



**Northwest Arctic Borough
Planning Commission Regular
Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

January 22, 2015 - 9:00 A.M.

Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers, Kotzebue, AK

CALL TO ORDER

Madam Chair Barbara MacManus called the meeting to order at 9:07 A.M.

INVOCATION/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Millie Hawley gave invocation.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present During Roll Call:

Barbara MacManus
Carol Wesley

Ernie Norton
Millie Hawley

Dale Stotts
Janet Mills

Daniel Foster Sr.

Absent

Calvin Moto Sr.

Member Hawley moved to excuse Member Moto; seconded by Member Norton, passed unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF AND GUESTS

Noah Naylor

Paul Karczmarczyk

Albert Beck

John Chase

AGENDA APPROVAL

Agenda presented for approval for January 22, 2015.

Commissioner Norton moved, seconded by Commissioner MacManus to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Minutes presented from June 27, 2014 with corrections made. Commissioners requested detailed minutes; should state what discussions were made concerning each resolution. As courtesy there should be diligence of structure of minutes taken. Member Hawley suggests minutes shouldn't be

tabled due to typos on the minutes. For future minutes then it should be noted on discussions or questioned they had should be on the minutes.

Commissioner MacManus moved, seconded by Commissioner Norton to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATION AND APPEARANCES

Alaska Department of Transportation presented projects presented in Northwest Arctic Borough which have been completed, in construction and ongoing design. First project completed which was the Ambler Grizzly Creek Bridge which was replaced with three culverts, in addition with an area where residents can plug in a generator to thaw out the pipes in the spring time.

Second project was the Selawik Utility crossing repair, existing crossing was failing the culvert installation over that was sinking. Had to strengthen up the culverts; some danger if collapse then would damage utilities, which recently have been completed.

Three ongoing construction; here in Kotzebue finishing up the runway and two projects in Ambler. Presented a picture of the Kotzebue runway as of summer of last year; a barge landing offloading some material. Shore of this project; was hoping to complete this past winter of 2014 or fall of 2014 but some delay, some rain and change orders had occurred. Currently over eighty-five percent complete, few things to do; navigation aides to be installed, additional dirt work and paving in the area.

Ambler Sewage Lagoon had been awarded to Ridge Construction; had good water and barge service last year. A lot of staging happened at the time; although not sure if the company had gone out for a post award conference meeting yet. Soon hoping to have a community meeting so they can start work force discussion which should start this year.

Ambler Runway repair also have been constructed Ridge; work will be begin this year opening up the material site, starting to do initial cuts and fills in the area. Just like the Kotzebue Runway Safety area project, you may recall couple years ago we were getting signatures to start the section 106 to make sure the cultural resource considerations were taken care of. Part of that was a memorandum of agreement with a bunch of organizations that basically put stipulations in place.

Ongoing efforts to Cape Blossom Road which is to construct a twelve mile road from Kotzebue to Cape Blossom for the barge landing which is funded with ear marks and State funds. Have done geo-tech explorations, completed recontinent study and survey work and environmental work for that project.

Work that is ongoing; received authority to proceed through final design and near completion of study report which will give authority of right of way phase. Hoping in March the statewide foundation drillers will go drill in Sadie Creek for what is needed for foundation design for the bridge work. From there on will get the right away phase of the appraisals and accusations.

Last fall DOT had come to Kotzebue to look up an alternative route to avoid the Air Force property between the windmill farms and Ted Stevens Way. A lot of energy involved in that; have talked to

multiple entities to see if this was an appropriate proposed realignment beyond the environmental document. When approached FHWA, they somewhat disagreed with DOT and they requested to continue the findings in the environmental document. They have stated they have a mechanism that they can communicate with the Air Force and request the right of way, which they said can be quicker than the State process. Next month DOT will request FHWA, hope they are successful, if not then DOT will backing up and look an another option for realignment. Currently proceed with going through the Air Force property, looking at straighten up some of the curbs in that area.

