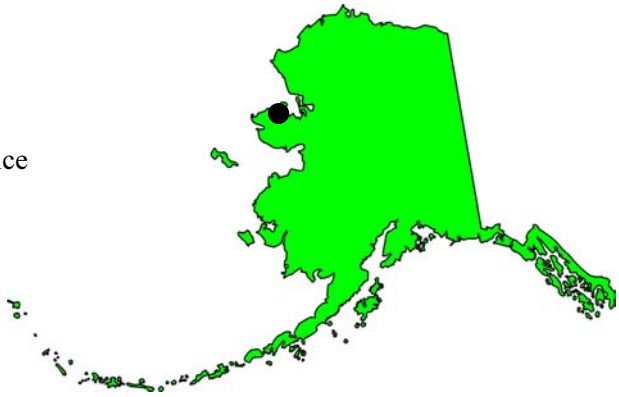
Deering Activity Report

Community Overview



Lead RUBA Staff: Margaret Hansen, Kotzebue Office

2001 Population: 136

Region: Northwest Arctic

Local Governments: Second Class City

The City of Deering operates the piped water & sewer system, central watering point and water delivery haul system. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Water is derived from the Inmachuk River; is treated and pumped to a 400,000-gallon insulated storage tank. Water is delivered to home tanks or hauled from the watering point. Major improvements are under construction for a water haul and vacuum sewer system. A new washeteria and water treatment plant are nearing completion. Archaeological remains were discovered while excavating for the new system. The City would like to purchase an incinerator with waste heat recovery to reduce the volume of refuse.

RUBA Activity This Quarter

The utility manager quit some time ago and did not train the newly hired bookkeeper prior to quitting. In May I traveled to Deering to provide a basic training to the clerk. And discuss general management issue with the staff.

Capacity Indicators

Finances

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
☒	☐	**All revenue and expenses for the utility are listed in the utility budget.**
☒	☐	**The utility has adopted a balanced realistic budget.**
☒	☐	**Monthly financial reports are prepared and submitted to the policy making body.**
☐	☒	**The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses.**

Sustainable Indicators

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

Finances Comments: The utility budget is supplemented with sales tax revenues. The council needs to seriously look at increase the water/sewer rates. I will once again attempt to convince the council to increase the user fees but because of increase electricity costs using the heat tape, they do not want to increase the costs to the user.

Accounting Systems

Essential Indicators

The utility meets all essential indicators.

Sustainable Indicators

The utility meets all sustainable indicators.

Accounting Comments: The clerk prepares a monthly financial report in comparison to the budget.

Tax Problems

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	NA	
☒	☐		**The utility has a system to accurately calculate, track, and report payroll tax liabilities.**
☒	☐		**The utility is current on filing tax reports.**
☒	☐		**The utility is current on making tax deposits.**
☐	☐	☒	**If there are any past tax liabilities, a repayment agreement has been signed and repayments are current.**

Tax Problems Comments: The clerk makes her deposits and reports timely.

Personnel System

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
☒	☐	**The utility has a posted workers compensation insurance policy in effect.**

Sustainable Indicators

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

Personnel System Comments: The city has not sent in anyone to the personnel management training. They need to do the evaluations timely.

Organizational Management

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
☒	☐	**The entity that owns the utility is known and the entity that will operate the utility is set.**
☐	☒	**The policy making body is active in policy making of the utility.**
☒	☐	**The policy making body enforces utility policy.**
☐	☒	**The utility has a adequately trained manager.**
☒	☐	**The utility has a adequately trained bookkeeper.**
☒	☐	**The utility has a adequately trained operator(s).**
☒	☐	**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 meetings act for all meetings.

Organizational Management Comments: The council does not have an organizational chart as part of their personnel policies. The Kotzebue LGS will work with the council on this. They need to discuss why they have not been able to hire an administrator and whether or not they want to go to paid Mayor.

Operation of Utility

Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
☒	☐	**The utility operator(s) are actively working towards necessary certification.**
☒	☐	**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 city has not been able to hire an administrator for a year and a half now. They have had problems with water/sewer freezing because of no oversite of operators.

RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter

The goal for the coming quarter is to work with the clerk and Mayor/council to decide why and what they want to do about having a full time administrator or paid Mayor. We will work on completing the CCR and a safety plan.