

North Slope Borough

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Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Slope Borough Assembly

FROM: Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor

DATE: June 3, 2014

SUBJ: May Status Report

Charlotte E. Brower

Good afternoon Assembly Members, Kalimiut, and listening audience. We were richly blessed this month as many of our whaling crews have been successful in their harvests and I hope the hand of Providence continues to bless our subsistence hunters across the North Slope.

May has also been a prosperous month for the North Slope Borough. Thanks to the efforts of my **Administration & Finance** staff, the Borough was successful in appealing the state's assessed value of the Trans Alaska Pipeline to the State Assessment Review Board. As a result, the Board found that the pipeline was worth nearly \$5 billion more than the original assessed value.

The significance of this victory is that the Borough is entitled to an additional \$21 million in capital funding. After much careful thought and consideration, I am proposing to use these funds for the construction of housing across the North Slope. Housing is the most fundamental unmet need in our communities. To ensure the sustainability and health of our communities across the North Slope Borough, my administration is committed to pursuing any and all funding and resources necessary to address the critical housing needs in all our villages.

In addition to these developments, I am pleased to report that **Department of Capital Improvement Program Management** staff and contractors traveled with me and Public Works staff to Wainwright and Point Lay to meet with residents on the Water and Sewer issues in their communities. Several issues were discussed including alternatives to the present water and sewer systems in the villages. The Department will continue to work with the communities and its engineers to find the best long term and sustainable solution to the recurring problems with the current water and sewer distribution system.

The **Department of Public Works** responded to concerns raised by the village of Kaktovik of fire hydrants being buried by snow. Public Works staff worked to dig out and clear access to hydrants all around the village. Staff were also instructed to do the same for all the other villages. Public Works personnel also responded to concerns raised in Point Lay about the lack of

water and sewer services for the 800 block. Service has now been restored to the area, and although inclement weather conditions prevail, we are making progress.

In Wainwright, Public Works worked to replace a culvert that they believe was contributing to flooding problems being reported there. They will continue to monitor the area and work to ensure efficient drainage of water.

In response to community needs and in an effort to utilize unused funds in other areas, the **Department of Human Resources** redirected year-end funds to hiring additional interns, MJP's and other temporary hires. As of May's month end an additional 50 residents were hired across the North Slope to assist with community projects, department needs and personnel development. 36 of these hires were village residents. We expect that these numbers will continue to grow in the next few weeks.

Training and Development held 18 training a this month and 121 residents attended training. A concerted effort to train MJP's to move them into permanent positions has begun. We are pleased that several MJP's have been leaving the program prior to their expected end dates because they have been offered and have accepted full time positions.

We would also like to thank Anna Stankiewicz for her 16 years of dedicated service to Human Resources and would like to congratulate her on retirement. On the heels of this retirement Kelly Cahoon will now be tasked with handling temporary hires and Melanie Samuelu will join Recruiting.

Employee Relations has experienced a few key staff changes as well - Robyn Burke is now tasked with Annual Evaluations, Kim Leavitt has also joined us to assist with the Personnel Hearing Board and the Compensation Committee.

Three **Department of Wildlife Management** staff members (Craig George, Robert Suydam, and Raphaela Stimmelmayer) and consulting scientists from 3 universities attended the 2014 IWC Scientific Committee meetings in Bled, Slovenia. While scientists attending the IWC meeting are not permitted to discuss the meeting results before the official report is released, we can offer that there were no management concerns about the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas (BCBS) bowhead stock. The same management advice from last year was forwarded to this year basically indicating that the current harvest levels are sustainable. DWM will include more details in the next monthly report. The NSB and Native community has been commended in recent years for making significant contributions to the science of bowhead whales.

The **Department of Planning and Community Services** staff participated in the State of Alaska Drill Rig Working Group and met with various divisions within the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to further the Borough's interests over the administration of state lands on the North Slope. The Capital Improvement Program staff also worked hard presenting Project Review Committee recommendations before the Planning Commission.

The Department is also continuing to work on comprehensive plans for all North Slope

communities. Draft plans will be presented to residents of Barrow in June and residents of Kaktovik in July. Planning staff is working to enter into Public Interest Determination contracts in the preparation of comprehensive plans for the villages of Point Lay and Point Hope.

The **Department of Health and Social Services** Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH) Division had a site visit by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for national accreditation. Accreditation for the Division will ensure quality and improved services for the region. The visit went well and the Department is looking forward to its accreditation.

The Health Department, in partnership with ConocoPhillips, conducted a health fair in the village of Nuiqsut. The event was well attended and work continues on planning for health fairs across all North Slope Communities.

The Department is also pleased to announce that one of its employees, Bertrand Britt, PHN, won the State of Alaska Outstanding Public Health Nursing Service award at the bi-annual State PHN Conference. Congratulations to Ms. Britt on that accomplishment! In other staff news, Julie Serstad, Deputy Director submitted her resignation to retire after many years of service in the health field. Through a transparent and objective process, Department Director Leavitt and Chief of Staff Ahgeak recommended the appointment of Jennifer Kiser Brower, whom I disclosed is my daughter-in-law. CAO Adams and our Borough Attorney affirmed the recommendation, and Jennifer's first day will be on the 6th.

The **Police Department** staff attended school graduations, assisted Arctic Women in Crises staff with arts and crafts activities for our youth, and conducted hunter safety classes. During the month of May, Police responded to 2,160 calls for service. Nine citations were issued and 33 cases were submitted to the District Attorney for review. The Police Department was also successful in seizing 4.26 liters of alcohol and 1.6 pounds of marijuana. As many of you may know, Chief Boyea will be retiring June 30th, and due to the election this fall, I plan to appoint an Interim Chief of Police.

This concludes my summary report for the month of May.