

# North Slope Borough

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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*Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor*

### MEMORANDUM

TO: North Slope Borough Assembly  
FROM: Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor  
DATE: September 3, 2013  
SUBJ: Status Report

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Good evening Assembly Members and listening audience. August was a very productive month for my administration.

The **Mayor's Office** supported the North Slope Leadership Roundtables last week. (Need story from Richard).

The **Department of Administration and Finance** is working with bond counsel and staff to prepare for the upcoming presentation to the bond rating agencies in New York the week of September 9<sup>th</sup>. Admin & Finance also awarded the first competitively bid contract for foundation work for the new **Service Area 10 Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant**. The Ground-breaking Ceremony will be held in Prudhoe Bay tomorrow, Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>.

The **Department of Public Works** is weatherizing 8 homes in Wainwright and expects to have them completed by mid-October. Once finished, they will mobilize for weatherizing homes in Point Lay and then in Kaktovik. Two main challenges are 1) educating the public about the Weatherization Program and how it differs from the old housing-related programs that the Borough used to operate; and 2) educating the public about the eligibility criteria and application process. The **Department** also worked very hard this year to ensure that upgrades to the power distribution grids are launched to avoid costly power outages for the fall and winter season. I am proud to say that my administration is making good progress to ensure that all residents are provided with the best possible service in this area.

The **Department of Capital Improvements Program Management** received the Notice to Proceed and now have a construction contract in place with Northern PowerLine to upgrade the Nuiqsut Power Distribution grid. The contractor is scheduled to arrive in Nuiqsut in mid-September. CIPM will also have a bid opening for power grid upgrades in the villages of Point Hope and Kaktovik on the 30th of August. All upgrades are scheduled to be completed before December 30, 2013.

The **Law Department** coordinated with several outside organizations regarding our bearded seal endangered species listing challenge which resulted in an MOA between all organizations to have one voice in this issue that heavily impacts our region. The Department is engaged with interviewing candidates for the vacant Assistant Borough Attorney position. The Law Department also began researching the Borough's ability to issue various bonds for low-to-moderate income housing projects.

As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, the North Slope Borough **Human Resources Department** has a new Employee Assistance Program. This new program offers no-cost, confidential help in managing life's challenges that interfere with the employee's work life, including information and pre-screened referrals for family or relationship problems, depression, anxiety, caring for children or aging parents, special needs, education and retirement issues, quitting tobacco, alcohol or drug use, and losing weight and living healthier; as well as legal assistance with family and divorce law, debt consolidation, estate planning, and help with civil or criminal issues interfering with their job. This is a huge step in the right direction to strengthen our workforce and improve job performance as well.

The **Department of Health and Social Services** Health Intern Program was a great success, with a total of 8 interns hired for the summer. All interns were Health majors in their respective colleges, and worked together on a group project to address suicide. They made a video, developed a community flyer, and created PSA's to address suicide across the North Slope. In addition to promoting **National Recovery Month**, the Health Department announced that September is "Stop the Pop" month, so keep your eyes open for "Stop the Pop" activities this month. Wainwright and Barrow received their new Senior Vans. Thank you to CIPM for getting buses designed to be easily accessible to Elders, reducing the chances of slips and falls.

The efforts of the **Police Department** to reduce the amount of illegal drugs and alcohol being trafficked into our communities continues, with a total of 47 bottles of distilled alcohol and 1 ½ pounds of marijuana seized during the month of August. The Police Department is also working with the United States Drug Enforcement Agency to provide task force assets to facilitate this on-going drug and alcohol interdiction. The new JAG Drug Interdiction and Trafficking grant has been appropriated, and the officer assigned under this grant has completed the requisite training. Funds are also being spent down to purchase bullet proof vests for new hire officers and replacement vests as needed.

The **Search & Rescue Department** performed six rescue activities this month, including the attempted rescue of a bear mauling victim near Anaktuvuk Pass. Because of the foggy conditions, our rescue was not successful and the victim was eventually brought to safety by the Alaska Air National Guard 36 hours later. Search and Rescue has also hired a new Aircraft Maintenance Engineer who was scheduled to begin on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

This concludes my summary report for the month of August. Have a safe and blessed end of summer!