

Alakanuk Activity Report

Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Marita Hanson, Bethel Office

2002 Census Population: 659

Region: Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Alakanuk operates the piped water and sewer system, the central watering point, flush tank and haul system, and washeteria/sauna service. The City Council is the policy making body for the Utility.

Construction began in 1995 to provide piped water and sewer to 170 homes and the school. In 1998, 83 homes, the school and teacher's housing were first connected. Today, there are 132 utility customers hooked up to the system. Water is derived from the slough, is treated, stored in a tank, and piped to most of the community. New facilities include a water treatment plant, heated 300, 000-gallon water storage tank, vacuum sewage plant, sewage lagoon, arctic piping and household plumbing. The new subdivision has been completed with all homes connected to the piped system. Plans to hook up the other side of the river are in the near future plans. The new airport construction got started this winter. However the project has been halted due to spring thaw.

RUBA Activity This Reporting Period

Bethel staff made a trip to this community in November 2003 to meet Betty Lowe, Administrator and follow-up on action plans from previous trip.

The City of Alakanuk utility continues to meet all essential indicators. The City has been kept busy getting more organized than before with Betty Lowe, Administrator, on board. She is very active with the staff, departments, and council. Compared to last quarter, the City is now getting back on track with the finances.

Capacity Indicators

Finances

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All revenue and expenses for the utility are listed in the utility budget.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has adopted a balanced realistic budget.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly financial reports are prepared and submitted to the policy making body.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses.

Sustainable Indicators

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses and Repair & Replacement (R&R) costs.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YTD revenues are at a level equal to or above those budgeted.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YTD expenditures are at a level equal to or below those budgeted.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A monthly manager's report is prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget amendments are completed and adopted as necessary.

Finances Comments: All excessive spending has been stopped unless a purchase form is first reviewed by the administrator for approval. The city has all creditor debts paid off. The City is hopeful in seeing revenues increase. The gravel bill has also been completely paid this quarter. The billing and collection policy continues to be enforced. The city continues to do a great job keeping all accounts up to date.

The City had been tapping into the Water/Sewer savings account during the low finance months and administrator position transition. This had a huge reduction to the account compared to the months it took to accumulate. The new administrator has put a stop to withdrawing from this account for any purpose other than for the water/sewer department. The City will be depositing to reimburse the account on a monthly basis.

Accounting Systems

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has adopted a collection policy and actively follows it.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility bills customers on a regular basis.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	An accounts receivable system is in place which track customers and reports past due accounts and amounts.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	An accounts payable system is in place.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The payroll system correctly calculates payroll and keeps records
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A cash receipt system is in place that records incoming money and what it was for.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Utility has a cash disbursement system that records how money was spent.

Sustainable Indicators

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A chart of accounts is used that identifies categories in a reasonable, usable manner.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly bank reconciliations have been completed for all utility accounts.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has a purchasing system that requires approval prior to purchase, and the approval process compares proposed purchases to budgeted amounts.

Accounting System Comments: Monthly financial reports continue to be received with reminders in between however, but the remaining months for this quarter had not yet been received. The bookkeeper had been out of the office due to illness and family death. She originally had informed the Bethel staff that she would be resigning making December her last month. She has extended her last day to be mid January. She will provide the reports by the 1st week in January.

Tax Problems

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | NA | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | The utility has a system to accurately calculate, track, and report payroll tax liabilities. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | The utility is current on filing tax reports. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | The utility is current on making tax deposits. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If there are any past tax liabilities, a repayment agreement has been signed and repayments are current. |

Tax Problems Comments: All essentials met.

Personnel System

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a posted workers compensation insurance policy in effect. |

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted and uses a Personnel Policy, which has been reviewed by an attorney, AML, or DCED for topics and language. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adequate written job descriptions for all positions. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted and follows a written personnel evaluation process that ties the job description to the evaluation. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequate written hiring process. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has personnel folders on every employee that contain at least: I-9, Job Application and Letter of Acceptance. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a probationary period for new hires that includes orientation, job-training/oversight, and evaluations. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility provides training opportunities to staff as needed and available. |

Personnel System Comments: The new administrator has the council reviewing the personnel policy. A copy was requested once this has been completed. Bethel staff informed her that the code of ordinance for the City should also be reviewed every five years.

Organizational Management

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The entity that owns the utility is known and the entity that will operate the utility is set. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The policy making body is active in policy making of the utility. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The policy making body enforces utility policy. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained manager. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained bookkeeper. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained operator(s). |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted the necessary ordinances (or rules and regulations) necessary to |

give it the authority to operate.

Sustainable Indicators

- The utility has adopted an organizational chart that reflects the current structure.
- The policy making body meets as required.
- The utility complies with the open meeting act for all meetings.

Organizational Management Comments: The October election results are as follows: Frank Alstrom Jr. – Mayor, Brian Williams – Vice, Patrick Phillip – Sec./Treasurer, Allen Hanson – Member, Denis Shelden – Member, Martina Harry – Member, Elizabeth Chikigak – Member.

A basic organizational chart exists for the City. Bethel staff informed the administrator that a more official chart, which includes names of council members, departments and staff, would be beneficial for the public and visiting guests. This way the line of authority and structure of the City is identified.

Operation of Utility

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility operator(s) are actively working towards necessary certification. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a preventative maintenance plan developed for the existing sanitation facilities. |

Sustainable Indicators

- The manager receives a monthly O&M report from the utility operator and routinely “spot checks” the facilities to see that the maintenance items are being completed.
- The utility has a safety manual and holds safety meetings.
- Utility facilities have not suffered any major problems/outages due to management issues that are still unresolved.
- The utility is operating at the level of service that was proposed.
- The operator provides status reports to the manager on a routine basis.
- The utility has completed and distributed its Community Confidence Report (CCR).
- The utility is not on the Significant Non-Compliance (SNC) list.
- The utility maintains an inventory control list.
- The utility maintains a critical spare parts list.

Operation of Utility Comments: The utility continues to be in good operations. Although they have had a few problems these were not serious enough to keep the system running. Having Billy Westlock, YKHC RMW located in Alakanuk is a benefit. He is readily available to help the operator’s resolve any problem. Currently Paul Ayunerak, Main Operator/Supervisor is out of the community on extended leave. There are two other operators who are well trained and capable of keeping the system running.

RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter

- Continue reminders and requests of monthly financial reports.
- Review the organizational chart once the council has completed this.
- Review the personnel policy once completed.
- Request for the Water/Sewer savings account journal when completed and make sure this is included in the monthly financial reports.