



# Northwest Arctic Borough

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## SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF:

Ambler Buckland Candle Deering Kivalina Kiana  
Kobuk Kotzebue Noatak Noorvik Selawik Shungnak

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Walter Sampson, President, NAB Assembly  
Hendy Ballot, Vice-President, NAB Assembly  
Assembly Members

**FROM:** Reggie Joule, Mayor

**CC:** NAB Staff Members

**DATE:** January 11, 2013

**RE:** Monthly Updates

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide current updates regarding the operational activities of my Administration. It has been a busy and productive time since my last report. The following discussion highlights some of our activity.

### **Current Activity Highlights:**

On January 8, 2013, Christine Hess, Government Affairs and In-House Counsel, and I attended the Alaska Public Office Commission (APOC) training in Anchorage. After the required training, Christine was able to register as a lobbyist for the Borough.

We had the pleasure of traveling to Ambler on January 10, 2013. During our visit we were able to meet with the Council regarding several items including receiving feedback as discussed during the recent Assembly Retreat. We also provided updates on activities related to community profile mapping, community comprehensive plans, combined public facility (including public safety), search and rescue, and trail staking, etc. During this meeting Mayor Wilbur Esenituk and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding that transfers ownership of the "Synergy" Solar-PV arrays from the Borough to the City of Ambler. The meeting went very well and the dialogue between staff present and the Ambler City Council was very positive.

We are continuing discussions with representatives from Key Bank regarding the potential purchase of a portion of or the entire DeLong Mountain Transportation System (DMTS) road. We will be meeting with James Pass with Guggenheim Investments regarding the same issue on January 22, 2013.

Wendie Schaeffer has been working with our communities to get their fiscal year 2014 Legislative Priorities for the Capital Projects. To date, we have received priorities from each community except Shungnak and Kobuk. Christine Hess was able to develop a Capital Projects summary that outlines their requests, funding included in the Governor's budget and funding received within the last 3 years. That list is included as an attachment to my report. Of note, Christine has received access to CAPSIS through Senator Olson's office and will begin input of the priorities to that system while she is on-site in Kotzebue January 21, 2013 through February 1, 2013.

I have been working hard to develop a more thorough understanding of the Borough's grants. Very specifically I am reviewing the following: (1) who is the project manager for the grant, (2) what reporting requirements are in place or need to be in place, and (3) what monitoring is necessary to ensure compliance with the grant requirements. We had a very good meeting with the Coastal Impact Assessment Program (CIAP) grants staff and agreed that there may be some overlap in monitoring them. However, until we receive additional guidance from the state and federal CIAP staff in February I am reluctant to make any substantial changes. We agreed that we will continue current monitoring practices until after we receive additional guidance.

### **Retreat Follow-up**

We have been working to develop the framework for "Our Story". An initial draft was developed this month and we are hoping to have a draft ready for presentation to you during the upcoming Assembly meeting. Retreat Facilitator, Kevin Ritchie has provided his report from our Assembly Retreat. The notes are attached for your review and information.

### **Department Highlights:**

#### **Planning Department:**

New Title 9 applications are being processed at the moment:

- State of Alaska DOT&PF—Replace the existing crossing structure, associated headwalls, embankment, and surface course over Grizzly Creek on the Ambler Airport access road. Proposed starting date: April 2013; End date: December 2014.
- Teck American Incorporated—Continuation of mineral exploration activities for the Noatak District Exploration. Proposed starting date: May 2013; End date: October 2013.

Other Title 9 applications to be processed:

- Waiting for an Environmental Assessment solicitation for public comments for the TERRA/GCI Project from BLM. A thirty day public comment solicitation should be released late January/early February. The Planning Department has chosen to participate in BLM's permitting process and submit public comments. There will not be a Title 9 permit for the TERRA project. (*TERRA is GCI's vision to build a hybrid terrestrial fiber-optic and microwave network to serve Alaska's remote and rural regions. The Northwest Phase 2 project will connect the Norton Sound region project to the Northwest Arctic with three repeater stations; two stations located on Federal lands and one within the City of Kotzebue boundaries.*)
- We are awaiting progress on NIHA's Ambler home construction project. NIHA submitted a Title 9 application to construct 10 single-family homes in Ambler, but we are waiting for DOT's approval on a "Site Specific Work Plan" before moving forward with the permit. The Planning Department will meet with Charlie Nelson of NIHA in early April for updates.

We are still in the process of contacting Title 9 permittees for Annual reports/year-end reports and receiving and filing Annual reports/year-end reports. To date thirteen year-end reports have been filed.