Noatak Airport Relocation Project which had a lot of effort developing this project late, literally relocation the entire runway with all supporting infrastructure associated with that. The access road, apron and building to store snow equipment. Recently Brett Kirk have been hired as a college intern this past year and have been getting him involved in this project. Brett have done a site visit for wind data, revisited files and will have a public meeting will be held. DOT will work around Brett's schedule, along with his college education to cover where the proposed project is at associated with where the runway is and where the proposed road alignment to the new runway is would be at. Then to find tune where the bridge crossing could be so it can be constructed. Based on that information we will seek geo tech work for the bridge location and start developing the scoping letters and commencing with the environmental document, possibly in about a month. DOT will be drafting the (ALP) Airport Layout Plan, discuss the ultimate which is used for authority from FAA to buy in what the proposed project will be at the end of construction.

Kiana had a meeting; funding for the project is expected in 2016. Been working with the community and their consultant DOWL to look at the access road to material site and have good momentum going on. Drafted the ALP which is with FHWA currently for approval or for them to request DOT to send in the official for signature. From then on they would skew the runway, move forward with right away acquisitions and final design of the project. Nearly a month or two away from the draft EA for public review. DOT have worked with DOWL to figure out the best route for access to the material site; what condition can we leave that access road in? They would have a haul out route road but also for the community that they can take over and improve upon. What does the community need?

Kotzebue GA apron which is on hold, currently waiting for the completion of the master plan. DOT planning section have been completed, they are coming end of the month which is like a kick off meeting of what have been done. On that note, build from the findings of the master plan what should be done with additional aviation space where private owners are able to park their aircraft.

Selawik Bridge structure, two bridges that need rehab; DOWL/HKM is doing environmental design work. Work have conducted based on surveys; looking at right of way that some of the features for the bridge as well as boardwalk are not in the right of way; biggest hurdle to sort through, not sure of how it happened although when federal dollars are spend need to have the right of way. Construction is anticipated for 2017 after the issues have been dealt with.

Barge landing access and boardwalk improvements have same situation as the Selawik Bridge; the existing sidewalk is out of the right of way. Couple other issues is where the utilities are constructed verse as to where they could have been built and where the boardwalk could have been. Some work to be done, some of the building are in the right of way so trying to find creative ways to work through these challenges.

Planning section is coming up end of this month with consultant PBC to hold a public open house for the Kotzebue Master Plan.

Member Wesley mentioned that she is glad they have local hire, Robbie Kirk. Would like to know if a courtesy letter have been sent to Native Village of Noatak of his hire. If they knew they would have sit with him and have an update as to how much footage we are losing towards the airport. This fall we had volunteers create an emergency road right adjacent to the airport; last ten to fifteen years we have low waters. Boating is a big part of our lifestyle because we have to subsist; we have high cost of living because of no barge service. Therefore we are people of the river but with that low river we can't park in front; currently park north of the village. A courtesy letter to the village council would be good so can work with him; glad to hear you use equipment for the confirmation of the runway alignment. Our practice in Noatak when we have major development projects whether its gravel extraction or location of next landfill we always get the advice of the Elders. This airport will be there the next thirty-fifty years as we seen it has taken a long time project to get the construction going. Really need this airport; we have no way in and out of the village besides snow machines and boating. Thank you for putting this in the files.

DOT mentioned they generally have vacancies; contact DOT, sophomore standing in college for interns.

Chair Mills verified confirmation of dates of when construction would begin; any rough ideas. In the past DOT stated 2006 and now it's 2015. DOT mentioned they looked at the latest funding plan coming from statewide and that project is currently not on the funding plan; it's beyond 2018 based on the current road to erosion. They have heard of the access road and continuation erosion of the road. It have been measured and keep coming back; have been mentioned to State. Chair Mills verified if DOT will be in Noatak next month; they will work around Mr. Kirk's schedule.

