

Deering Activity Report

General Information:

In October, Kotzebue LGS/RUBA Margaret Hansen, discussed with the Utility Manager and confirmed that she would be attending the Utility Management Training in November as planned in the RUBA workplan. Margaret also provided assistance to the Administrator and Clerk on their elections and reorganization. The Mayor lost his seat and Margaret provided assistance on a recall petition by reviewing City ordinances and Title 29. Margaret also made sure they had their lawyer review the petition to make sure it was sufficient.

In November, Margaret provided on-site training and assistance to the Utility Manager in preparation for their audit. The Utility Manager could not reconcile the accounts for the last four months. In the meantime she still needed to locate funding for meter upgrades and old generator site cleanup. Margaret also sat down with the Administrator who misunderstood that the VSW administrative fee was a flat fee when instead she was to document and provide copies of expenditures for reimbursement. They completed a worksheet, which Margaret reviewed with the Administrator and Utility Manager. All they needed to do was copy the backup paperwork. Margaret also provided training on how to balance Quick books. The Utility Manager's deposits did not match the bank deposits and her payroll summary did not match the employee compensation record. They prepared a worksheet and found the mistakes which were corrected. They discussed revising the workplan to include utility board training after this election and what information we will need to do a rate study.

In addition Margaret has been helping with coordination between the National Geographic and the community. We requested the National Geographic staff person write to the Council with dates that he is available next summer to come to Deering to do the article on the archaeological artifacts that were found two years ago when the water and sewer trench was being dug.

In December, the City received a grant through Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation (UIC), a subsidiary of Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, as part of their water & sewer project for training of preserving artifacts. Reviewed the grant and made some calls. The City was to receive on-site training but due to the artifacts needing immediate preservation, they were sent to Fairbanks. This change of plans resulted in sending only three from Deering to Barrow for the training. Margaret also provided assistance with the State Revenue Sharing (SRS) application, personnel policies and conflict of interest ordinances.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — During Margaret's trip in November the need to transfer all intake of revenues and expenses for the water/sewer to the Utility Manager was discussed. Margaret will follow up on this in 2000.

Accounting Systems — The City continues to utilize Quick Books Pro and have worked out the problem areas. Margaret will provide on site training and assistance for the W-2 and year-end reporting in January 2000.

Tax Problems — No tax problems.

Personnel System — The City Council did not reorganize until November 1999. December was a busy month so in this next quarter (January-March 2000) personnel policy and completed revised job descriptions will be reviewed.

Organizational Management — Organization charts still need to be reviewed with all staff and Council to reflect the change in Utility Management and departments. New lines of communication and supervision need to be clear to the staff, Council and Utility Board. This task has been changed to next quarter during personnel policy review.

Leadership/Governance — New Council members were sworn in at the November meeting. An assessment of new members training needs will be done and the workplan revised to incorporate those training needs.

Operation of Utility — The water plant operator is providing the Council with monthly reports and the Utility Manager provides the Council with a monthly financial report during the monthly Council meetings. The Utility Manager could not attend the workshop in Nome due to the on-site audit that could not be postponed. The Council needs to make sure the Utility Manager attends the next Utility Management workshop.

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	