

# Golovin Activity Report

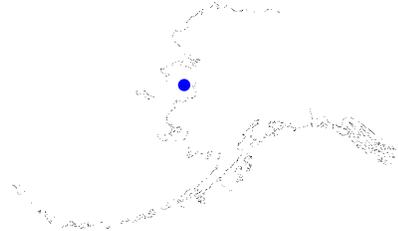
## Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Josie Morrow, Nome Office

2000 Census Population: 144

Region: Bering Straits

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Golovin operates the central watering point and water truck delivery system. There are honeybucket pits but no sewage lagoon. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

The City is beginning development of a community-wide piped water and sewer system. Water is pumped from Chinik Creek, is treated and stored in three large tanks. Approximately 50% of households are plumbed. 28 homes currently have water delivered by truck, 27 haul their own water, and 13 collect rain water during the summer. 10 homes with septic tanks have experienced drainfield failures, 25 households use honeybuckets and 21 homes use pit privies. A new 1.2-million-gallon water tank has been funded. A new landfill is under construction; the access road is completed. A new washeteria is also needed.

## General Information

Nome RUBA Josie Morrow assisted the City through phone and fax this quarter in the following matters:

- Chain of command between Council Members, Staff, Mayor.
- Use of Small Claims Court for collecting amounts due from former employees for unauthorized travel costs and unpaid payroll advances.
- Recommended written warning to employee who was allowing family members to use City equipment that was assigned to her to do her job duties.
- Assisted the Mayor and Council to resolve a problem with a Council Member who was harassing certain employees.
- Recommended to the Mayor and Council they institute a formal policy regarding the handling of police actions when the VPSO is out of town or communication.
- Recommended that the Mayor send a letter to all staff and Council Members that employees timesheets and leave slips are to be signed by the Mayor first, per the Personnel Ordinance.
- Assisted the temporary Accounting Clerk with questions she had about costing out liability insurance, workers compensation, and utilities.
- Agreed with Mayor's position on temporary hire for the Postmaster position. Advised her to have the Nome Postmaster approve any temporary hires.
- Recommended to Business Office Staff that they develop a plan to cross train one another so that they could eliminate the practice of using untrained alternates. This would also save the City and Utilities money. Advised them they needed to take the plan to the Mayor and Council.

- Assisted the temporary Accounting Clerk to calculate estimated FY01 Gasoline Fund revenues. Also advised her on the proper coding of some revenues received from other sources .
- Reminded the temporary Accounting Clerk that she should check whether the Fuel Sales Clerk had billed the City for all the fuel deliveries to various buildings throughout the year and if there were any balances due. This would affect revenues and expenses for her FY02 budget projections. Same with Water Sales.
- Reviewed with the Mayor and City Clerk the meaning of Conflict of Interest and applied it to various scenarios at recent Council Meetings.

The City sent its City Clerk and a Council Member to the Utility Personnel Management workshop in Nome the week of May 21st.

A Council Seat became vacant at the end of June, and the Council is recruiting to fill the vacancy in July.

## Observations and Recommendations

Finances — The Electric Utility Bookkeeper hired late last calendar year continues to keep all reports and billings up to date. However, the temporary Accounting Clerk says that the City has not been billed for fuel deliveries and water. These are the responsibilities of the Utility Clerk, who has been on maternity leave. The Nome RUBA advised her to bring this matter up to the Mayor so that the situation could be corrected.

The City and Utilities stopped preparing schedules for the FY 99 and FY 00 audits early last Fall. The Council Members indicated to the Nome RUBA that they want an audit rather than Certified Financial Reports. Josie recommended they make arrangements for accounting assistance with their auditor. As of the end of this quarter, there has been no action on the two outstanding years.

The City has renewed its workers compensation and liability insurance policies with AML/JIA for the new fiscal year.

Accounting Systems — The newly hired Utility Bookkeeper continued to keep the electric utility financial and PCE reports up to date this quarter. The City Clerk and Water/Sewer Utility Clerk are behind in all financial reports and need training. The Nome RUBA recommended last quarter that the City hire back the person they had as an interim City Clerk last Fall, so that she can train these two new Clerks in monthly financial reports and grant reports. The Council hired this person back this quarter to assist with reports and the FY02 budget, but she did not find the time to provide any training to the two new Clerks.

