City Approves Federal Wishlist, TWIC Card Lease Extension

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

A handful of Kodiak projects will be sent to Washington D.C. in the near future. During last night’s city council meeting the council unanimously approved the city’s prioritized federal capital improvements program and issues list, essentially the city’s wish list of sorts for federal funding.

City Manager Aimee Kniaziowski said she spoke with the city’s D.C. lobbyist, Brad Gilman, and he recommended including all transportation and water infrastructure projects that are underway in the event some funding becomes available for those specifically.

“He said the same thing last year but I think he has a feeling there might be some chance for federal money.”)

Kniaziowski said the list is similar to the one the city submitted last year, but includes two new issues they hope D.C. folks will consider taking a closer look at.

“Council passed that resolution in favor of rural subsistence determination so Brad and his staff have been working that on the hill and he wanted that in there. And also some comment on the federal fishery observer program funding.”

The top priority on the city’s federal capital improvement list is still the Monashka pumphouse replacement. Kniaziowski said that $2 million request is included with the hopes that any federal funding allocated can be used as a match for the state municipal matching grant. She said that worked well when they did the same thing for the UV project, and would mean the city won’t have to borrow as much money to fund the pumphouse replacement.

In general, Kniaziowski said D.C. senators have been requesting project breakdowns from Kodiak, which she interprets as a good sign for federal support.

During the city’s meeting the council also approved a lease with Morpho Trust USA for office space on Marine Way. The company issues Transportation Worker Identification Credentials, or TWICs. TWIC cards are needed for all dockworkers in Kodiak and Kniaziowski said Morpho Trust’s Universal Enrollment operation has been issuing the cards from the location at 411 Marine Way since about May. She said that usage was under a short term lease, and now they requesting a two year extension.

“It really does benefit Kodiak employers and employees by allowing this work to be done locally, rather than flying people, as has been the case in the past, all the way to Anchorage. It could get pretty expensive. So we’re glad they’re here. I think it’s good that that building is being occupied, even

though they’re only open part time.”

The City Council approved the two year lease 5-0.

Universal Enrollment is located in the public bathroom buildings next to the harbormasters office on Marine Way. It is open on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.