

**City of Palmer
Action Memorandum No. 18-071**

Subject: Approving a Council Community Grant in the Amount of \$4,000.00 to the Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center to Provide Educational Information to the Public


Agenda of: August 14, 2018

Council Action: **Approved** **Amended: To Award \$2,000.00**
 Defeated




Originator Information:

Originator: City Manager

Department Review:

Route to:	Department Director:	Signature:	Date:
	Community Development		
X	Finance		07/13/18
	Fire		
	Police		
	Public Works		

Approved for Presentation By:

	Signature:	Remarks:
City Manager		
City Attorney		
City Clerk		

Certification of Funds:


Total amount of funds listed in this legislation: \$ 4000.00

This legislation (√):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Creates revenue in the amount of:	\$ _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Creates expenditure in the amount of:	\$ <u>4000.00</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Creates a saving in the amount of:	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has no fiscal impact	

Funds are (√):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Budgeted	Line item(s): <u>01-02-10-6068 (3,500)</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not budgeted	<u>01-02-10-6068 (500)</u>

Director of Finance Signature: 

Attachment(s):

- 2018 Council Grant Application
- 2018 Scoresheet

Summary Statement/Background:

The Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center (HPAC) is a separate and distinct part of the Alaska Avalanche Information Network (AAIC). It is staffed by volunteers. It is held financially accountable through the AAIC 501(c)3.

The HPAC provides weekly snow advisories for the East Side of Hatcher Pass as well as educational opportunities for the residents of Palmer and the MatSu beginning in October thru April. This funding will be used to support those activities. This grant would allow HPAC to provide an additional weekly report throughout the season.

HPAC is not located in Palmer or within 1 mile, the services from this organization are received within those parameters, as well as educational opportunities occurring within Palmer throughout the year (Palmer HS, Depot, Backcountry Bike and Ski).

HPAC received \$2,000 in grant funding from Palmer in 2017.

In February 2014, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 14-043, which established the Council Community Grant program. The Council also approved \$10,000.00 in the Community Council Grants line item for 2018 that would finance approved Council grants.

Legislation #	Organization	Amount	Date Approved
AM No. 18-021	Who Let The Girls Out	\$1500	02/13/18
AM No. 18-028	Mayor's Green Day Gallup	\$1000	2/27/18
AM No. 18-029	Who Let the Girls Out Run	\$1000	2/27/18
AM No. 18-038	PMHA Garden and Art Faire	\$2000	3/13/18
AM No. 18-047	Valleywide Community Pinewood Derby	\$500	4/10/18
AM No. 18-053	American Legion Salute to Service	\$500	4/24/18
Total 2018 Grants approved prior:		\$6,500.00	

Administration's Recommendation:

To approve Action Memorandum No. 18-071 Council Community Grant in an amount the Council deems appropriate with remaining funds to the Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center to provide educational information to the public.



City of Palmer • City Manager's Office
231 W. Evergreen Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645
Phone: 907-745-3271 Fax: 907-745-0930

Council Community Grant Application

Program, service, project or event title: Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center
Date(s) of program, service, project or event: Fiscal Year: June 30, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Applicant Information

Name: Debra McGhan, Executive Director of Alaska Avalanche Information Center
Address: 7632 W Parks Hwy #623
City: Wasilla State: AK Zip: 99623
Phone: 907-982-0332 Email: dmcghan@alaskasnow.org

Organization Information

Name of organization/group: Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center, part of AAIC
Type of organization: Non-profit Volunteer community group Other

Funding Request

Amount of Request: \$ 4,000
Matching funds provided by applicant: \$ 10,000

Project Summary Information

In the space below, provide a concise, on paragraph summary of your proposed program, service, project or event and how it promotes economic development for the City of Palmer.
Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center, part of the Alaska Avalanche Information Ctr network,
provides life-saving services to Palmer residents and visitors who recreate and travel
at Hatcher Pass in the winter. HPAC produces avalanche bulletins and advisories on a
weekly basis during the winter season through the work of highly trained forecasters
and volunteers. This information is shared with the public via the AlaskaSnow.org
website, weekly radio reports, and social media. HPAC also provides free avalanche
training for all ages. This project will double the available information on snow conditions
in Hatcher Pass by adding a second weekly advisory effectively increasing public safety.

Project Scope of Work

Please list the steps to be taken to conduct the program, service, project or event. Be sure to address issues such as: beginning and ending date, who will work to conduct the event/project, clean-up team, where is the project going to occur (location).

Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center currently provides weekly snow advisories for the East side of the Pass beginning mid-October and ending in April each year or as conditions warrant. This project will add one additional skilled observation per week which includes a summary of snowpack and avalanche information. This will double the avalanche information available to the public each week improving public safety. This work will be performed by skilled, highly trained forecasters or observers starting in mid-November and ending in mid-April or as conditions warrant. The City of Palmer will be recognized for supporting this effort with a thank you logo on our website and in press releases.

