

Deering Activity Report

Margaret Hansen, LGS/RUBA, Kotzebue Regional Office

General Information:

In July, Margaret provided phone and fax assistance to the administrator on preparation of her capital matching grant application. They have agreed to use it as match for their water/sewer CDBG grant application.

In August, Margaret traveled on site to provide training and assistance to the council and staff to update their personnel policies. When she arrived she found out that the Mayor could not make it to the planned training session. Because the city had other urgent items to take care of, we decided to work on those items. Margaret provided training and assistance on water/sewer project issues, VSW questionnaire, election ordinance and timelines, tax reports, financial reports and grant administration including plans for CDBG application. She met with the Utility Manager and reviewed her audit. Margaret discovered that after dipping the fuel tanks that they were missing 6,500 gallons of fuel. Later they accounted for 1,509 gallons of that total. The staff had not recorded a sale of fuel to the school. However, 4,991 was not accounted for. Pilferage is expected. Locks need to be put on the tank. These tanks were recently constructed but no security measures were incorporated into the design. It will require getting a welder to the community. They could use their capital matching grant to hire someone to put locks on the tanks.

They also discussed her current CDBG grant and determined that they will have 75% of her project completed if not finished by the next CDBG deadline of December 1st. Margaret reiterated the need to have a public hearing on the grant to determine what project they want to apply for next cycle. We did not know in August if they would receive the amount needed to complete the water/sewer project from ANTHC funds.

In September, Margaret provided assistance via phone and fax to the City Administrator on elections. The current Mayor still had not completed a declaration of candidacy form. He may not be running for office this year. We also discussed that they did in fact receive the \$720,000 from ANTHC SDS funding needed for the water/sewer project. Margaret reiterated the need to talk with the engineer to make sure that was all that was needed. They started coordinating with AIDEA Division of Energy for information on the old generator spill to bring up as a possible CDBG project. Margaret also assisted with her VSW & capital matching grants and coordinating with tourism staff on tourism activity training. The council sees the need to create jobs for folks. They are ready to go forward with their economic development plan. Margaret also provided assistance to an individual who has over the years found mastodon tusks he wants to sell. She referred him to Tony Nakazawa and Fish & Wildlife after talking to department staff and National Park Service.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — They seem to be doing well financially. The funds needed for the water/sewer project have been awarded. Margaret will assist with their FY 2000 certified financial statement to see how well they did last fiscal year.

Accounting Systems — The council and public have been receiving monthly financial reports and the city is using Quick Books Pro without problems. Training for the new clerk will need to be done next trip.

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.

Organizational Management — During the personnel policy training session and job description review, we do not see a problem with transferring all water/sewer duties to the utility board under their manager.

Leadership/Governance —Deering will have a new Mayor this year so we will revise the workplan to include council training as needed.

Operation of Utility — Margaret followed through with the concerns of VSW. The administrator confirmed that she is making sure they work on those items. The operators continue to receive training towards certification.

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	