

TO: The Mayor and Common Council
FROM: Glenn Steckman
RE: Manager's Report

December 9, 2021

Public Safety Advisory Commission:

The Commission met this past Monday. The Commission heard a presentation from Rhonda Schneider and Liz Johnson. The presentation was regarding the proposed development of safe housing for the homeless community in Nome. The Commission voted to support the project's concept and looked forward to hearing progress reports.

Planning Commission:

The Commission met in a work session and regular session. The Commission has sent forward the Historic Preservation Plan with a recommendation to the Common Council for approval. They heard from Austin Ahmasuk but chose to leave the plan in its present form. They want to amend the plan at a later time with input from representatives of the Alaska Native tribes.

The Commission also discussed permits and their enforcement by the city. It was explained to the members that the city is moving towards an electronic permitting system.

Unified Command:

The Unified Command (EOC) continues to meet and monitor the COVID Pandemic impact on the city and the Nome Census Area. While Emergency Order 2021-06 has expired, the city still encourages the continued use of facemasks in public indoor spaces. Free facemasks for adults and children are still available for the public to get at City Hall, Rec Center, the Library and Post Office.

Rec Center:

The boiler installation continues and I hope to see it in operation sometime next week. The final ventilation and parts needed for it are being installed as this report is being drafted. Proctor Sales that supplied the boiler is to provide training and they will initially fire up the boiler.

A new cash register at the Center is being ordered to allow for the processing of credit card payments.

Eileen Bechtol:

Eileen Bechtol our city planner has submitted her resignation. I am currently looking for a new planner or a planning firm to help complete the city's Comprehensive Plan.

Housing First Project:

The Community Center is seeking to develop housing for the chronic homeless and to provide treatment services for these individuals. While this may be controversial to some, this is just one piece of the

puzzle to address the homelessness, alcoholism, mental health issues and substance abuse problems plaguing the community; especially along Front Street and moving up Bering Street.

The financial plan for the facility is for the facility to be self-supportive. The Community Center will continue to operate NEST. The Day Shelter will also continue to operate. Community Center is also operating additional housing to provide support to the community.

The Community Center is seeking two things from the Common Council. One is a resolution of support for grant funding. The second, is a promise to donate \$200,000.00 to demonstrate support of the project by local officials when grants are secured. I would recommend those funds be allocated from our ARPA funds or the General Fund.

Senators Murkowski and Sullivan:

Teleconference calls were held by the city with the senators and their staff on the port project and other related issues. While I was traveling and not able to attend that call, Senator Sullivan's call included the Mayor, Joy Baker, Jay Sterne and me. The two issues discussed were the status of the port and the Air Force tank farm property.

Air Force Tank Farm:

As soon as conversations with the senators on transfer of the Air Force property concluded, the city started to hear from the Air Force. (Thank you to the senate staffs of Murkowski and Sullivan). The city emphasized the need to close out the process to allow development on the property. The Air Force said it could an additional 18 months to address concerns just raised by ADEC

Sara Lizak:

Sara has given the Planning Commission notice that she will not seek another renewal of her term.

Opioids:

Councilmember Topkok and I participated on a Zoom call regarding opioids and the impact on Alaska. The meeting was hosted by the AML to discuss settlements that are being reached by the pharmaceutical companies. Unlike other substance abuse, opioids are causing a change on the brain chemistry. This results in much longer treatment times.

AMMA:

The Alaska Municipal Manager's Association met in Anchorage for two days discussing recent changes in the law, the homelessness issues and HR related issues regarding the management of different generations.

Snow Removal:

With the two big storms of the season, city staff with its private partners addressed the removal of snow. The city's two snow blowers are down. One burned out a clutch and the other fuel filter issues. NSHC has agreed this year not to move snow to our snow dumps saving money for both parties. Another snow removal meeting is scheduled for next Thursday.

Nome Youth Facility:

Conversations are starting again on the Nome Youth Facility. It appears that it is for sale (\$90,000.00?). But, the real issue is to re-open the facility to provide necessary services to Nome and the Nome Census area. The Mayor and I conferenced called with Wendy Chamberlin to discuss the facility and what is its status.