

Nunapitchuk Activity Report

General Information:

There were no RUBA trips to the community during the Quarter. Direct assistance to the community was minimal. Scott Ruby in the Anchorage office did speak with the Administrator and VSW Engineer several times.

The community needs a good rate study done. A preliminary rate study was done in March of 1999. The RUBA program looked at contracting for a rate study for Nunapitchuk and several other communities, but problems in the RFP process prevented this from occurring. RUBA staff did discuss the rate study with the VSW engineer, and it was decided that the O&M consultant hired by the Community to train the water operators could complete a rate study. The RUBA agreed to assist as necessary in this process.

RUBA staff also discussed with the Administrator the status of the Fish Disaster computer equipment that the City was expecting to receive. In Early January, it was finally announced that these computers were not going to be forthcoming. The City had planned on using part of the equipment (primarily a networkable printer) to fill a need in their existing system.

Johnny Evan, RUBA staff in the Bethel office, has been assigned as lead on this community effective January 2000. Johnny's first trip is scheduled for January 24 & 25, 2000.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The City is doing a good job in managing their finances. Cuts to State Revenue Sharing have hurt. According to the preliminary rate study, water/sewer services (including the WTP, washeteria, delivery and pick-up services) are close to breaking even. That can change mainly with labor requirements for hauls. (i.e. if it is a bad year and the vehicles get stuck or they have to do a lot of plowing to clear the paths, they will be running in the red). The City is combating this by looking at opportunities for efficiencies and charging for all services provided. Some examples include the new water fill point at the washeteria, and the process implemented for charging people for water they get from the washeteria.

Accounting Systems — Nunapitchuk uses a fairly complex computerized system monitored by an accountant in Bethel. It is run well, and accurate. The only knock is the lack of really good, simple, useful financial reports for the council.

Tax Problems — There are no known tax problems.

Personnel System — The City needs to revise its personnel policy, they realize this. It has just not been a high enough priority item for either the City or RUBA staff. With the transfer of RUBA responsibility from the Anchorage to Bethel office, it is anticipated that this task can be accomplished. The City has begun to make improvements in their

personnel management. The council has made it clear that there must be more responsibility shown by the WTP operators and has increased supervision of them by the administrator.

Organizational Management — The City has taken great strides in reorganizing the WTP. They have, through the VSW projects contracted with a management consultant to train operators, and recommend changes in the management of the facility. They have acted upon recommendation of RUBA and VSW staff to create a Washeteria Attendant area separate from the WTP operator so you don't have the public passing through the WTP.

Leadership/Governance — Leadership and governance continues to be one of the strong points of the City. They have a Council that is actively involved with management, but not micro-management.

Operation of Utility — Overall, the operation and management of the utility is improving. They have a lot of projects underway, and several more under consideration. These changes, along with changes in funding of local programs by the legislature will all greatly affect the services, profitability and ultimately the success or failure of the utility.

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	