

## Hydaburg Activity Report

Gina Shirey, LGS/RUBA, Bethel Regional Office

### General Information:

On January 11, 2000, Gina Shirey received a call from City Administrator Adrian LeCornu. He was calling to update her on what was going on in Hydaburg. The City is working with Haida Corp to work out a package for the Denali Commission. One of the top priorities is a water resource study to address water quality problems. An old copy of a similar study done many years ago was found which prompted this study.

The city is down to its last \$45,000. Starting the 17th, staff is supposed to go to half time. There was also a problem with leave balance for the City Clerk April Edenshaw. She had 178 hours, which seemed excessive to the administrator. April said part of it was comp time. The council said they didn't authorize comp time until November. He's thinking about having an independent party come in and do a leave balance audit.

On February 4, 2000, Gina sent a copy of the invitation letter and AVEC resolution to Mr. LeCornu.

On February 29, 2000, Mr. LeCornu called. He said he had a council meeting last night, and they passed a lot of resolutions. Gina asked about the AVEC resolution. He said he forgot about that one. He will write a note to the council members. Gina advised the council could take care of it when Gina and Athena Logan are there for the council meeting next Monday. On March 6-9, 2000, Gina and Athena traveled to Hydaburg. As soon as they arrived, they did a quick assessment to see if there were any improvements since the City's been working with the RUBA program. They met with the council at 5 PM to discuss progress in the RUBA program. Athena reported that there was some progress with the program in several areas. The City now has a qualified back-up operator. The staff in the office has remained consistent for the last year. And there has been some progress with the financial software. There were still areas that needed to be address.

The rest of the time they worked with staff on revising the water and sewer ordinance, reconciling the checking accounts, creating and memorizing reports on Quickbooks, creating a procedures book with index, and creating a spreadsheet to calculate leave balances for all employees and updating leave balances on their paychecks

A follow-up RUBA trip was planned for the week of April 17th. However, that trip was canceled when all the office staff quit. The city clerk has since reconsidered her resignation and will be in the office through May. She will be taking family leave from June through November and plans on returning to the office at the beginning of December. A trip is being considered in May provided the City sends out the proposed collection letter, and a plan is developed for a temporary replacement for the city clerk.

## Observations and Recommendations:

**Finances** — The City is in terrible financial shape. The last time Gina spoke with the clerk, she indicated that they had only about \$7,000 in their checking account. The city administration continues to spend money without checking their budget and will probably run out of money before the end of the fiscal year.

**Accounting Systems** — The accounting system appears to be in fairly good shape. When RUBA staff assisted city staff in reconciling the checking accounts, there were only a few deposits missing, but they were quickly located. The clerk is not able to easily pull up some financial reports due to how the system was set up. RUBA staff will assist with this.

**Tax Problems** — There appears to be no tax problems. An outside accounting firm continues to review payroll taxes.

**Personnel System** — The city lost their office assistance and almost lost their clerk. The clerk will be taking extended family leave June through November. A replacement has not been found yet.

**Organizational Management** — The city is not organized well. Staff lack job descriptions. The chain of command is unclear.

**Leadership/Governance** — The city lack capable leadership. The mayor spends without consulting the budget. He doesn't follow through on his statements. He says he will sent out a collection letter (RUBA staff saw a draft copy), but the letter has not been sent out yet. He bought a metal detector to locate curbstops, but the piece of equipment has not been used yet. The city administrator is working without pay and concerned with corporation business, of which he is also a board member. Frequently the clerk is alone in the office.

**Operation of Utility** — There appears to be no problem with the operation of the utility other than occasional positive tests for lead.

### 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	