Member Stotts mentioned his is glad the issues are being addressed in Noatak; hopeful that with the new administration and cutting out the mega projects that Governor Walker have declared that some of the rural issues can be addressed. Two hundred feet is not that distant especially in Noatak, highly encourage you to give the college student a break and get on the job. Pay attention to the absolute need that the community has; encouraged that you have a college student be involved but don't let that be your schedule.

Elder Foster raised his concern regarding Selawik Rainbow Bridge; last discussion we thought would start in 2016 although really wearing out right now due to erosion. Recently held a community meeting and Elders mentioned that something need to be done with the West end because if something might happen. When will that be fixed? DOT will check with the Bridge Design section and get back to the Planning Commission.

John Chase mentioned when DOT projects have been finalized and construction is about to take place that is when they contact Borough for a Title Nine permit; look like we have a few years for project designs to be finalized. All projects you see on here DOT will be getting a land use permit except Kotzebue Airport Project; Borough Title Nine code don't have jurisdiction within the municipal boundaries of City of Kotzebue. Looks like they are major projects, more than likely they would be conditional use permits which will be approved by this committee.

Member Stotts verified with Mr. Beck as to what sort of generator is used to keep the culverts opened. Mr. Beck mentioned that a bit of the design of that the hydraulic section designed the flow of the pipes to figure out what the flow would be in a fifty year flood event. They size the culver accordingly so they don't flood for the ultimate condition of any case of disaster that might occur beyond the fifty year flood event. The benders type design associate with this is they installed a bank of two culverts and they included an over flow pipe. So as an area floods up it glaciates and culverts freeze up, also have a pipe higher up on the embankment of the road to allow any water can still flow through the pipe. Also, installed an electrical thaw wire in the culverts then plumb them to a load center where generator can be plugged in to help open up springtime. Member Stotts mentioned that Kiana has that issue, DOT will send them a copy of the design for their needs as well.

Zach Stevenson, Subsistence Mapping Project presented to the Commission an update. Borough has been working over the past four and a half years on this project; just under five months to be completed. In the packet you will find a newsletter sent out; will provide a brief overview of the updates relevant to your communities.

Most recently had number of youth activities; Selawik, Noorvik, Noatak, Kivalina, Deering, Buckland and Kotzebue. We heard particularly from Elders was strong desire to see youth involved in the project; interest not only traditional knowledge but also by scientific data collected. Found that younger people between ages of 9-35 were getting out less then parents or grandparents. Our concern is over time we would see less people subsisting; if not using the land then you have less connection to it. Have the changes over time that can effect food security and culture; with contribution from Shell this past year and guidance from Lance Kramer has help developed a program. Using the funding we were able to provide one thousand five hundred per season; have been increase to eighteen hundred dollars a month per activity in the seven villages. Monies can be used to share traditional knowledge of subsistence; goal is the young generation is to learn and pass them on. Require a lesson plan, share will the councils so activities can be carried on. Monies can be used for supplies, food, gas and oil; also paying instructors. They find out from village staff or tribes if they would like to participate. They don't tell people what to teach or do or any the community comes up with it. Examples in Kivalina they have done uugruk hunting; Selawik had beaver trapping activity with Raymond Woods, also mouton and seal skin mitten activity from Norma Ballot. WE have two staff in Noorvik, later this month there will be more activities in Kivalina. Message to the commission if the communities would like to get involved please contact our office; possibly for the next five months.

Recently had a photo contest; purpose was to make sure when final report is produced that it reflects not only written traditional knowledge of our communities and science gathered but also has authentic description that is true to our communities. Process will be judged by Wednesday of next week; key people are Chloe Naylor and Jamie Lambert. A Facebook page have been created and have over nine hundred people have joined that site; indication of what subsistence means to the people of this region. Over three hundred photos been submitted; having hard time selecting the top three. Will get formal release form signed; key idea is we respect and protect traditional knowledge.

