

Kwethluk Activity Report

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General Information:

This is the first quarter the Kwethluk Utilities Commission (KUC) is operating solely, aside the contributions from the City and the Tribal governments. The utility service is having complications in collecting user fees, despite the billing efforts and several meetings in explaining the importance of sustaining itself financially.

The IRA Tribal organization expressed an interest in taking over the operation and maintenance of the water sewer project, with intent of acquiring the assets and liabilities in the future. IRA participated in an informal meeting with the City Council to gather financial information that would be used in determining whether they should pursue the intent.

In July, after meeting the ANTHC Project deliverables, there was a utility assessment conducted to modify a new RUBA Work Plan primarily focussed to maintaining and sustaining the operation and maintenance costs of the interim water sewer project. The utility commission held a two-day fiddle dance to raise funds for the operation and maintenance costs of the current system. This event raised over \$12,000.00 that was deposited to their organizational account.

In August, Johnny Evan did not travel to the community. Ken Berlin assisted the City Clerk on repealing a severance pay ordinance that only benefited the City administrator. FY01 City budget is not done. Ken provided the administrator with another budgeting manual. Ken Berlin later met with the Mayor and the City Clerk concerning the city budget for FY01. Administrator was out of the office and the budget was not done. Also worked with the City Clerk on NFS fees being charged by one of the local stores. Clerk thought the store was being unreasonable because the checks bounced because of a returned deposit by the bank, but she re-deposited and the checks were paid.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — KUC finances are not stable with the user fees and the contributions from the two local governments are uncertain.

Accounting Systems — Accounting is handled through Money Count software in conjunction with the City's manual financial management system.

Tax Problems — The tax liabilities are current so far, but with unstable finances, how long can they maintain their tax liabilities.

Personnel System — The utility commission has a utility manager who handles all the administrative and management requirements. They have a utility service operator and water treatment operator with limited hours due to funding.

Organizational Management — The utility commission is organized per the ANTHC Work plan. The utility ordinances need to be reviewed with an emphasis on the billing and collection section, and should be enforced accordingly.

Leadership/Governance — Despite the busyness of the utility board members, they have a strong commitment to running the utility service requirements, and are actively involved in all aspects of planning. The City council acts as an overseer to the utility commission despite KUC being separate.

Operation of Utility — The operation of the utility services is being hindered by lack of funding sources. The user fees are not coming in as anticipated despite the billing effort of the organization, and contributions being uncertain. Transformation of the utility services to the IRA Tribal organization would have a positive impact for the future needs of the community.

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	