

Savoonga Activity Report

Josie Morrow, LGS/RUBA, Nome Regional Office

General Information:

Nome RUBA/LGS Josie Morrow assisted the City and Utility through phone and fax this quarter in matters concerning employment of council members, determination of permanent employee classification for a project employee, recommendation to project engineer concerning accrued leave for a project employee, coordination of computer training, software implementation for utility business office, and municipal elections.

The City sent its Utility Manager to the Utility Organization Management workshop in Nome the week of November 13th.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The City has a strict collection policy for the new water/sewer hookups, and there are no late paying customers as of this quarter. The Honey Bucket/Trash Haul Utility is a disaster, and a stronger ordinance will have to be adopted to enforce collections and restrict private hauls.

The City carries insurance with AML/JIA and is up to date with its premiums. The insurance coverage is considered adequate.

The City has a past due fuel loan from 1999 with the Alaska Energy Authority in the amount of \$4,551.

The Nome RUBA will look into the finances of the City more closely on the next field trip, when she can gather more information first hand. The new Utility Manager has made some reference to the City and Utility being short on funds this year, but he could not provide a list of debts or any other particulars.

Accounting Systems — The City Clerk resigned early in the new calendar year, and as a result the financial reports for the City are not up to date. The Utility Clerk had been using an old Apple computer, but stopped using it as of March 2000. As a result, the Utility financial reports were completed only through March 31, 2000. ANTHC purchased a new P.C., printer, and backup unit for the Utility, and the system was delivered to the Utility this quarter. Nome RUBA Josie Morrow assisted the engineer with the order and developed a training plan for the proposed accounting software, QuickBooks Pro 99. The implementation and training will begin early next quarter with a consultant hired through the RUBA program. The Nome RUBA will work with the City Clerk to bring the City accounts up to date on the accounting software they purchased two years ago.

Tax Problems — IRS has not contacted the Nome RUBA about any tax problems. The Utility has an outside consultant who files all the payroll returns, and there are no amounts due IRS for Utility payroll taxes. However, the Nome RUBA is concerned that the City may have some payroll tax issues for 1999 and 2000. She will not be able to make an assessment on this situation until next quarter.

Personnel System — The City Council and Utility Manager need training in the City's Personnel Policies and Procedures. The City needs to classify positions and institute a pay scale. Supervisory training and the evaluation process will be incorporated into subsequent training sessions.

Organizational Management — All ordinances need to be reviewed by the Council, City Clerk, and Utility staff in a joint meeting. The Nome RUBA is scheduling that workshop later this fiscal year. Consideration of amendments to the utility ordinances will be included in the local workshop. An organizational chart will be developed at the same time.

The Council hired a Utility Manager this past fiscal year and disbanded the appointed Utility Board. The new organization is working much well, with better communication between Utility staff and the Council.

Leadership/Governance — The Council is still having difficulty leaving family ties out of the work place and basing their decisions on what is best for the organization. There is a need for the Council and staff to sit down together and review the City's Code of Ordinances. They need to do this with the Nome RUBA fairly soon.

The Vice-Mayor and Secretary/Treasurer have been filling in for the vacant City Clerk position. The Nome RUBA recommended they hire a permanent employee as soon as possible. Current recruitment for a suitable candidate for City Clerk has been unsuccessful.

Operation of Utility — There were no reported problems with the system this quarter. Two new water plant operators were hired this year, but the alternate recently resigned. The RMW reports that the City has been sending in all tests and reports as required for daily and monthly monitoring. Fluoride treatment has been discontinued until the new operators are certified at a level to assure safe treatment.

(Continued on next page.)

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