A mapping workshop have been done in October, third and final for this past four and a half years. Purpose was to review the draft important archeological area or IEA maps; reminder, project will have three major areas of focus. You will see in the report when done but we are mapping IEA which is a place where animals use for feeding to raise their young, migrate whether on land or

sea, also where people fish/hunt by season third is places where are important for development. At this point we have finished our mapping; got about four hundred pages of maps and two hundred pages of text. About half way through complete, should be done within four and an a half months. There have been a lot of input from various communities; twenty five meetings in the seven village. Currently have ninety-five percent of the people's written permission to use for the report. Next thing is to go back to tribes and cities bring the draft final report and ask for permission to bring to the assembly for their approval. We will be back to the commission for your approval.

Back in June we had a concern regarding observing climate change; in the newsletter you will see an article about a film that Borough Subsistence Mapping had put funding into. Available for free on You Tube regarding effects of climate change on subsistence communities; involved were Kivalina, Buckland, Deering, Kotzebue, Noatak and Selawik. The producer is also helping with the local voices section in the report. This film had been shared at the October workshop, at one meeting in Washington DC this past summer and in Anchorage recently. Number of people are interested; they want to learn from what people are observing from a traditional knowledge stand point about climate change. Thank you to the communities for that film.

Surprisingly had substantially amount of monies left over in the project approximate two hundred sixty thousand dollars due to changing in staffing. Working with the team and will bring opportunities and recommendations to Noah that will hopefully enable us to spend those monies down. Challenge wrestling with different funders and that have different obligations and timelines associated with them. With five months remaining, how do we use that money with what we got left? Unique opportunity to continue and increase impact the next couple months. Wrapping up report to present to the villages for review; appreciate your participate and support, look forward to completion of project.

Member MacManus mentioned doing a good job and good job bringing to the communities; at some point hope upper Kobuk will have some of that as well.

Zach mentioned that one of the recommendations is that the team will do a possible initial work in upper Kobuk although not sure of how that will proceed although there is strong interest up there; with the current monies available it wouldn't complete that job but to at least get that process started. It would need a lot of input from a lot of people. Noah mentioned Zach did a presentation to the Assembly several months ago and they have brought that up also. Enlighten of the attention that the Ambler Mining District have received kind of dwindled with the loss of funding from what the Governor had made. Noah thinks that it is very necessary to find funding sources to complete that project; Zach estimates two point two million dollars to complete. It's not only a concern from the Planning Commission but also the Assembly several months ago. Member Stotts thank Noah and Zach; the missing piece is upper Kobuk area. Commend what your team has done; excellent study effort, community outreach has been some of the best he has seen. Thank you for that, Member Stotts have tried to coordinate a resolution with Kiana and up river communities to encourage Borough to continue the study; think it's incomplete without upper Kobuk. You have done an excellent job, thank you for that. Member MacManus echo along that statement; fine job with involvement with the communities. Chair Mills thank Zach, job well done. Also, verify the length of the project. When the selections were be made for the photo contest. Job well done. Member Hawley thank Zach, good job, appreciate you coming to Kivalina although haven't attended but heard reports back. However, after the presentations wondering how much of that is being shared with DOT, or other entities that have interest in construction, industry,

mining, oil and gas, how are we going to share that information? Zach thanked everyone for the kind words; it has been most challenging and soulful work he has been involved in. The desire since the beginning has been to with approval of communities worked in and their permission to share data that we have collected to have a product with to have a report that can be used to protect subsistence way of life. With approval of councils, cities and Assembly a report will be shared, goal to all communities, then state and federal agencies up to Washington DC. One of the points he made is to make it on the web so that the product don't sit on his shelf; got about thirty thousand dollars to develop a website. We need to complete the federal grants have some strict deadlines that need to be cover first. Will revisit that idea of the website, if not by the time the project ends then I hope it continues and gets done before the Shell money wraps up. Think getting it out to the public is really key, today's day and age the web is really effective way and cheap to do that. If there are ways to do more effectively Zach is all ears. Member Hawley mentioned that is what she wanted to hear; she don't want the information on the shelf collecting dust. Want it to be shared with everyone that shows an interest in the region. Last year you have done a presentation at AFE, are you planning to do another one? Zach mentioned he has funding for in budget for Anchorage one time this year; going down tomorrow to attend a subsistence mapping policy workshop funded by Oak Foundation. There is funding although not sure if will be able to attend. Not sure if his schedule will allow him to attend next month; incredible opportunity to attend to reach out to one of the largest tribal gathering of environmental professionals; hoping to make it down. Member Hawley mentioned that there are other forum or conference an annual conference apart from the environmental portion but there is the Alaska Oil and Gas conferences; how do you reach out or expose your work to these entities so that they know what is happening that there is information. She encourage outreach on how to spend all the monies. Member Norton echoes Member Hawley's comments on how will you share the information; especially with people of the community, State, National and International. Like you have said in a good way, make sure it's not damaging to us. Also, you have mentioned ninety-five percent permission from participate, were the other five percent be contacted?

