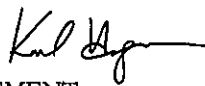

MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR JENSEN AND BOROUGH ASSEMBLY
FROM: KARL HAGERMAN, EOC INCIDENT COMMANDER 
SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY SHELTERING AGREEMENT
DATE: 12/14/2020
CC: STEPHEN GIESBRECHT, BOROUGH MANAGER

On April 13, 2020, the State of Alaska issued Health Mandate #14 in order to recognize the importance of, and facilitate the establishment of, non-congregate sheltering across the State. On November 16, 2020, Health Mandate #14 was continued as Health Order #4. The goals continue to be to establish sheltering situations for certain specific populations that may need to be isolated from others in order to prevent spread of the virus.

On April 28, 2020, the Assembly approved Emergency Health Directive #7 which established a plan and program to meet the goals of providing non-congregate sheltering to certain populations. The plan provided for reservation of rooms at the Narrows Inn for homeless persons and facilitated housing of first responders and health care workers at the Scandia House or Tides Inn as needed.

Pursuant to Emergency Health Directive #7, the Borough entered into an Emergency Shelter Rental Agreement with the Narrows Inn, effective May 1, 2020. Initially, the EOC reserved 7 rooms. At the end of the initial 2-month term, the EOC reduced the number of rooms being reserved to 4 and beginning in October reduced the number of reserved rooms to 2. The cost is being paid for by FEMA (75%) and State of Alaska DHS&EM (25%) and the rate per month per room is \$800.

There have been three persons sheltered as a result of the program. All were homeless and all were waiting for test results after receiving a PCR nose swab prescribed due to symptoms consistent with COVID-19. All sheltered persons received negative results and were checked out of the shelter upon receipt of their result. The shortest stay was two nights and the longest was 5 days. The program has had no sheltered persons since May. The last of the sheltering agreement extensions expires on December 31, 2020.

At this time, with case rates continuing to surge in Alaska, Petersburg needs to retain the NCS program in order to be prepared for potential isolation of first responders, health care workers and the homeless. The Narrows Inn is the only facility in Petersburg that is willing to shelter homeless persons who are impacted by the virus and remains the only facility that would be able to provide isolated shelter in order to avoid an infected homeless person moving about the community and spreading the virus to their friends and others.

Therefore, I propose and recommend that the Assembly approve the extension of the sheltering agreement with the Narrows Inn, on a month-to-month basis, until the end of May 2021 or until State Health Order #4 is rescinded, whichever first occurs, and to maintain the current reservation at the Narrows for two (2) rooms. The proposed Addendum is attached for the Assembly's consideration. As noted above, the cost is being paid for by federal and state authorities. I believe that this is the best option for isolating any affected homeless persons who are impacted by the virus, which also serves to protect the community at large if an outbreak within our homeless population were to occur.

Thank you for your consideration.