

Golovin Activity Report

Josie Morrow, LGS/RUBA, Nome Regional Office

General Information:

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

- Reviewed the insurance policy, including workers compensation, with the temporary Accounting Clerk. Helped her with an allocation of the premium expenses on the FY00 financial reports and the FY01 budget.
- Worked with the temporary Accounting Clerk to complete the FY01 budget. Also provided her with grants information so she could bring current all the grant reimbursement reports. The City was current with their reports at the end of this quarter.
- Assisted the Utility Bookkeeper to prepare an invoice for a construction company leasing some of the City's heavy equipment. The City's rate schedule is not very clear and needs to be revised. The Vice Mayor was advised of the problem.
- Assisted the Utility Bookkeeper to rewrite a Past Due warning letter and a Notice of Cutoff of Service to customers. Provided her with the current City ordinance that addresses these policies and answered her questions about the procedures that should be followed.
- Responded to a call from a resident regarding recall procedures. The person decided to not go through the process, but to run for a Council Seat in the October municipal elections.
- Provided the City Clerk with a list of specific items to order for a new PC, printer, and back-up power unit. This order is for the electric utility. Reviewed the quote presented to the City from Gateway, made some changes; and the Clerk ordered the computer and other hardware. The order was received at the end of this quarter.
- Advised the Utility Bookkeeper which accounting software to order and what version. Gave her the vendor's phone number and monitored her ordering. She did a good job.
- Instructed the interim City Clerk which reports to pull from the City and Utility computers, assisting her with the proper formatting so that the City's FY99 Certified Financial Reports could be completed. The interim Clerk was very responsive in finding all the information Josie needed, and the reports and resolution certifying the statements were completed and submitted to the Revenue Sharing section in late August.
- Advised the Vice-Mayor what to do concerning the Fall barge order for fuel. The Utility Bookkeeper had failed to meet the deadline for an order, and the vendor was saying that the fuel would have to be flown in. Directed the Vice-Mayor to two other vendors and told her to throw herself on their mercy. She was successful in getting a competitive quote and commitment for delivery.
- Advised an employee to take his complaint of a Council Member to the Vice-Mayor for resolution at the next Council Meeting. Discussed the situation with the Vice-Mayor, and she handled the situation successfully in an executive session.

- Researched the question of which seats were open in the upcoming municipal elections. Assisted the temporary Accounting Clerk to draft a Notice of Election. Reviewed the final notice and verified that it had been posted in various locations.
- Confirmed with the temporary Accounting Clerk that the Capital Matching Grant application, Village Safe Water Questionnaire, and PILT Resolution were being completed. All three items were submitted timely.
- Made four recommendations concerning some serious personnel problems. One situation was cleared up, but the other three were still outstanding at the end of this quarter. Provided the Council with a checklist of what to expect on a monthly and quarterly basis for two employees. Arranged for a field trip early next quarter to assist the Council with the three outstanding matters.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The City hired a City Clerk and Utility Clerk at the end of this quarter. Both Clerks are fairly inexperienced in their positions, but are willing to learn. The Utility Clerk does have a background in daily cash receipts, and she has taken over the tasks of customer collections, daily reconciliation of fuel sales, and all bank deposits. She was able to bring all water billings up to date as of the end of this quarter.

The City is still preparing schedules for its FY 99 audit. Due to the chaos in the two City business offices, it was decided that the Nome RUBA would assist the City Clerk in preparing a FY99 Certified Financial Report, such that the City could receive its FY01 Shared Revenues and Payment in Lieu of Taxes in a timely manner. The City has dedicated a portion of its FY01 Shared Revenues for direct payment to the fuel vendor for its Fall barge order. The Nome RUBA was able to complete the report this quarter. In addition, she was able to assist the City in its completion of the FY01 Budget. She has advised the Council Members and staff that the outstanding audits must be dealt with as soon as possible, even if it means hiring the temporary Accounting Clerk for a longer period or making an arrangement for accounting assistance with their auditor.