Eligibility

Describe how your program, service, project or event meets the eligibility guidelines.

Since 2010 HPAC has benefited Palmer by providing information for safe travel in our local mountains. As Palmer is the gateway to winter recreation at Hatcher Pass the AlaskaSnow.org HPAC website, weekly radio reports, and social media updates attract recreation users who seek local services. HPAC holds an annual fundraiser, provides avalanche education, works with local businesses and organizes volunteer snowpack observations for Palmer. HPAC forecasters and observers are snow science practioners with industry experience in the US and Canada. HPAC is guided by an advisory board and held fiscally accountable through the non-profit AAIC 501(c)3.

Matching Funding Source

Describe source of matching funding. Have alternate sources of funding been explored?

Matching Funding: Friends of Chugach National Avalanche Information Center - \$2000;
Volunteer In-Kind for 2017/18 season - \$41,010; 2018 Fundraiser - \$11,000;
Donations 7/1/17 to 5/8/2018 - \$4,500.

Alternate Funding Explored:

-Fishhook Community Council (Revenue Sharing Funds) - \$5000 (passed first stage)
-Mat Su Heath Foundation and ConocoPhillips Alaska

Community Benefit

Please indicate how the results of your program, service, project or event will enhance economic development or generally benefit the City of Palmer. Describe the expected number of participants to be attracted by the event or project. Please explain how your organization will evaluate the community benefit of your event. Examples might include surveys, registrations, sign-in sheets, number of people served, etc.

Winter visitors to HP purchase necessary items from Palmer businesses, e.g. fuel, food, sporting goods, and lodging. Adding an additional observation and summary each week will increase public avalanche awareness enabling safer recreational travel for all users.

Demand for HP snowpack information is evidenced by growing Facebook reach exceeding 1,925 users per post, the HP Marmot weather station is one of the most visited pages on the CNFAIC.org website, growing participation in the Mat Su annual training workshop with over 100 on 1/14/18, demand for free awareness classes (50+ attendees from HP Snow riders club and 10+ with MAT SAR K9), plus large fundraiser turnouts shows the benefit.

Detailed Budget

Revenue:

Source:	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Alaska Mining & Diving	\$	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000
Donations	\$ 4,500	\$	\$ 4,500
Annual Fundraiser	\$ 11,000	\$	\$ 11,000
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Totals	\$ 15,500	\$ 14,000	\$ 29,500

Expenditures:

Item/Service:	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Pro. Observer Labor	\$ 4,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 14,000
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Totals	\$ 4,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 14,000

Applications may be submitted at any time to the address listed above. Please allow at least six weeks lead time for application review and City Council agenda scheduling.

Applicant signature: Debra McPherson
Date: July 10, 2018

For Office Use Only

Date received by Manager's Office: _____

City Council agenda date: _____

Action Memorandum No.: _____

City Council: Approved Denied

Date Manager's Office notified applicant of request outcome: _____

**City of Palmer – Council Community Grant 2017
Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center – Post Event Report
April 28, 2017**

Grant application criteria: *Please explain how your organization will evaluate the community benefit of your event. Examples might include surveys, registrations, sign-in sheets, number of people served, etc.*

Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center has the following mission statement: “...to provide avalanche information and advisories to assist and educate the general public in avoiding avalanches.” HPAC completed its 2016/2017 season on April 15 and provides the following measures of benefit to the community and businesses of Palmer:

Weekly Avalanche Forecasts

- 18 forecasts were made December 17 – April 15, 2107. The season started late due to a delayed snowpack. Forecasts have started as early as October in previous years. As the forecasting program expands and becomes more sustainable, HPAC hopes to move to multiple forecasts per week.

Professional and Volunteer Observations

- In addition to weekly forecasts, HPAC hosts an observation platform at its website with detailed information about the snowpack at various specific locations at Hatcher Pass. During the 2016/2017 seasons, 27 professional observations and an additional 38 volunteer observations from members of the community were made.

Hatcher Pass Snow Stake and Webcam

- The snow stake measuring snow depth at the Hatcher Pass Lodge and the webcam showing a view of the stake and valley below was again maintained by the HPAC advisory board.

Educational Presentations and Workshops

- Attendees at annual evening avalanche awareness presentations:
 - Palmer High School (2/17/16) – 60 attendees
 - Backcountry Bike & Ski (2/25/17) – 6 attendees (poor choice of date)
- Attendees at annual Saturday avalanche workshop at Hatcher Pass
 - Saturday (2/13/16) – 75 attendees
 - Saturday (1/14/17) -50 attendees despite snowstorm and unplowed road

HPAC Website (administered by Alaska Avalanche Information Center, AAIC)

- AAIC contracted with Justin Matley of AKSyS and launched a new website on November 1, 2016.

