

# Nulato Activity Report

## Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Irene Catalone, Fairbanks Office

2003 Population: 342

Region: Interior

Local Governments: Second Class City

Village Council



The City of Nulato operates a piped water system in the new townsite as well as a washeteria. They operate a washeteria at the old townsite. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility. Water is derived from wells and is treated. A piped water and sewer system was completed in 1996 for 53 homes in the Nulato new (upper) townsite, with bathroom and kitchen plumbing. The washeteria has recently undergone major renovations. Thirty-four unserved residences in the lower townsite haul water from the Blackberry Well or the Church and use honeybuckets or outhouses. A new sewage lagoon is under construction in the lower townsite area. A landfill feasibility study is also underway. Electricity is provided by AVEC. There is one school located in the community, attended by 101 students.

## RUBA Activity This Reporting Period

RUBA staff maintained contact with Nulato City staff answering routine questions and requests for assistance on a variety of matters including: assistance with completing W-2's and quarterly tax reports; assistance with preparing miscellaneous grant reports; and other general matters. The City Administrator and the City Clerk both attended the advanced QuickBooks training in Anchorage. The contractor and RUBA staff provided on-site assistance with: setting up new computers purchased by the city; updating the Quickbooks program; setting up internet access; instruction on use of Quickbooks, word processing, internet, and e-mail.

**Capacity Indicators**

**Finances**

**Essential Indicators**

- | Yes                                 | No                       | N/A |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |     | All revenue and expenses for the utility are listed in the utility budget.                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |     | The utility has adopted a balanced realistic budget.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |     | Monthly financial reports are prepared and submitted to the policy making body.                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |                                     | YTD revenues are at a level equal to or above those budgeted.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |                                     | YTD expenditures are at a level equal to or below those budgeted.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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:** The utility budget does not have the Repair and Replacement category and is using other revenues for their operation \*To date there hasn't been a need for a budget amendment, however, they do know how to do one.

**Accounting Systems**

**Essential Indicators**

- | Yes                                 | No                       |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | An accounts receivable system is in place which track customers and reports past due accounts and amounts. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | An accounts payable system is in place.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A chart of accounts is used that identifies categories in a reasonable, usable manner.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Monthly bank reconciliations have been completed for all utility accounts.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 Systems Comments:** The City of Nulato utilizes the QuickBooks accounting system. The City has an adequate system in place.

## Tax Problems

### Essential Indicators

- | Yes                                 | No                       | NA                                  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | The utility has a system to accurately calculate, track, and report payroll tax liabilities.             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | The utility is current on filing tax reports.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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:** None

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility has an adequate written hiring process.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility has personnel folders on every employee that contain at least: I-9, Job Application and Letter of Acceptance.          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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:** There are training needs and separation of responsibilities that still need to be worked out. For example, the responsibility of doing the financial recordkeeping is mainly the Clerk's, however, much of this has been given to the Office Aide to do and this needs to be addressed.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The policy making body is active in policy making of the utility.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The policy making body enforces utility policy.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained manager.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained bookkeeper.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility has an adequately trained operator(s).   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility has adopted the necessary ordinances (or rules and regulations) necessary to give it the authority to operate. |

### Sustainable Indicators

- |                                     |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted an organizational chart that reflects the current structure. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The policy making body meets as required.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility complies with the open meeting act for all meetings.                     |

**Organizational Management Comments:** The office aide is performing the duties of treasurer (payroll, accounts payable, bank reconciliation, grant reports, general recordkeeping and bookkeeping). The city clerk handles most of the cash receipts and the deposits. This arrangement has been in place since August 03. The city has not yet clearly defined the new roles and responsibilities of the administrative staff (office aide and city clerk), nor has it changed the title of the office aide, whose duties and responsibilities are now clearly more than just those of an office aide. The city should update the job descriptions of the administrative staff, and clearly define roles and responsibilities.

## 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. This is being revised. |

### Sustainable Indicators

- |                                     |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 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. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a safety manual and holds safety meetings.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Utility facilities have not suffered any major problems/outages due to management issues that are still unresolved.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility is operating at the level of service that was proposed.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The operator provides status reports to the manager on a routine basis.   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility has completed and distributed its <u>Consumer Confidence Report (CCR)</u> .   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility is on the <u>Significant Non-Compliance (SNC)</u> list.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The utility maintains an inventory control list.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | The utility maintains a critical spare parts list.  |

**Operation of Utility Comments:** The new operator is working out very well. He is certified. He writes a section every month on the status of the utility for the community newsletter. He is the "operator of the year".

### RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter

Staff will continue monitoring the activities of the administrative staff and provide assistance as needed. Staff will participate in the on-site advanced training in QuickBooks.