John Chase will be attending a training workshop titled, "How NEPA Can Help You Achieve the Results You Want," February 11 and 12, 2013 in Anchorage. The workshop will focus on getting agencies to assess and incorporate health impacts of projects on local communities, how to successfully provide input on federal decisions, development of alternatives for acceptance by federal agencies, current trends in NEPA case law, mitigation and monitoring once an action has been initiated. The workshop is sponsored by the Partnership Project, a nonprofit organization composed of twenty national public interest organizations that coordinate and advocate on important environmental topics.

John Chase will also be attending the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual "Permitting Strategies in Alaska," February 28 in Anchorage. Successful project development in Alaska requires a thorough knowledge of state and

federal permitting requirements. This conference will examine up-to-the-minute regulations, legislation, and case law, as well as the best practices essential to project permitting.

Public Services Department:

- Glenn Skin hosted a regional Administrators teleconference on January 8, 2013. 5 communities participated and had a good dialogue regarding some of their concerns. Currently staff taking steps to follow-up with each of the communities. The next teleconference will be held on the Second Wednesday so as not to conflict with Council meetings. (Would move to the top, this is important community outreach that is lost at the end here)
- **We have been notified that AST has placed an order for two snowmachines and two ATV's for Kotzebue.**
- There are currently four VPSO's in the Borough. VPSO Coordinator John Peratrovich based out of Kotzebue. Otis Rolls based out of Shungnak. Richard Eunice based out of Kiana. Michael Gagliano who is based out of Kotzebue. There are three Non-Native male VPSOs and one Native male VPSO. Kiana VPSO Eunice is currently attending phase one of the VPSO academy in Sitka.
- VPSO program will be hiring two VPSOs for the communities of Buckland and Noorvik. They will start January 2013. After they start, we will receive additional funds from DPS to ensure that we order office furniture and office equipment (e.g., computer, printer/fax/scanner, cell phone, digital camera, etc.). A snowmachine and ATV will also be ordered for each of these locations in the near future.
- Public Service Announcements (PSA's) have been airing to update residents regarding trail staking activities and trail conditions. Staff has been contacting the SAR Presidents and City/IRA offices to encourage VHF announcements about local ice and traveling conditions.
- SPOT training conducted in Kiana with good attendance.
- The new Iridium Satellite Phones have been distributed. The SAR Presidents in each community are using them when needed in SAR missions with success.
- SPOT units are being used on SAR missions with success. The Borough has units for residents to check-out as needed. The check-out program is being utilized.
- Three new freight sleds are currently being shipped to Kotzebue. They will be distributed as soon as they arrive to Deering, Kivalina and Kotzebue.
- The project to move the new shelter cabin is underway. The shelter cabin will be placed on the Kotzebue – Noorvik trail at the west Shore of Kobuk Lake by members of Kotzebue's Arctic Circle Search and Rescue group.
- Ambler, Buckland, Kiana, Kobuk, Noatak, Noorvik, Selawik and Shungnak have received draft copies of the Emergency Operations Plans for their communities. We are still trying to finalize scheduling to present the draft EOP's to their Council's for approval. We hope to have this completed by March 2013. This has been a very long project and we are glad to see it near completion.
- An invitation has been extended to the community of Deering to complete a table top exercise in February or March 2013. The scope will be on weather extremes, fire, flood, hazardous material incident, or a mass causality incident and should include a search and rescue component. If the council is interested we will conduct further meetings to complete a full table top exercise.
- In response November's "Bering Sea Super Storm", the public use emergency shelter cabin between Kivalina and Pt. Hope was destroyed. NAB was awarded \$51,500.00 to replace the shelter cabin. To date, a prefabricated cabin kit was purchased and delivered to Kivalina. We extended employment offers for temporary carpenters in Kivalina; however, they chose not to accept employment. Construction of the shelter cabin has been delayed until spring.
- On August 18, 2012 the City of Kivalina declared a disaster as a result of the water and landfill situation in the community. Mayor Whiting honored their request to the Borough and declared a disaster. Following that, a team from DHS&EM along with Wendie Schaeffer and Margaret Hansen flew to Kivalina to provide an initial assessment of the situation. It was determined shortly thereafter that we would have to take immediate response actions to address the water take re-fill efforts. John Spriggs from ANTHC and Maniilaq took the lead to complete a plant evaluation, and mobilize necessary equipment and supplies so that pumping could begin to re-fill the water tank.

Unfortunately, school was delayed by a total of 27 days; however, the community did get water into the tank. The Governor's Disaster Policy Cabinet approved the declaration and Wendie Schaeffer has been working with the DHS&EM recovery staff to complete necessary paperwork to get reimbursed for the Borough's expenses (total of \$11,923.02) of which we will be reimbursed \$6,923.02 based on our disaster declaration resolution, which indicates that we would seek reimbursement for all but \$5,000. ANTHC and the School District along with the City of Kivalina are going through the same process. Payment from DHS&EM is still pending.

