

Deering Activity Report

Margaret Hansen, LGS/RUBA, Kotzebue Regional Office

General Information:

In October, Margaret provided on-site training and assistance to the new city clerk. The first task was to review the October election, which showed that they needed to have a runoff election. The council wanted to meet to discuss this so we set up a work session in the evening at 5:00 p.m. During this trip Margaret also provided training to the clerk on tax reports, monthly financial reports, and QuickBooks Pro. They still did not have any applicants for the City Administrator position. We found out all the hard work convincing the Maniilaq Board of Directors to award their points to the Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) grant process paid off. The city got the remaining funds needed for their water/sewer project. We coordinated with ANTHC, EPA and BIA for the funds needed to complete their new water/sewer system, which should be done by Fall 2001.

In November, Margaret provided phone and fax assistance to the clerk and council on their runoff election. The previous Mayor did not run and the Vice-Mayor resigned to move to Kotzebue so the Secretary/Treasurer was in charge. It turned out that one of the two seats in the runoff was a tie so Margaret reviewed with the City Clerk the ordinance where it stated that they must flip a coin or draw straws. They tried three times to schedule a meeting with the two candidates but one did not show so they had to do it without him. Margaret continued to provide training on QuickBooks Pro. She also assisted the clerk in finding the funds needed to pay their AML insurance bill in full.

In December, Margaret provided assistance via phone and fax to the City Clerk on reconciling her employee compensation records with the 941 and ESC reports in order to prepare for the training in January on year end tax reporting. The clerk could not get a quorum until the end of the month to swear in one of the new council members. When they did finally get a quorum, the new council member had to travel out of town. They still have not reorganized the council. Margaret also was asked to check into allegations that the city was spending too much funds on unnecessary travel and that no one is investigating the funds stolen from the Utility Company. Margaret contacted the Utility Manager who agreed that the first week of January would be a good week for Margaret to visit. Margaret then received a call from the Utility Manager that she submitted her resignation and wanted assistance in reviewing the job description and interview questions.

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Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — They seem to be doing well financially. They did have \$320 stolen in October at the city and around \$2,000 from the utility office. The State Troopers are investigating. I will follow up on this next quarter. AML insurance went up slightly, so we had to make sure funds from other departments can be utilized for this.

Accounting Systems — The council and public have been receiving monthly financial reports and the city is using QuickBooks Pro. The clerk calls Margaret for assistance as needed.

Tax Problems — None.

Personnel System — Margaret will present the final draft of their personnel policies and job descriptions to the newly organized council and provide training on use of it including evaluations. The utility has hired a new manager who is very experienced and should be very easy to work with.

Organizational Management — There are no organizational management issues.

Leadership/Governance — The council was not able to reorganize this quarter due to the runoff elections and holidays. There was a tied vote for one seat after their runoff election. One of those candidates would never show up for the coin toss so we advised them to do it without him so they can move forward. Once they have reorganized we will review the workplan and amend it to meet the new members needs as well as staff.

Operation of Utility — The operators seem to be doing a good job responding and repairing water/sewer problems. Most problems occur with the pumps installed.

Ranking

1 = Inadequate

4 = Adequate to meet minimum requirements

7 = Exceeds requirements

Category	1	4	7
Finances		X	
Accounting Systems			X
Tax Problems			X
Personnel System		X	
Organizational Management		X	
Leadership/Governance	X		
Operation of Utility		X	