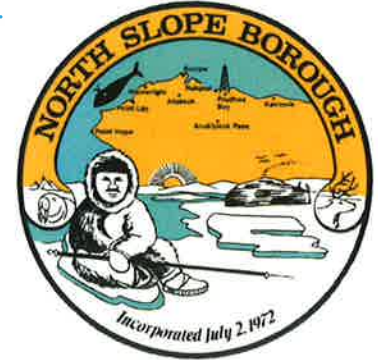


# North Slope Borough

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*Harry K. Brower Jr., Mayor*

## MEMORANDUM

TO: North Slope Borough Assembly  
FROM: Harry K. Brower Jr., Mayor *HB*  
DATE: September 13, 2016  
SUBJ: Status Report

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Good evening Members of the Assembly and listening audience. The month of August was busy and productive for my administration as we finalize our transition. We as people who live across the entire North Slope, have witnessed dramatic changes over the last 44 years. When oil was discovered in Prudhoe Bay, it started a chain of events that have had tremendous impacts on our region. Because of the visionary leadership of the people who walked before us, we have opportunities to better the lives of all the people that call the North Slope their home. That has been the focus for my administration as we transition. We work for the people.

I would like to thank all of you for your cooperation, commitment, and understanding over the last several weeks since my swearing in. Everyone in this room, and everyone listening -- has helped us to provide essential goods and services, healthcare, safety, and economic opportunities to our people. You have also played a huge role in protecting our cultural identity and the subsistence practices that have sustained our people for thousands of years. Again, thank you all.

Our economy is strong, however, the borough's fiscal stability should never be taken for granted. Our economy is based on oil and gas. That means it depends on global markets and economic conditions, the oil industry's investment and development options around the world, state and federal policy, and the success of exploration activities here on the North Slope. Many of these things are beyond our control, but we do have some influence in decisions relating to how exploration and development activities are conducted in this region.

The past two administrations were supportive of the proposal to build a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope to the Cook Inlet. The project could be one of the largest and most expensive projects ever undertaken in the world and could be a major economic generator for the North Slope for decades to come.

But the economics of such a project are far from certain and the current proposal from Governor Walker calls for this project to be exempt from local municipal property taxes. We do not have a PILT in place, which leaves us with oil infrastructure property taxes as our main source of income; we all should be thinking about what will replace Prudhoe Bay in the near future. Onshore development prospects for finding a replacement field for Prudhoe Bay are not very good. The political prospects for opening ANWR are no better than they were 15 years ago, and they may even be worse. The estimates for recoverable oil in NPR-A have been scaled back.

Thus, we are faced with the reality that less oil is flowing down the Trans-Alaska Pipeline each year. And where does that leave us? Our financial economy is almost entirely dependent on the value of oil and gas infrastructure within the boundaries of the borough, and we will be forced to make some tough economic and financial decisions. But we are strong, unified and resilient people, and in the coming months, I will call upon all of you for your ideas on how we can productively move forward.

**The Department of Administration and Finance:**

We are moving forward on the upcoming bond sale. The bond rating presentations will be in September and the bond election is coming up on the October ballot. We are looking forward to completing the process and funding the upcoming capital projects.

The year end close has been successfully completed and we have started the audit process with KPMG. Thank you to all of the departments for their efforts to process everything in a timely manner.

We have begun conducting tax audit fieldwork for several accounts. The taxpayers are cooperating and we are making good progress in completing this important task. We want to say thank you to all of our tax payers for their efforts to file returns in an accurate and timely manner.

**The Department of Human Resources:**

Summer is coming to an end and our High School graduates and College Interns are now preparing to go back to College. With that comes the startup of our OJT program. My staff met with the OJT Teacher and Counselor and OJT students at the High school. We discussed our online application process and the Employee Training Specialist talked about workplace expectations. Training & Development offered 12 trainings in Barrow and 1 cancelled in the village. Our numbers and interests in trainings should pick back up as children return to school.

*is this only in Barrow? what age group*

## **The Department of Health and Social Services:**

- The Department held a fun run and was attended by approximately 180 participants. The fundraising efforts assisted the City of Barrow to help fundraise for the new Piuragvik gym. Thank you to UIC, ASRC, ASNA, NSB Mayor's Office and BUECI for participating and partnering with us! We raised \$6000.00!
- The 2015 Census is almost complete for publication and includes health community assessment questions that will be reported to the communities across the North Slope once published.
- The Department is working closely with the Department of Administration and Finance, the North Slope Borough School District and the Paanaq group with ASRC at planning for meal services in the villages for children and elders in the summer time. The program will be ready for the summer program in May 2017.
- The Integrated Behavioral Health Program has increased access to services with a 20% increase in the number of people served from July 2015 to July 2016. The wait time for assessments now takes approximately one week, a huge decrease in waiting time from previous years past.
- The North Slope Health Fairs started with Barrow's health fair in August and had over 200 participants. The villages are scheduled and we will kick off the first villages of Point Hope and Point Lay in September.
- Arctic Women in Crisis is partnering with Alaska Legal Services to provide a series of legal presentations for clients and community members in September.
- The Barrow High School football team is this year's tobacco prevention champs! Promotional posters are being printed.
- The Department Prevention manager attended the last city council meeting to gather more information about tobacco taxes. The City reported that an additional \$1.00 tax is being put on the October ballot. This is a huge success for our regional tobacco prevention program and the Office of Minority Health tobacco grant we receive in collaboration with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.
- The Department, in partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conference, will be hosting a community meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass. This is an annual meeting with the community.

