Mayor’s Message

My staff and I are continuing to review the new federal regulations regarding endangered species that are being thrown our way almost daily. We feel there is a bias in the way agencies implement the Endangered Species Act in the Arctic compared to other parts of the country. Many listings of Arctic species appear to have more to do with politics and fundraising than they do with actual threats to the species.

Our North Slope Borough Wildlife Department scientists have been studying the ringed seal for many years and while sea ice is declining, both science and local Indigenous knowledge demonstrate that Ringed seals continue to have a robust and healthy population, and are more resilient and adaptive to climate change than previously assessed.

The North Slope Borough will continue to fight this listing and others with sound science and local traditional knowledge. This will always be what guides us. As the animals and the humans that call the Arctic home, we are all trying to adjust to today’s changing world and have been doing so for thousands of years.

On June 28th the Alaska State House of Representatives and Senate adjourned from the (Continued on page 4)
The North Slope Borough funds new service connections with capital funding. Capital funds come from bond sales each year as allocated by the Project Review Committee, Planning Commission and Mayor. The Assembly votes on the bond sale package and voters are given the opportunity to approve the bond sale.

Water & Sewer Division maintains a list of applications for services connection. Some applications date back to 2009. We prioritize oldest connection requests and project locations, as funding becomes available.

The NSB currently has funds to construct 10 services in Anaktuvuk Pass, which is bid ready, and will start when the last permit is approved. Additional services for Anaktuvuk Pass are on the 2021 bond sale that will be presented to voters in August. Many services require archeological clearance prior to construction, which the NSB is performing this summer.

In addition, funding for five services in Utqiagvik pending vote by residents for the bond sale. The project will need design and permitting prior to beginning construction.

Residents and building owners can get a service connection in two ways: Borough-provided connection, or owner-provided connection. To start either process, the building owner should complete and submit the Application for Service Connection Approval to the Public Works Water and Sewer Division. The applications may be emailed to Water&Sewer@north-slope.org, handed-in at the Division office at the Public Works or dropped-off to your local village supervisor’s office. With “New Service Connection Application” in the subject line for tracking purposes.

The Water and Sewer Division or their designee will contact the homeowner confirming application is received. Please if no confirmation call is received within 1 week after submissions call the Division for application status. The Division’s first goal is to provide the essential service of water production and delivery, and the collection and treatment of wastewater in all communities in a manner that results in increased customer satisfaction.

Questions? Contact the Public Works Water and Sewer at 907-852-0489
Happy Founder’s Day & 49th Anniversary to the North Slope Borough

Happy Founder’s Day to the North Slope Borough. 49 years young today! Still a kid in organized Government years!

Founders’ Day holds a special significance to each of us. It is a time to honor our history, celebrate our present and contemplate the bright future of our Borough.

We recognize those who walked before us and how a desire for freedom and self-determination led to the creation of our home-rule government that we are blessed to call home today. Thank you to all those who have walked before us and those that continue to carry the torch today.

- Mayor Harry Brower

“It is important to remember the lessons of the past. In addition, we must search and master the new changes if we are to continue to dominate the Arctic. We have demonstrated we can survive the trespasses which have been perpetuated upon us.

We have been successful in establishing our own home rule government. We have been able to achieve self-government. We must strive to insure that our We are Iñupiaq. Borough, our city governments and our school systems reflect our Iñupiat ideals.”

- Eben Hopson, Sr.

Economic Impact Assistance Program – Kaktovik

Over the past two years, Kaktovik has used funding from NSB’s Economic Impact Assistance Program to benefit the entire community. With grant administration provided by the City of Kaktovik under Mayor Amanda Kaleak and the city council, EIAP project highlights to date include:

- Summer Youth Program, which introduces kids into the workforce as responsible, contributing community members. The “Summer Clean Up” portion of this program makes Barter Island even more beautiful, one trash bag at a time!

- Purchase of woodworking tools to replace those that were lost in the 2020 Harold Kaveolook

- An ongoing series of year-round “Community Events,” which promote community bonding and unity. The events are well-attended, with plenty of food and fun games & prizes for all.

- Day-to-day operation of the city office, which sustains and manages the community center, home to many activities and services.

- Community center maintenance and improvements, including electrical system upgrades and the installation of a backup generator (planned for Summer, 2021).

Photo credit: Tori Inglangasak and Flora Rexford
second special session. It’s been a very contentious 5 months but before adjourning, the House rescinded its action in previously failing to adopt the effective date clause for HB 69 (the operating, capital, and supplemental budgets) by a vote of 29 yeas, 9 nays, 2 excused. This action brought the budget bill back before the body. The House then passed the effective date clause for HB 69 by a vote of 28 yeas, 10 nays, 2 excused. The budget bill will now be transmitted to Governor Dunleavy for his signature or any vetoes. If Governor Dunleavy quickly signs the bill, this will prevent any State government shutdown and we are also confident this should not impact the NPRA grants process for our North Slope communities.

Furthermore as part of the agreement to pass the effective date clause, the House adopted a “sense” of the house. This is basically an agreement to work together on a fiscal plan through a non-partisan, bicameral working group. The fiscal plan is to be completed before the first day of the next special session. The next special session is scheduled for August 2nd. The sense of the house passed by a vote of 30 yeas, 8 nays, and 2 excused.

However, the Constitutional Budget Reserve/reverse sweep issue hasn’t been resolved. Both the House and Senate failed to approve the reverse sweep. The result is a $525 dividend instead of a $1,100 one.

