

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 the following matters:

- Advised the Utility Clerk to finish up all financial reports for the fiscal year by using the Model Financial Reporting System. Told her where to find the forms she needed.
- Followed up with the Mayor and Vice-Mayor after a phone call from Senator Adam's office about how to dissolve a Utility Board. Told them they needed an ordinance to amend the City's Code.
- Prepared a letter for the Council and Utility Staff and ANTHC engineer that explained the computer training and software implementation. Received letter of assurances from the Mayor and Utility Staff committing the City to the proposed program.
- Assisted the Mayor in finding the right agency to advise the City with proper disposal of items used to contain an oil spill at the Post Office.
- Completed the 1999 Consumer Confidence Report on water quality.

The City sent its Utility Manager and Utility Clerk to the Introduction to City/Utility Financial Management workshop in Nome in May. This workshop was sponsored by DCED's RUBA Program and Norton Sound Health Corporation, Office of Environmental Health.

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 is behind in its electric bills with AVEC in the amount of \$4,422. AVEC has levied the City's FY01 shared revenues for this amount. 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 last quarter 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. 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 this past quarter. Nome RUBA Josie Morrow assisted the

engineer with the order last quarter and developed a training plan for the proposed accounting software, QuickBooks Pro 99.

The City Council and Utility Manager and staff have committed to the software training program, and it is expected that the Nome RUBA will begin that training this next quarter. The accounting software implementation will be done with a consultant funded through the Department of Community and Economic Development, RUBA Program. That implementation and training is expected to begin before the end of this calendar year.

Tax Problems — There are no tax problems.

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 quarter and disbanded the appointed Utility Board this quarter. The Nome RUBA did contact the Mayor concerning the need for an ordinance to dissolve the Utility Board, and they both agreed that Josie would put together a draft for the Mayor to introduce this next quarter.

Leadership/Governance — The Utility Board had some strong leaders on it, but were contending with a City Council who have parental ties to a number of key employees at the Utility. The Council did disband the Utility Board this quarter and hired a Utility Manager. The Council must learn to leave family ties out of the work place and base 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.

Operation of Utility — There were no reported problems with the system this quarter. The second phase of water/sewer hookups is expected this Fall. Two new water plant operators were hired this year, but neither is OIT certified as of this date. 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.

The Utility Manager and Clerk were assisted in preparing the City's 1999 Consumer Confidence Report on water quality by Steve Shreiber of the National Rural Water Association and Nome RUBA Josie Morrow during the May Utility Management

Workshop in Nome. All reports were distributed to users of the system, but the assurances need to be sent to DEC. The Nome RUBA is following up on this final step.

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