Although the City has an outstanding balance of \$5,835 on its insurance premiums with AML/JIA, it is in a current status. The City expects to pay this amount in full this next quarter.

All utility billings are now up to date, but it could not be determined at the end of this quarter how many customers are past due. The Nome RUBA has requested a schedule of customer accounts receivable from the Utility Clerk for the end of next quarter. The Utility Bookkeeper remains behind in Past Due notices and the PCE monthly reports as well as the PCE annual report. It was recommended that these reports and collection issues be given the highest priority.

Accounting Systems — The City and Utility took delivery of its new computers at the end of this quarter. However, the utter chaos in both business offices has put off any software implementation until the beginning of the next calendar year. Both offices have not been able to produce any financial reports for almost six months now. The interim City Clerk did finish inputting all transactions for the City General Government and Water/Sewer Utility before she returned to school at the end of the summer; but the new Clerks are unfamiliar with financial reports and the older machines currently being used. The temporary Accounting Clerk hired by the Council was able to bring all grant reports up to date, but she advised the Nome RUBA that she was not going to continue employment much longer into the next quarter.

Bank reconciliations still need to be brought up to date. In addition, business office personnel need training on reconciling quarterly payroll reports and year-end reports and forms, and computation of leave accruals and other pay issues, such as overtime. Record Keeping continues to be a serious problem. A system needs to be developed and filing completed before the end of this calendar year.

Tax Problems — IRS reports that they see no payroll tax deposits for the City in the second quarter, but that there are numerous ones for the third quarter. The Nome RUBA did contact both new Clerks to locate all payroll report files for this calendar year and to investigate what happened in the second quarter. She also advised them to prepare the third quarter reports as soon as possible.

Personnel System — The Utility Bookkeeper and Council continue to have problems following personnel policies. There is not a clear line of supervision at City Hall, and quite often individual Council Members give orders to business office staff. The Nome RUBA has brought this matter to the attention of the Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and Council Members. She also recommended that the Council work through the Mayor, or Vice-Mayor, in his absence.

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 were done at the end of the fiscal year, but there still remain a few staff who have refused to meet with the Council concerning their evaluations.

A few of the staff continue to “shop” among the Council Members for various permissions, such as leave and early pays. The Nome RUBA recommended to the Mayor and Vice Mayor that this practice be stopped immediately and that all staff and Council Members be advised that these types of requests must be given to the Mayor, per the Personnel Ordinance.

Organizational Management — The past City Clerks had not codified the ordinances passed in late 1996/early 1997, nor any updates. The Nome RUBA will incorporate this step into RUBA work plans.

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. Currently, it appears 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. This charting can be included in the Personnel training that the Nome RUBA will be scheduling with the Council and staff on the next field trip. 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 clarifying.

Leadership/Governance — Council training needs to happen as soon as possible in the new fiscal year and can be coordinated with the Personnel training. The City Council has a history of acrimonious meetings and much turnover. Somehow there needs to be instilled in the Council and public a sense of pride in its City government.

Family ties between Council members and staff continue to cause much dissent in management of day-to-day affairs as well as implementation of policies. The Personnel policies prohibit elected officials from holding permanent positions in City employment, and last quarter there remained one Council Member who was also a City employee. The Mayor gave this employee a choice to either resign his seat as a Council Member or resign from his permanent position. He chose to resign from both positions. The vacant seat was filled at the following Council meeting.

Operation of Utility — The City hired a new Water Plant Operator at the beginning of this quarter. It was recommended that they recruit for a backup Operator. The new operator needs to attend the next OIT training.

The Remote Maintenance Worker provided the Water Plant Operator with a list of tasks that need to be attended to before winter sets in. He stressed the immediate need for hiring a second operator. As of the end of this quarter, the City was unsuccessful in recruiting for the alternate position. It was recommended to the Council by the 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.

(Continued on next page.)

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		