There is also no funding for oil and gas tax credit payments, Alaska Performance Scholarships, or the Power Cost Equalization Program which impacts 85,000 Alaskans.

The $340 million Alaska Performance Scholarship fund provides $6.4 million in needs-based grants and $11.8 million in scholarships for high-achieving students. Funding for community assistance is reduced by $12.4 million and only $30.8 million for school bond debt reimbursement is funded. Additionally, funding for $86.5 million in capital projects, many located in Mat-Su are now in limbo. More information on the reverse sweep can be found at the Office of Management & Budget site which has a PowerPoint and handout on the funds affected by the sweep. There is just over $1.5 billion in various saving accounts that are impacted. There is hope that the reverse sweep may be ratified later during the August special session and that payments will be made retroactively for the various programs.

If constituents have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Mayor’s office or the NSB Government and External Affairs Director.

Arctic Foxes are a natural part of the environment of the North Slope Borough. However, due to their high prevalence to carry rabies please consult with the NSB Veterinary Clinic before touching and disposing of any dead foxes.

Also, report any abnormal behaviors of foxes and their location to the NSB Veterinary Clinic. Some typical signs of rabies in foxes include: biting/attacking inanimate objects, little to no fear of people, wobbly movements, and hyper salivation.

Not all foxes are rabid, but rabies is not curable. Make sure your pets are current on their rabies vaccinations, which can be obtained at no charge through the NSB Veterinary Clinic.

Arctic Foxes

Some students made atikluks, finishing personal sewing projects, learning how to cut a wolf skin as well as language revitalization opportunities.

Cultural Expert Lillian Aana Lane instructed classes for her local residents, with IHLC’s assistance.

Cultural Experts Wilson Ekak, Rachael Upicksoun, Tommilynn Ahmaogak and Sophia Segevan assisted with sewing classes for their residents. They started off sewing fur mittens and atikluks.
Dr. Anne Zink (Chief Medical Officer for the State of Alaska), Heidi Hedberg (Director of Public Health) and Verné Boerne (President and CEO of the Alaska Native Health Board) thank COVID-19 responders and Health Care Providers.
Inupiaq Value: Compassion

Though the environment is harsh & cold, our ancestors learned to live with warmth, kindness, caring, and compassion. Compassion means to have sympathy and concern for the community and those around you.
Donald “Nok” Acker has been with NSB Planning as a CIP Planning Technical Coordinator for over five years. Covid-19 has affected every part of his job, from the emergency orders, the hunker downs, and the travel restrictions; these have not stopped Nok from assisting the North Slope Borough communities.

Nok shows his value in working independently and as a team player in his position. He assists in different capacities with no complaints. Nok eagerly and enthusiastically will work over a hot grill for a BBQ, and jump aboard a flight to assist inspectors. He will attend meetings, help community members and has filled in as a division delegate. All with zero complaints with good effort and attitude. Nok has shown enthusiasm to the department. He is a vital employee and someone we can depend on. Quyanaq Donald “Nok” Acker, for your dedication!

Kristin “Tuuq” Gutierrez-Edwards has been working with the North Slope Borough since 1998. She is currently working as Community Development Planner with the North Slope Borough Planning and Community Services Department. Tuuq has been working hard and diligently this last quarter. She conducted a review of the annual population determination for the North Slope Borough villages. She also assisted with the finalization of the Paisaŋich, the village comprehensive plans and brought recommended changes to assist the administration. Her willingness to jump into projects and learn as she goes, benefits the department greatly.

The North Slope Borough Health Department had several contact tracers during the COVID-19 pandemic; we are so thankful for each of them. The following individuals were a part of the contact tracers’ team. Their responsibilities were to contact individuals who may have been in direct contact with a positive COVID-19 person. Help identify and advise people to get tested and isolate until results came back, in addition to providing educational materials out to the public through phone calls, email, flyers, and KBRW announcements. They worked countless hours doing everything they can to stop the spread of this virus. Aside from contact tracing, if needed, they would deliver staple food items and cleaning supplies to those in isolation and provide educational materials. Each employee worked with our local Public Health Nursing office and the Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital on a day-to-day basis. We want to thank each of the Contact Tracers for their service, dedication, and commitment to our community. Quyanaqpak!
MAYOR HARRY BROWER OFFERS CREDIT TO RESIDENTIAL UTILITY ACCOUNTS FOR NORTH SLOPE RESIDENTS

The North Slope Borough Mayor Harry K. Brower Jr. has approved another round of financial credits towards the cost of residential utility service(s) in the 8 north-slope communities. Similar to the earlier Covid pandemic 2020 credits, this is offered to each residential utility customer and excludes commercial and not-for-profit accounts.

For the villages served by the North Slope Borough Public Utility, the credit will be equal to 2 months of consumer usage based on January and February 2021 consumption and will appear on the June statement.

For Utqiagvik, the credit will be applied to each residential members’ Barrow Utilities and Electric Cooperative Inc (BUECI) account equal to $300 and will appear on the July statement.

“On behalf of the Cooperative, thank you to Mayor Harry Brower and the North Slope Borough for their ongoing meaningful support provided to our community members” said BUECI General Manager Timothy W. Russell.

“We will do what we can to help people in their time of need,” said Mayor Harry Brower. “This has been a challenging and stressful time and I appreciate everyone who took the threat of the pandemic on our community seriously and respecting emergency orders and social distancing recommendations for the protection of others. I am very pleased that the NSB is in a position to provide financial help to the residents of the North Slope in this way.”