

Gambell Activity Report

Josie Morrow, LGS/RUBA, Nome Regional Office

General Information:

Telephone and fax assistance by Josie Morrow, Nome RUBA/LGS, continued during this quarter and were as follows:

- Advised the City Administrator to follow instructions concerning documentation that needed to be completed for the CDBG Fire Hall project. The Department's Grants Section needed a list of materials and freight costs, and the vendor was dragging his feet. Recommended that the City look at some other vendors in Anchorage, because the order was fairly large.
- Reviewed the draft FY01 budget with the City Administrator and Utility Clerk. Recommended various ways to cost out insurance premiums among all departments.
- Reviewed the Sales Tax ordinance with the Mayor and City Administrator. They had a question about Ivory Sales to a merchant from Anchorage. Determined that the sales were not taxable, but that the ordinance could be amended to address the specific situation. The Mayor was going to poll the Council Members on the matter.
- Reviewed the Notice of Election with the City Administrator and City Clerk and requested that both of them review the election ordinances before the process got very far along.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The Utility continues to set aside \$500 per month in a separate bank account for capital improvements and emergency repairs. The Utility did draw down some of these funds this quarter to pay for their annual fuel order. The Utility Clerk says she will reimburse these funds before the end of the calendar year. The City invests these funds in an interest bearing account with the local bank.

The City carries its insurance with AML/JIA and is current with its premiums.

There are very few customers who are not current in their utility billing payments. The Utility Clerk is very diligent in following up on past due notices and cutoff of services. She said that customers seem more willing to pay their accounts because they understand the new bills that are being sent out from the QuickBooks Pro software.

Accounting Systems — The Utility Clerk is utilizing the QuickBooks Pro accounting software and is becoming quite an expert with the system. She did set up the Bingo/Gaming Account onto QuickBooks Pro and the Gaming Manager is very pleased with the results. The Utility Clerk is now looking at what can be done with the City General Fund because the City Clerk was unable to do much with the system these past

nine months. The Nome RUBA is assisting her with this endeavor, and they expect to have some results next quarter.

The Utility Clerk does maintain the manual customer accounts receivable ledger cards as a check on the computer generated accounts. The Nome RUBA will be reviewing this process with the Utility Clerk sometime in the new calendar year, so that she will have more confidence in the computer reports.

The City Clerk has not been current with monthly budget reports. The Utility Clerk taught her how to do the reports on an Excel spreadsheet, but the Nome RUBA says she has reservations about the accuracy and completeness of these reports. All Utility reports are done in a timely manner, and the bank accounts are reconciled monthly. The Utility Clerk did reconcile all of the City bank accounts this quarter.

The Nome RUBA and Utility Clerk have discussed the need for the City to have one bookkeeper for all departments. Currently, the City has three bookkeepers: The City Clerk, the Ivory Coop Manager, and the Gaming Manager. The Utility Clerk is a fourth bookkeeper and is the only one to have any kind of aptitude for the work. This concept of one Bookkeeper will be discussed with the City Council and staff on the next field trip. The City Administrator and Utility Clerk see the practicality of the suggestion.

Tax Problems — The Utility payroll tax deposits are timely. There are no outstanding balances due IRS. The City had been remiss in some of its reports due to turnover in City Clerks, but the Administrator is now aware that he needs to monitor the timely filing of all payroll reports for the City. The City was up to date with its payroll tax deposits this quarter. The Utility Clerk is reconstructing all City Departments' payrolls onto the City's QuickBooks Pro software; so if there are any incorrect payroll reports for this calendar year, it will be obvious by the end of next quarter.

Personnel System — The City/Utility still needs to adopt job classifications, pay scale, and revised personnel policies and procedures. Additional training sessions in Personnel Management, Evaluations, and Supervision will be conducted next winter by the Nome RUBA.

Organizational Management — The Utility Ordinances need updating to reflect current rates. All Utility Ordinances need reviewing with the Utility Board and Council for clarification. There are approximately twenty homes on the water/sewer system that do not have utility agreements on file. The Utility Clerk will be obtaining those agreements as time permits. User agreements need to be updated to include appropriate information and legal considerations.

The City Council is desirous of eliminating the Utility Board, and has requested assistance from the Nome RUBA with this issue. Josie did discuss the situation with the

Mayor, City Administrator, and Utility Clerk this quarter and will draft an ordinance to eliminate the Utility Board. This should be completed before the new calendar year.

Leadership/Governance — The City Council has requested that there be a work session sometime this current fiscal year to read all ordinances, such that there can be a better understanding of the Code. A field trip in the third quarter of the fiscal year is planned by the Nome RUBA to read ordinances and review the budget for FY 2001.

Operation of Utility — There have been no major problems with the system this past quarter. Any operational problems are handled speedily by both Water Plant Operators.

Both operators are OIT certified and are planning to attend the next Level 1 course in February.

Ranking 1 = Inadequate
 4 = Adequate to meet minimum requirements
 7 = Exceeds requirements

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

