



Agenda Statement

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ITEM TITLE:

City Manager's Report 3-17-2020

SUBMITTED BY: Mark Detter, City Manager

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and File.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The following details the trip to DC attended by Council Member Sorum, former Mayor Knight, Assistant Manager Murphy, and myself. The topics discussed with our federal partners included:

CHILDCARE-Discussions with the Department of Health and Humans Services and Housing and Urban Development were informative. Key partners in developing expanded childcare will be the Coast Guard and the Valdez Native Tribe. Both groups are potential funding sources for childcare in Valdez.

FLOOD CONTROL/LOWE RIVER-FEMA officials explained their plans going forward for funding flood control projects. Funding will be available through a competitive process for infrastructure projects for mitigation of flood issues. However, the size and scope of the Lower River project may not be a high priority for FEMA under the newly established BRIC grant program.

FERC-A FERC staffer, Stratton Edwards, and I met on Tuesday March 10, 2020. The staffer would

not elaborate on the FERC staff recommendation to the Commission related to the environmental impact issues of the gas line. The primary result of the conversation is that Valdez staff will be informed of the Commission's final decision due in June directly. The only statement related to the recommendation of FERC staff was that pipeline issues were complicated and the construction of a gas pipeline did not necessarily involve the same issues as the construction of an oil pipeline (meaning the TAPS route environmental impacts are not the same environmental impacts as a gas line route).

MARTIME ADMINISTRATION DOT- Council Member Sorum will discuss City official meetings at the Department of Transportation Maritime Highway Administration

HOUSING-Housing was discussed with HUD representatives and funding programs through CDBG were explained.

A few points were common themes in most of the meetings with the Federal agencies.

-- State of Alaska officials are primarily responsible for providing funding to local entities through block grants.

-Income qualifications are prevalent throughout most federal programs, particularly housing and childcare. However, rural development has loan programs (backed by general obligation bonds) with amortization schedules up to 40 years for water and wastewater projects.

Senatorial and Congressional Offices were occupied with by the Coronavirus issue, however, Congressman Young and both Senators did meet with City staff personally.

CHCG staff worked hard to set up appointments with federal agencies and Congressional and Senatorial offices to discuss Valdez issues. The City needs to utilize lobbying services going forward to fully realize the overall value of having such lobbying services in DC. The utilization of services includes visits to DC and closer contact with lobbying staff.

The next two weeks will involve monitoring Coronavirus issues and preparing for work session on affordable housing.