The Electric Utility Bookkeeper is training the two new Clerks on bank reconciliation's and reconciling quarterly payroll reports, as well as the computation of leave accruals and other pay issues, such as overtime. The new Nome RUBA needs to follow up on this process next quarter. Record keeping continues to be a serious problem. A system needs to be developed and filing completed before the end of this calendar year.

Both business offices have new Gateway computers and Hewlett Packard printers that will support Quick Books Pro software. The electric company and fuel sales both have adequate cash reserves that they could pay for a consultant's contract to implement and train staff on QuickBooks Pro. It is recommended that the City and Utilities contract with their auditor for this service.

Tax Problems — The City and Utilities are current with all tax reports and deposits.

Personnel System — The issues reported last quarter concerning problems that some Council members had following personnel policies and the practice of individual Council members giving orders to business office staff and keeping the Mayor out of the loop came to a critical head in May. In addition there was reported to be harassment of one of the employees on and off the job by a Council Member to such an extent that the employee filed a complaint with the State Troopers. The harassment was deemed of such a serious nature by unanimous vote of the Council Members, excluding the one causing the problems, that a vacancy was declared and the former Council Member was ordered by the Council not to come into the City Business Offices any more.

Job descriptions, classifications, pay scale, evaluations, and merit reward need to be incorporated into the policies and procedures. Work plans will be developed with the personnel management component being given primary consideration. Employee evaluations are being done on a more timely basis. Probationary periods are being extended where there is seen a need.

By the end of June 2001 the new Mayor was able to stop the practice of staff "shopping" among the Council Members for various permissions, such as leave and early pays. The Office Staff report that they no longer feel that they are in the middle of Council and Mayor conflicts, and that "things" have settled down now that the one former Council Member can no longer come into the business offices.

The City sent one of its Council Members and the City Clerk to the Utility Personnel Management workshop conducted by RUBA staff in Nome the week of May 21<sup>st</sup>. It is recommended that the new Mayor and another Council Member attend the next Personnel workshop scheduled for this new fiscal year.

Organizational Management — The Mayor and City Clerk have not been able to locate the most recent Code of Ordinances. The Nome RUBA advised the new Mayor to ask the temporary Accounting Clerk to find her the Code. As of the end of this quarter, this was not done.

The organization of the City and Utility needs to be put up on an organization chart for the Council and staff to analyze the lines of communication, supervision, and work duties. Nome RUBA's assessment of the City and Utilities is that there is some chaos in the way the bookkeeping, sales, receipting, and reporting are being handled. In addition, the lines of authority are not clear to all staff and Council Members. This charting can be included with the QuickBooks Pro implementation, and Josie recommends that the new Nome RUBA work closely with the Council, staff, and consultant to streamline the

Business Office functions and to develop a good organization chart that can be posted for all to see.

Appropriate utility ordinances need to be drafted when it is determined what system(s) will be built for water/sewer. Current utility ordinances need incorporating into the correct section of the City’s Code of Ordinances, and the payment and collection policies need clarification.

Leadership/Governance — There has been a considerable improvement in leadership this past quarter under the new Mayor. The Nome RUBA reports that this is the first time in almost four years she has seen the Council and Mayor work together, and she credits the new Mayor and new Vice-Mayor for this positive change.

Operation of Utility — The City is operating with only one Water Plant Operator. It is still recommended that the Council recruit for a backup operator, and they have advised the Nome RUBA that they are recruiting for the position.

It was also recommended to the Council by the Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) and the Nome RUBA that the Council look at two operators working a shift of one week on, one week off. This arrangement would be more attractive to potential employees.

The City is on the Significant Non-Compliance Exception List for Surface Water Treatment Rule violations. There is no distribution chlorine residual testing, no turbidity testing, and late operator reports.

**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		

### Anticipated Activity

Leroy Seppilu, LGS/RUBA in the Anchorage office, will be moving to the Nome Regional Office September 1, 2001, and will continue to work with the City.