

Goodnews Bay Activity Report

General Information:

In early July, Athena Logan, RUBA staff, sent a report to the Utility Board President, the City Mayor and the Village Council Mayor explaining the progress to date and further activities planned by the RUBA staff. The letter explained that the plans for the next trip, in early July, were to provide further training with the Utility Manager on payroll taxes, preparing draft Utility Rules and Regulations and a draft Personnel Policies and Procedures for the Board. RUBA staff planned on working with the Utility Manager on these items and he should be able to present them to the Board at the next meeting. RUBA staff explained that she is very pleased with the progress the Utility Board and the Utility Manager have made to date and encouraged them to continue to take seriously the responsibilities required to provide a safe and effective public utility service.

In early July, Athena traveled to Goodnews Bay to work with the Utility Manager on numerous items listed on the work plan. These items included quarterly tax reports, reconciling checking accounts, drafting new rules and regulations for the Utility Board, drafting personnel policies and procedures, and sending out the first billings from the Utility Board.

RUBA staff worked with the Utility Manager on the computer. He had been trying to change the billing spreadsheet. The system was designed to include all the previous bills owed by the customers. He had been told to take all the old bills off and just bill for July 1999. This caused the formulas to be incorrect and we needed to redo about twenty of the bills. Since the City office was closed we couldn't get the previous billing records so we were not able to correct and send those bills.

Tuesday evening we worked on designing a cash counting system for the Washeteria which would record the cash from every machine and the paper money from the quarter machine.

On Wednesday, we used the cash count spreadsheet for the previous months to determine how many uses the machines actually get. RUBA staff will use this information to provide the Utility Board with advice on rates for the machines. RUBA staff started gathering the other information needed for a rate study for the Washeteria. We got copies of the annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily task list for the O&M position.

On Thursday, we reviewed the draft Rules and Regulations. Dennis will introduce them at the next board meeting. We also worked on the following tasks:

- ◆ started a filing system,
- ◆ reconciled the checking account,
- ◆ prepared the Quarterly tax reports,
- ◆ got a P.O. Box for the Utility,
- ◆ entered the budget into Quicken,

- ◆ prepared Annual & Monthly Budget Reports in Quicken,
- ◆ printed out the billings that we could, along with a message to customers reminding them of the change, telling them what the office hours would be and the phone number,
- ◆ set up an address file so the Manager can print the envelopes for the bills from the computer.

In mid July, the Utility Manager called to let the RUBA staff know that the billings had been sent out and that the Utility Board would be meeting on August 6th.

In late July, RUBA staff received the following message from Greg Capito of the Village Safe Water Program. "Athena's July 2 report and scorecard were excellent. Sending it and a cover letter to the local board was a great touch. Perhaps that should be done on every job where RUBA is involved. It sends a message straight to the locals and sometimes that's exactly what's needed."

RUBA staff met with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) staff in late July to discuss current activities with the Goodnews Bay Water and Sewer Utility. RUBA staff provided a copy of the most recent trip report and related that the Utility staff are rapidly learning the necessary management skills. The accounting systems they need to manage the finances are in place. The problems with both the City and the Utility Board sending out billings for the haul service were discussed. We will continue to work on the items on the RUBA workplan. An updated copy of that plan was provided to the ANTHC staff.

In early August, RUBA staff took another trip to Goodnews Bay to work with the Utility Manager and the Utility Board on numerous items listed on the RUBA work plan, These items include Rules and Regulations for the Utility Board, Drafting Personnel Policies and Procedures, Workshop on Collection Policies with the Board, General Office Procedures w/ Utility Manager, and reviewing previous training activities for possible follow-up.

During this trip the RUBA staff person worked with the Utility Manager and the Utility Board on the following items:

- ◆ Printed a Monthly Financial Report for the Board.
- ◆ Attended a Board Meeting.
- ◆ Billing System & Notice - Changed the billing spreadsheet. The system was designed to include all the previous bills owed by the customers. We had to take all the old bills off and just bill for the time period after July 1999. This caused the formulas to be incorrect and we needed to redo all the bills.
- ◆ Met with the Mayor and Acting City Clerk to discuss the proper procedures for bill and cash collections for the Hauling System.
- ◆ Agenda's & Minutes - drafted a sample agenda and the minutes for the recent meeting for the Manager to use as an example for the next meetings
- ◆ Cash Count - reviewed cash count procedures with the Manager.
- ◆ Cash Receipts for HB - instructed the Manager to prepare cash receipts for all funds received and showed him how to enter them in the computer Quicken file.
- ◆ Payroll - Corrected Payroll Spreadsheets
- ◆ Personnel Policies and Procedures - Workshop Scheduled with Board for August 31

- ◆ Quicken - We checked that all transactions have Categories and reviewed the process for preparing reports.
- ◆ User Fee for School Sewer-discussed what rate the Utility Board should charge the School for disposing of wastewater into the sewer lagoon.
- ◆ Prepared a To Do List for the Manager to work on during the next month.

