

Kwethluk Activity Report

Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Johnny Evan, Bethel Office

2002 Population: 730

Region: Lower Kuskokwim

Local Governments: Second Class City, IRA
Tribal Council



The Kwethluk Utilities Commission operates the water treatment plant, washeteria, garbage collection, and the honey-bucket haul system for the community. The Kwethluk Utilities Commission Utility Board is the policy making body for the utility.

A new washeteria/water treatment plant is still under construction through Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) engineering services. The school and teachers' housing have their own water sewer systems. There are bins located sparingly throughout the community for the container haul system, these are hauled to the sewage lagoon on a concurrent basis. Very few homes have running water or plumbing for showers, but many residents have saunas.

RUBA Activity This Reporting Period

The ANTHC sent a formal letter to Kwethluk IRA regarding the grant conditions and how they are affecting the water sewer project for the community, and requested the group to work with the RUBA Program in meeting the grant conditions. The Joint Group met and appointed new Kwethluk Utility Commission board members due to nonfunctional board members. Four new members were appointed to the utility board from the City and Tribal Council respectively. The new utility board will reorganize the utility organization and deal with the utility's debt with IRS and other entities. Once the organization is debt free, the Kwethluk Joint Group would like to dissolve the utility organization and have another organization operate the water sewer services for the community.

Capacity Indicators

Finances

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | All revenue and expenses for the utility are listed in the utility budget. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted a balanced realistic budget. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Monthly financial reports are prepared and submitted to the policy making body. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses. |

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses and Repair & Replacement (R&R) costs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | YTD revenues are at a level equal to or above those budgeted. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | YTD expenditures are at a level equal to or below those budgeted. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | A monthly manager’s report is prepared. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Budget amendments are completed and adopted as necessary. |

Finances Comments: A utility budget has never been developed, despite the training provided to the Utility Manager. The utilities commission has a very low collection rate despite the bills sent regularly. The monetary donations from the two local governments are still infrequent, and creates a financial jeopardy to the utility. The IRA Tribal Council is considering whether they should donate a couple gaming nights a week for the operation and maintenance of the utility services. The utility commission holds a fiddle dance fund raiser every quarter for operational expenses.

Accounting Systems

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted a collection policy and actively follows it. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility bills customers on a regular basis. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | An accounts receivable system is in place which track customers and reports past due accounts and amounts. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | An accounts payable system is in place. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The payroll system correctly calculates payroll and keeps records |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A cash receipt system is in place that records incoming money and what it was for. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Utility has a cash disbursement system that records how money was spent. |

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | A chart of accounts is used that identifies categories in a reasonable, usable manner. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Monthly bank reconciliations have been completed for all utility accounts. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a purchasing system that requires approval prior to purchase, and the approval process compares proposed purchases to budgeted amounts. |

Accounting System Comments: The commission still keeps track of its accounting functions manually using the Ekonomik check register, and does not post to any other journals and/or ledgers.

Tax Problems

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | NA | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | The utility has a system to accurately calculate, track, and report payroll tax liabilities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | The utility is current on filing tax reports. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | The utility is current on making tax deposits. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If there are any past tax liabilities, a repayment agreement has been signed and repayments are current. |

Tax Problems Comments: The utility organization is currently working with IRS to resolve it's past tax liabilities. IRS is planning to lien the utilities commission assets and possibly levy its account due to noncompliance.

Personnel System

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a posted workers compensation insurance policy in effect. |

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted and uses a Personnel Policy, which has been reviewed by an attorney, AML, or DCED for topics and language. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adequate written job descriptions for all positions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted and follows a written personnel evaluation process that ties the job description to the evaluation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequate written hiring process. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has personnel folders on every employee that contain at least: I-9, Job Application and Letter of Acceptance. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a probationary period for new hires that includes orientation, job-training/oversight, and evaluations. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility provides training opportunities to staff as needed and available. |

Personnel System Comments: The utility is under the City's workmen's compensation, still need to develop their own personnel policy, and implement the personnel management procedures. A formal letter was drafted requesting a change in the utility's administration, as it is nonfunctional despite the current utility staff. The utility manager has requested to be terminated and replaced by someone who can perform the duties of the utility staff.

Organizational Management

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The entity that owns the utility is known and the entity that will operate the utility is set. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The policy making body is active in policy making of the utility. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The policy making body enforces utility policy. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a adequately trained manager. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a adequately trained bookkeeper. |

- The utility has a adequately trained operator(s).
- The utility has adopted the necessary ordinances (or rules and regulations) necessary to give it the authority to operate.

Sustainable Indicators

- The utility has adopted an organizational chart that reflects the current structure.
- The policy making body meets as required.
- The utility complies with the open meeting act for all meetings.

Organizational Management Comments: The utility board is still nonfunctional, but the Kwethluk Joint Group appointed several members from the City and Tribal Councils respectively to reorganize the utility organization.

Operation of Utility

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility operator(s) are actively working towards necessary certification. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a preventative maintenance plan developed for the existing sanitation facilities. |

Sustainable Indicators

- The manager receives a monthly O&M report from the utility operator and routinely “spot checks” the facilities to see that the maintenance items are being completed.
- The utility has a safety manual and holds safety meetings.
- Utility facilities have not suffered any major problems/outages due to management issues that are still unresolved.
- The utility is operating at the level of service that was proposed.
- The operator provides status reports to the manager on a routine basis.
- The utility has completed and distributed its Community Confidence Report (CCR).
- The utility is not on the Significant Non-Compliance (SNC) list.
- The utility maintains an inventory control list.
- The utility maintains a critical spare parts list.

Operation of Utility Comments: The utility manager has the required documents for the utility, but does not require the utility operators to perform their duties. He tries to do the work for them. The operators perform their duties as assigned despite the problems. The utility has never completed a CCR. Inventory samples were provided, still they do not have an inventory list despite the utility manager’s experience in military materials management. Parts are ordered when needed.

RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter

RUBA services will continue once the newly formed utility board meets, to assist in the reorganization of the utility organization.