

Wales Activity Report

Josie Morrow, LGS/RUBA, Nome Regional Office

General Information:

Nome RUBA/LGS Josie Morrow provided assistance to the City Clerk and Mayor this quarter through phone and fax in regards to contracting with a Collection Agency and Small Claims procedures. She also clarified some questions on Conflict of Interest.

The City sent one of its Council members and the City Clerk to the Utility Planning Management workshop in Nome the week of January 29th.

Observations and Recommendations:

Finances —The City Clerk continues to pursue collections on past due utility accounts. The Council is desirous of expanding its collection efforts and is currently looking at collection agencies.

Wales is not carrying any insurance, and the Nome RUBA/LGS advised them they must at least carry workers compensation insurance. The Mayor did call an insurance company in Anchorage for an estimate on premiums for the next calendar year, but as of March 31, 2001, they had not contracted with the agency for the coverage.

Accounting Systems — The City uses manual journals and registers. They have not been keeping any kind of budget detail sheets since the turnover in Clerks in 1998, nor were they spreading costs in the check register. Monthly financial reports have not been done since mid 1998. The Nome RUBA had to complete the City's FY98 and FY99 Certified Financial Reports. The City Clerk needs some direct supervision in the completion of financial reports, and Josie will be working with the Mayor to accomplish this.

Tax Problems —IRS levied the City's shared revenues for 1999 in the amount of \$40,504. The City's shared revenues for FY00 were released this quarter, and there now remains a balance of \$4,800 due IRS. The FY01 shared revenues should be available next quarter, and they will pay off the 1999 debt due to the IRS. The new City Clerk has kept all payroll tax deposits current this calendar year and has filed the required quarterly reports in a timely manner.

Personnel System — Since 1998, the City had been unable to keep a Clerk for more than a few months. However, in late January 2000, the City hired an experienced Clerk, who has all intentions of staying with the City and seeing that it gets back on its feet. The new City Clerk reports that the Mayor and Council are supportive of her and what she needs to do, so there is a lot of positive energy being generated.

Personnel management has not been strong in the past at the City. There have been at least 5 employees that the Nome RUBA can remember these past two years who have taken advantage of their positions and not feared any action on the part of the Council. Josie has been working with the Mayor and Council to address problems as they arise, and it appears that the new City Clerk is providing the backup and leadership that has been lacking in the past.

Organizational Management — The City has a Code of Ordinances, but it is only recently that the Clerk and Council have been reading them. The code is very old and needs amending. The Nome RUBA will be working with the City to strengthen their billing and collection policies this next fiscal year.

Leadership/Governance — In the last nine months the Mayor has taken a strong position on old accounts past due the City. The Nome RUBA will be making a high priority to work with the Council and train them better in their roles and responsibilities.

Operation of Utility — The Water Plant Operator is OIT Certified and is current with his testing. He has a good attitude and can always be relied upon to carry out instructions from the RMW. However, the City’s water system is on the Significant Non Compliance (SNC) List for Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR). The violations are for late operator reports, not measuring entry point chlorine residuals daily and no distribution chlorine residual. DEC reports that the Sanitary Survey is long overdue and should be scheduled as soon as possible.

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		

Anticipated Activity:

The Nome RUBA will be assisting the City Clerk and Mayor with the FY02 budget.