In mid-August, a meeting was held between Mary Minor, Athena Logan and Mike Black to discuss the current activities with the Goodnews Bay Utility Board. RUBA staff provided copies of her recent trip report and reviewed the activities that had taken place.

RUBA staff also talked to the Jim Sanders, Field Office Manager, about the assistance that the City of Goodnews Bay needs. RUBA staff and LGS office staff met at a workplan meeting to discuss what assistance could be offered to the City of Goodnews Bay. They are having financial problems, personnel problems and problems filing grant activity reports. Bethel field office staff will schedule a trip to assist them with these items.

In early September, staff traveled to the community to work with the Goodnews Bay Utility Manager and the Utility Board on numerous items listed on the RUBA work plan. These items included: Rules and Regulations for the Utility Board, Personnel Policies and Procedures, General Office Procedures w/ Utility Manager, Review previous training activities for possible follow-up.

RUBA staff finished a report to the Council on rates to charge the school district for using the sewer lagoon. The next day, RUBA staff worked on the daily cash count spreadsheet. The Manager was having trouble balancing it on those days when he has to remove quarters from the machines and refill the change machine. We reviewed the process and made the necessary corrections during the next few days. The City Mayor never showed up to work with RUBA staff during the morning as we had agreed. Therefore RUBA staff continued to work with the daily cash spreadsheet and the sewer rate recommendation. When the Manager was not working with the RMW we worked on the following items:

- ◆ Billing System - corrected two customers' spreadsheets that were not calculating correctly.
- ◆ Finished the Agenda for the next meeting.
- ◆ Finished the Minutes for previous meetings.
- ◆ Reviewed the table to keeping track of the Board members assigned to which seats.
- ◆ Corrected a few Payroll entries.
- ◆ Quicken - We checked that all transactions have Categories assigned and reviewed the monthly report and the budget report.
- ◆ Printed a Monthly Financial Report for the Board.
- ◆ Discussed the Utility Manager's Report to the Board. It should contain a Financial Report and information the Board needs to know about personnel issues and operation & maintenance issues.

RUBA staff attended a Board Meeting where we reviewed the Rules and Regulations and the Personnel Policies and Procedures. The Board also discussed the rate to charge the School for disposing of wastewater into the sewer lagoon, among other items on the agenda.

The next morning RUBA staff and the Utility Manager reviewed the payroll process. Staff prepared another To Do List for the Manager to work on during the next month.

In mid September, RUBA staff received a message explaining the ANTHC staff would be traveling to Goodnews Bay Sept. 14-16. The trip purpose was:

1. The archaeologist will be on-site to begin the survey of areas impacted by future construction of the water and sewer projects.
2. Sanitarians from BBHC will be doing a site evaluation to investigate reports of asbestos in the old BIA school and about concerns over some pipe that was stored in GNB that may have asbestos insulation.
3. ANTHC foremen will be on site to evaluate what work is required to move the watering point and to reconfigure the fuel oil piping system. Currently, the generator is not operable and therefore will need to be brought back on-line. Also they will be doing preliminary planning for next year's construction season.

A meeting with the Utility Board will be scheduled so the VSW CIP01 resolution can be signed prior to the Oct 1, 1999 deadline.

RUBA staff replied back and asked for information about the VSW grant application. The City Administrator had brought it to the Utility office while RUBA staff was there and she suggested that Dennis contact Sherri Hadley as the appropriate person to help him if another the application needs to be filed for this project or for a different project. He mentioned a new sewer haul vehicle to get them through the next two years.

We will continue to work on the RUBA workplan items including preparing the quarterly reports that need to go to ANTHC, starting an annual operations plan with the operator and beginning the budget planning process for fiscal year 2000.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The washeteria revenues are not enough to cover the expenses with the current operating system and rate structure. The Utility Board is continuing to receive contributions from the City and the Tribal governments. The rates for the dryers were set to increase on July 1, however with the loss of the experienced Operator no one knew how to change the machines. The Manager is working with the RMW on this. He will be ordering the parts needed as soon as possible.

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 in July learned how to file the required quarterly reports with the Internal Revenue Service and the Alaska Department of Labor.

Personnel System — The new Operator and Alternate Operator will be receiving training in October. The Board reviewed and approved personnel policies and procedures at their regular meeting in September.

Organizational Management — There is one person who is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of the utility.

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 reviewed the draft rules and regulations governing the operations, maintenance and management of the utility at their regular meeting in September. They have scheduled a public hearing and final approval of the Rules and Regulations at their regular October meeting.

Operation of Utility — With the change in staff there will need to be some training provided in operating the water plant and washeteria equipment. The Utility Manager should also receive training in the operations of the water plant so that he can better manage the staff and the equipment. All the office equipment is setup and operating at this time. The Manager will be pursuing getting meters on the fuel lines so that fuel use information can be gathered to be used in the budgeting process.

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	