- During the month of December VPSOs performed 5 prisoner transports from the surrounding communities to the Kotzebue jail.
- VPSOs have also attended basketball tournaments in the region.
- VPSO Coordinator has visited 4 communities with plans to visit all surrounding communities in the future.
- There is a current PSA on KOTZ radio for VPSO positions within the Borough region.
- There are currently 10 Village Police Officers. These positions are funded by pass-through monies appropriated from the Borough's general fund.

Fire Incidents for December 2012:

12/14/12 – Kiana. Kiana Traditional Council Building. Attic fire near woodstove pipe. Unknown \$ loss. No injuries or fatalities.

Search & Rescue Missions for December 2012:

12/3/12	Overdue	OTZ to BKL	Person found walking into BKL as hasty crew was leaving.
12/8/12	Overdue	OTZ to ORV	Persons found and assisted into OTZ
12/14/12	Overdue	ORV to IAN	Persons arrived in ORV as hasty crew was leaving
12/14/12	Overdue	OTZ to BKL	Hasty crew found person on trail, brought him into BKL
12/14/12	Overdue	OTZ to ORV	Hasty crew found persons, assisted them back into OTZ
12/14/12	Over due	OTZ to BKL	Family will handle
12/17/12	Lost	OTZ to ORV	Hasty crew found person and brought him into OTZ
12/21/12	Overdue	OTZ to ORV	Person made it to ORV as crews were getting ready to go out.
12/30/12	Overdue	BKL to OTZ	Airplane made contact. Person safe and warm out of gas. Family notified of position.

Economic Development Department:

- Fred Smith, Economic Development director has spent his first few weeks meeting with staff and learning about the Economic Development department programs. He has been reviewing the new CEDS document and looking at the Strategic Plans that have been done for the various communities in the region.
- Additionally, Fred is familiarizing himself with the different grants administered through the Economic Development Department and met with Nicole, the Alaska State ARDOR director, on the NAB \$62,122.00 grant. Also he is making arrangements to attend the ARDOR conference in Juneau on February 5 – 6, 2013.
- One of the things that is tied to Economic Development is the cost of living. Fred has been looking over data regarding to the cost of living in the NAB and determining how we can help our residence with the costs, for example: reducing the cost of stove oil.
- Elizabeth Rexford with Alaska Growth Capital has received a grant from the State of Alaska for over \$700,000.00 to work with rural communities on a micro loan program. This program is designed to help small business or individuals in rural areas to acquire a loan, where they might not be able to get one through normal lending institutions. We are planning to meet with Elizabeth in February to see how the NAB can work with Alaska Growth Capital to help get this program for our residence.
- This next week January 15 and 16, 2013 the Economic Development Director will be traveling to Barrow to meet with the North Slope Bough on the proceedings from the 2011 Summit as well as

preparing for the 2013 joint Northwest Arctic and North Slope Borough Economic Development Summit.

- Sulanich is beginning the process of the annual art inventory. The launch of the Inupiaqart.com website is expected to launch within the next 60-days. We will host an open house as part of the launching of this exciting new website! Invites will be extended to the Assembly once we are ready.
- Energy
  - As we reported last month the construction for the solar array in Amble is complete as of November 30, 2012. The next five communities that have been selected for solar array is Kobuk, Shungnak, Noorvik, Noatak, and Deering. An Engineer will be visiting the communities to determine site location and size of array.
  - The Upper Kobuk has been recommended for funding for Design and Construction of a Biomass Boiler project at \$250,000.00 under round 5 of AEA Renewable Energy Fund. Due to slow progress, NIHA is turning the grant over to NAB. There is a resolution in the meeting packet that outlines the process. A conceptual design has been discussed among the upriver councils, using a biomass boiler to offset cost of fuel for a washeteria or community building. The concept involves using recovered burnable material from waste that currently is delivered to the landfills. According to our initial biomass feasibility study, the upper Kobuk region has enough usable biomass for small projects. This could possibly be expanded in the future to include the schools.

**Future Schedule:**

January 31, 2013:	Noorvik City Council Meeting, Noorvik, AK
February 3 – 6, 2013:	Travel to Juneau, AK for meetings with the Legislature
February 12, 2013:	Deering City Council Meeting, Deering, AK

*As follow-up to the discussion during the last Assembly meeting, the Regional Strategy Session dates have been tentative set for November 11 – 15, 2013 in Kotzebue, Alaska.*