

# Goodnews Bay Activity Report

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## General Information

Throughout the quarter, RUBA staff continued to provide assistance to the Goodnews Bay Water and Sewer Utility on numerous items. The activities included computer assistance with Excel and W-2's, draft budgets, payroll taxes, customer relations with the school district personnel, and financial statements.

In mid March, RUBA staff met with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Engineer for the project and discussed to progress to date of the Utility. We agreed that much progress has been made towards the goal of the Goodnews Bay Water and Sewer Utility Board being capable of operating and managing a water and sewer system and that additional work has to be done in the area of collections.

## Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The Washeteria revenues have been increasing during this quarter and are covering more of the expenses of the Utility (the non-profit corporation). However, the City is continuing to have financial problems. The City staff continue to receive technical assistance with budgeting and accounting processes from the Bethel office staff. The collection rate for the honey-bucket bin haul system is increasing. The manager sends bills regularly. The City and the Tribal Council are both late in making the agreed upon contributions to the Utility. They both had financial problems of their own to deal with this quarter. These contributions should be caught up next quarter.

Accounting Systems — All the necessary accounting systems are in place and the Utility Manager has been trained to use them. RUBA staff will continue to monitor the system to see if any changes need to be made or if further training is needed.

Tax Problems — There are no tax problems. The Utility Manager knows how to deposit the payroll taxes and can file the required quarterly reports.

Personnel System — The Operator has had on-site training and has gone to training sessions in Bethel. He has passed his OIT test. The Manager has trained an assistant to help in the office a few hours a week. This has proved helpful for the operations of the Washeteria on the weekends and other times when the Utility Manager is not available.

Organizational Management — There is one person who is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of the utility. There are Rules and Regulations for the Utility in place and Personnel Policies and procedures have been adopted.

Leadership/Governance — The Utility Board is a recognized non-profit corporation. Its' Articles of Incorporation have been reviewed and approved by the Department of

Commerce. The Board has approved the Bylaws. The Board continues to hold meetings monthly. Both the City and Traditional Village governments recognize it as the local organization that will manage and operate the system. The City and Utility Board have signed a management agreement to formalize the understanding that the Utility Board will operate and manage the City’s property. The Utility Board has reviewed and approved the rules and regulations governing the operations, maintenance and management of the utility.

Operation of Utility — The new operations staff has received training operating the water plant and Washeteria equipment. The office equipment is operating properly and utility staff has been trained how to use it.

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 Activities:**

In early April, RUBA staff will travel to Goodnews Bay to review all the accounting systems in place and determine if any changes need to be made. RUBA staff will probably start a new billing spreadsheet as of the beginning of the year.

The Utility Manager has requesting assistance in communicating with a customer (the School District) on the necessity of paying for services. We will draft another letter explaining the Utility Board’s decision to charge the School District for sewer discharge into the community’s sewer lagoon.