Another note, on outreach there are young people that are curious; no matter where they are from. If you invite people from Upper Kobuk people to participate; young people would want to calm down, and grow, even though they are not in the project. They will send representatives; Taikuu, job well done. Noah mentioned that Zach has a good team, we praise him, also to Damien, Glenn Gray, village employees like Lottie in Buckland, interns Liz Ferguson and Jamie Lambert. A lot of hard work from the people working together. Zach mentioned the ones that are no longer on the team are John Goodwin Sr, Lee Ballot, Alvin Ashby Sr, Eleanor Sunii Jackson, fifty advisory group members in seven village, countless meetings with tribal council members and city staff and incredible army of volunteers. Support from both oil industry and environmental community which in his twenty years of professional experience he have never seen that kind of collaboration. From the social media for free advertising and publicity. Have seen the best in people, best in humanity, incredible generosity and incredible dedication. Noah is right, success in this project it's not Zach, it's an army of people that given their best consistently this past five years. It's incredible powerful positive story that the communities as a whole made possible; real privilege to be part of that. Thank you. Chair Mills mentioned with the two hundred thousand dollars think a good idea is to present the final version you did them in; is that in the plans? Zach mentioned he will be recommending to Noah, which was brought up in Noatak is to have a potluck as a way of thanking and completion of this project. Would like to do in each of the village; also, would like to offer training on how the Atlas can be used to prepare written and public comments. Can't commit to that now but will be look into for consideration. DOT reiterate congrats to Borough and team on job well done for the efforts, when first met Zach starting the project we

recognize that type of documentation to their process to do projects. They work with federal agencies in many ways look for numbers; everything has been quantified. Subsistence use is hard to thing to quantify with traditional knowledge; disbursed activity, hard to put general numbers on and consolidating information onto a report has gone through a qualified process, peer review, scientific method, etc that has statistical inference with it. Really important to their process for environmental stuff for project that they do, when completed it's a powerful tool for the communities for example Kiana Airport or Noatak Airport. This ties what is the other cost of the community are living; really welcome this sort of data into our projects. Thrilled this is done, echo your concern as to how going to get this out to the communities and share with the northern region. Please make available for our staff, he is not the only environmentalist. Thank you. Member Stotts thank Paul for that comment; he hopes many more agencies look upon this. Hope many more agencies look upon this research as equivalent as you do. It's not easy for someone to come into your home and ask, how many caribou have you caught? Where did you get them? How many fish? What did you get in return? What did it cost you? It is very well hidden in the report and we are facing a decline in caribou population, big issue and will affect not only this region. Imposts of this governing body to continue this study and to add a component on what can we do to prevent a potential collapse? We have three super packs of wolves in Kiana vicinity right now; these are like forty wolves in each pack. We have had moose kill and caribou kill; wolves got to eat too, also do Inupiaq. I'm not suggesting we go kill wolves but this subsistence study need to

OLD BUSINESS

None presented

NEW BUSINESS

None presented

NEXT MEETING DATE

PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF COMMENTS

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Member move to adjourn at 1:05PM, seconded by Member; passed unanimously.