A Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for March 24, but that has been postponed. The consultant team is waiting on input from FAA (the primary funding entity for projected identified in the Master Plan). They will then need to work up an updated schedule with AK DOT&PF. Sounds like the next committee meetings won't be for at least another couple of weeks. As you may recall, City Staff posed the question to the consultant team prior to their meeting with the FAA about the impacts on potential projects in the Master Plan if there were some sort of local contribution. I am meeting with the consultant team to learn more about what that might look like and how that might play out.

Virtual State Legislative Fly In: The Mayor and I will meet with Diane Blumer to sketch out a plan and timing for a virtual state legislative fly in, after additional feedback from City Council this evening.

Diane has provided the following comments, stressing the value of such an event: *As we all know, participation in advocacy and communicating with government, especially lawmakers, is the essential foundation of democracy. While COVID-19 has brought many challenges, it is still important to engage with lawmakers, even if it be a virtual fly-in format.*

Hosting an event virtually can be a bit challenging but it works well if we try keeping the agenda as close to the same "in-person" format as possible; a handful of meetings with pertinent legislators and 1 or 2 group presentations related to items of interest. This will broaden the City's advocacy efforts and allow the Mayor, City Manager and Council articulate priorities and areas of concern in addition to asking specific questions of the Legislators.

Diane is already thinking through what the agenda might look like. A virtual event structure much like an in person visit works best. Meaning a day or so of back to back meetings. Diane says that Tuesday and Thursday mornings are best.

Tuesday, April 27; Thursday, April 29; Tuesday, May 4, and/or Thursday, May 6 mornings are good potential times identified by Diane. Given that we have a big Council Meeting on April 27, and BOE Training on May 4, focusing in on the **Thursday dates (April 27 and May 6)** may be best. I welcome your feedback on the dates and Council members that might be available.

State Budget Public Testimony: As noted in the last Manager Report, the City provided public testimony for the Senate Finance committee on the proposed operating budget on March 18, 2021. Now is round two. The House Finance committee is receiving public testimony between April 8 and 10. Our State Lobbyist, Diane Blumer, highlighted this as an important opportunity to provide input, and Nils Andreassen echoed this in an email sent on behalf of AML. I am outlining the City of Unalaska's priorities and areas of concern that are associated the State's potential operating budget once again.

Emergency Operation Survey: City Council requested a follow up online survey and for staff to make stronger efforts to reach more people in the community. The results may assist us with understanding the effects of COVID-19 on the community; to examine the impact on people's daily routines; to gauge public perception about local mandates; and finally, to determine what percentage of the community intends to receive the vaccine. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Tagalog and Russian. The survey period was March 8-April 8, 2021. A summary of the responses is provided below. Complete results will be posted on the City's website. Thank you to the Planning Department for their work on this project.

- 150 responses. The previous COVID survey had 100 responses.
- Effect of COVID mandates on employment
 - 45% were not affected
 - 44% had their work schedule altered
 - 8% were not at the usual job in order to take care of children not in school
 - 4% were laid off temporarily
- Local mandates were generally easy to understand.

- Respondents were split on whether they would visit public facilities were there no protective measures in place, most responded either “Not Likely” or “Very Likely.” They were generally more likely to visit the school, restaurants and City facilities than bars.
- IFHS
 - 72% visited the clinic since the pandemic began. Most felt safe because of protective measures, like masking and plexiglass barriers, there.
- Contact Tracing
 - 9% were notified by contact tracers that they may have been exposed to someone who tested positive.
 - Of those, 76% chose to get tested and 84% isolated afterwards.
- Vaccine
 - 70% already received the vaccine
 - 20% do not intend to receive it
 - 6% intend to receive it once available
 - 3% intend to wait before receiving it
- Travel
 - 75% have travelled off-island since the pandemic began.
 - Opinions of the airport arrival process were generally positive.
 - Most received an informational sheet about local protective measures and completed a contact tracing form at the airport.
- Quarantine
 - 75% have quarantined at some point
 - Very few visited public facilities during their quarantine
 - Many were able to work remotely during their quarantine. Many also spent time outdoors away from others.

Directives to the City Manager: One outstanding directive currently exists:

- *Cost Benefit Analysis for Captains Bay Road Project (March 30, 2021). Underway.* The directive reads, “Implement a cost-benefit analysis for the proposed road improvements and utility expansion for Captains Bay Road.” The Public Works Director is working on a scope of work for this effort. As discussed at the meeting, we will be sure to work in potential funding opportunities.