- Between November 1, 2016, and April 24, 2017, Pageviews of the HPAC Forecast and Observations pages totaled 23,810 for an average of 4105/month with peak month of February that reflected increased snow conditions.
- It is estimated that these Pageviews are represented by 8000-10,000 Unique Visitors for an average of 1379 – 1724 per month.

Social Media – Facebook

- HPAC advisory board launched a Facebook site, “Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center”, in order to reach more of the public. The average Reach per month of the FB site was 600 with an Engagment of 50.
- Certain high interest items such as a video of Jed Workman, HPAC forecaster, analyzing snowpack structure in February had a Reach of 27,000 and an Engagment of 3000 including 500 shares.
- High interest items were human-triggered avalanches or large natural avalanches and the actual forecast advisory.

Summary

Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center published 27 weekly advisories to their website, *hpavalanche.org* over a 5.8 month season in 2016/2017. Professional and volunteer observations of the snowpack published totaled 27 and 38, respectively. Measures of website visitation show significant viewing by the public especially during times of high avalanche danger. Our new Facebook site features high interest items related to avalanche safety and points people to the website for further information.

HPAC continued their educational programs this past season with an evening awareness class held at a local Palmer business and a half-day hands-on workshop at Hatcher Pass. This is the second year to hold these activities and we see this component of the program expanding using Palmer as a base for evening workshops.

Our annual fundraiser held this year at the Palmer Depot was well-attended and allowed HPAC to raise over \$5000.

In short, we find the extended Palmer community supports the Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center and that Palmer is a convenient base for certain HPAC operations. HPAC provides a quality of life benefit to Palmer residents and others who travel through Palmer to enjoy winter recreation at Hatcher Pass in a safe and healthy manner. Many of these visitors begin and end their day in Palmer purchasing local services. Finally, we have placed the seal of the City of Palmer at the HPAC website and invite the City to provide a link at their site to HPAC.

Ralph Baldwin, HPAC – Advisory Board

Project Name: Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center

Reviewer Name: Nathan Wallace

Date: 7/12/2018

Qualification Pre-Check

All items listed below must be present before further review of application.

X Event must be accessible to all members of the community.

Event must take place within Palmer city limits or within one mile of city limits.

Event has received funding from the City in the past. List the years funding was received: \$2,000-2017

If event was supported by a City grant in the past, the post event report from the previous event is complete.

	Application Elements		Expectations	Points Earned
	10 pts		7 pts.	3-0 pts
Accessibility & Strategic Priorities	The application clearly states the economic benefits and the reader/evaluator easily understands the benefits to the community and residents of the City.	The application states the benefits, however it is not clear and/or the reviewer/evaluator must assume or use reason to determine the benefits to the community and residents of the City.	The application does not clearly demonstrate the benefits and/or the reader/evaluator cannot determine through reasoning the benefits to the community or residents of the City.	10
	The application clearly addresses how the project meets one or more of the City's Economic Development Strategic Priorities.	The application attempts to address how the project meets one or more of the City's Economic Development Strategic Priorities; however, the reviewer/evaluator must assume or use reason to determine how the project is addressing a strategic priority(s).	The application does not clearly demonstrate how the project is addressing a strategic priority and/or the reader/evaluator cannot determine through reasoning how the project is addressing a strategic priority.	10
Fiscal	The application clearly states how much financial or in-kind services are being requested for the project.	The application contains information regarding financial and/or in-kind services as part of the project; however, it is not clear and the reviewer/evaluator must assume or use reason to determine what is being requested.	The application does not clearly state what is being requested and/or the reviewer/evaluator cannot determine through reasoning.	10
	The application includes a project budget which demonstrates sound fiscal practices and reviewer/evaluator can easily understand.	The application includes a project budget; however, the reviewer/evaluator has questions or has to use reason to understand the overall budget for the project.	The application does not include a project budget or the reviewer/evaluator cannot understand and/or has significant concerns about the budget as presented.	3
Benefit	The application clearly states how the community will benefit as a result of the event.	The application states the degree of benefits; however, it is not clear and the reviewer/evaluator must assume or use reason to determine the how the community will benefit as a result of this grant.	The application does not clearly demonstrate the degree of benefits and/or the reviewer/evaluator cannot determine the how the community will benefits as a result of this grant.	10
Reporting	The application clearly states how and when the City will receive a post event report on this project.	The application attempts to address how a post event report will be given to the City; however it is unclear and the reviewer/evaluator must assume or use reason to determine how and when the report will be presented.	The application does not attempt to address how a post event report will be given to the City or the reviewer/evaluator cannot determine how the report will be presented.	3
			Total:	46/60