## **Department of Planning and Community Services:**

The Pt. Hope Comprehensive plan began the public comment period on July 26th. Public commenting will be open until Sept 6th. A community meeting was held in Pt. Hope on August 11th. The plan was reviewed with the community and comments were solicited. The meeting was well attended and meaningful engagement with community ensued. Both verbal and written comments were submitted, and the final draft is scheduled to be completed in September. We are scheduling the Planning Commission Public Hearing in Pt. Hope in October, followed by Assembly adoption in Nov/Dec.

The Planning Commission meeting was held on Thursday, August 25, 2016 here in Barrow. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2016 possibly in Wainwright. Location and time will be confirmed in the next week.

There was a Barrow Zoning Commission meeting held on Thursday, August 11, 2016 in Barrow. The next Barrow Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2016 in Barrow.

## **Department of Wildlife Management:**

Ice seal tagging has continued in collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on a project funded by the Office of Naval Research (ONR). The objective of this project is to monitor the oceanographic variables that are important to ice seals using a Conductivity Temperature Depth (CTD) tag. In August, we have tagged five spotted seals and one bearded seal. Earlier this summer, we also tagged two ringed seals for the ONR project. For the baseline studies project, we have tagged a total of 10 ringed seals. Maps are periodically being sent to a large list of community members, local leaders, and colleagues. Plans are to continue seal capture/tagging work until about mid-September.

Plans are under way to begin a study of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of polar bears in the Southern Beaufort (SBS) Sea subpopulation. This work is in collaboration with researchers that have published on similar research in the Chukchi Sea (CS) subpopulation. The SBS TEK study will complement a similar study that was produced by Canadian researchers in the Canadian portion of the SBS.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in collaboration with Department of Wildlife Management Polar Bear Patrol staff from Kaktovik did successfully remove a tight collar from a sub-adult male polar bear. The bear had been spotted by community members of Kaktovik and the information was brought to the attention of the USGS/FWS.

The Department of Wildlife Management has received an extension of the currently held J.H. Prescott grant to support our marine mammal beach survey-monitoring program. Weekly beach surveys have been conducted in Barrow since break up. In summary, overall numbers of found dead ice seals are

low. In Barrow a large adult polar bear carcass was found floating in late August and is scheduled for necropsy. Found dead birds, mostly red-throated loons from by-catch were high in comparison to previous years.

#### **Law Department:**

- Attended 9th Circuit Appeals Court arguments challenging bearded seal listing under the Endangered Species Act.
- Continued discussions with Wildlife Department on polar bear co-management.
- Negotiated memorandum of agreement with TNHA regarding senior housing.
- Worked with ASNA regarding fiscal year 2017 Medical Travel and Funeral Assistance Grant.
- Assisted in drafting Memorandum of Understanding between Native Village of Barrow, NSB and State of Alaska regarding the Juvenile Court Tribal Youth Program.
- Reviewed Anaktuvak Pass Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviewed draft mine site operators agreement.

#### **Police Department:**

During the month of August 2016, the Police Department responded to 2,985 calls for service during which 82 criminal and noncriminal cases were filed. 90 of the calls were alcohol related. 1,131 calls were dispatched and 1,854 calls were officer initiated. There was 103 traffic related contacts during which 13 citations were written.

A total of 50 criminal cases were submitted to the District Attorney for prosecution. The Department received and processed 30 requests for Police Reports and 38 applications for Alcohol Permits and/or renewals.

**Drug and Alcohol Seizures:** Officers seized a total of 36.28 ounces of marijuana.

## **Department of Search and Rescue:**

Staff flew a total of 57 missions last month. Here are some of the summaries:

7-21-16 We a received call from NUISAR, they needed assistance with a mission. They had three boaters trapped by moving ice. NSBSAR dispatched helicopter N401ES to the location with two pilots and the assistant coordinator. When the crew arrived to the location the three boaters were eight miles from NUI and trapped by two miles of ice. The boaters were picked up from the ice and brought back to NUI. From there, the crew refueled in Dead Horse and returned to Barrow. No reported injuries.

7/28/16 We received a radio call from Barrow Dispatch that AKPSAR needed assistance. Two hikers were overdue in the mountains west of the village. NSBSAR was unable to assist with our helicopter N401ES. AKP sent two Argo sorties and hikers to search. The two hikers were found heading to AKP. AKPSAR reported after all parties arrived. No reported injuries.

8-19-16 We received a call from AINVSAR about an overdue hunter. AINVSAR was dispatched, and after several attempts to locate the individual they finally located him 20 miles south of Wainwright. AINVSAR pulled his four wheeler out and all returned with no reported injuries. Case closed.

## **IHLC:**

The month of August was productive for the **IHLC Department**. Major accomplishments included building capacity within staff to fill positions, and oral histories gathered from many elders across the region in preparation for a 2017 calendar on positive parenting grounded in Inupiaq values. We hosted a visit and tour from the Rasmussen Foundation and had visitors from a cruise ship. Both times we were able to contact local artists to interact with guests. Building upgrades for the Iñupiat Heritage Center includes plans to Weatherization and paint the traditional room during the fall whaling season.

I would like to close by saying that I look forward to working together with all of you so we can ultimately arrive at wise decisions that our grandchildren will thank us for. By forging strong relationships between local organizations and remaining united as a people, we can be proactive in leading the policy debate over Arctic and NSB issues.

I also want to once again thank the Assembly members for the thoughtful attention they give to the issues that come before them and for working with my administration for the good of our communities. This concludes my summary report for the month of August. Quyanaqpak and God Bless!