Mayor's Message

Greetings fellow residents of the North Slope Borough, I am pleased to share with you a few highlights of the Borough’s recent activities.

As we may see the number of COVID-19 cases decrease on the North Slope, we stand together and continue to do our part for our community’s health. One step we all can take is getting the COVID-19 vaccine. On March 9, 2021, the State of Alaska opened up COVID-19 vaccinations for anyone living or working in Alaska who is 16 or older.

If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, please contact Public Health Nursing at 907-852-0270 or SSMH Appointment line at 907-852-9156. Thank you to our health care providers for providing vaccinations to the public.

Over the past few months, construction on the new 8-plex and 10-plex housing has been moving forward. Some of the deliveries on the CWAT trail include hauling fuel to the community of Atqasuk, and dump loaders also hauled gravel for the Atqasuk airstrip. (Continue on page 3)
Mayor’s Message (continued from page 1)

The 10-plex in Atqasuk is near completion connected to water & sewer.

I am pleased to announce that our Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 has been passed. I would like to express my appreciation to all the Department Directors, Deputy Directors, Budget staff, and the Assembly who work collaboratively and tirelessly during the budget process. Additionally, the Project Review Committee Workshop was held last week and recommended the capital projects for consideration by the Planning Commission and Assembly for funding through a Bond Sale later this year. My administration is looking forward to providing another year of improved services for the residents of the North Slope.

We expect a decline in available revenue for operations for the next fiscal year due to COVID’s impacts on our population in development areas; however, we will likely consider a larger bond sale and devote a larger share of revenue to upgrading our infrastructure. Department of Public Work’s (DPW) Water & Sewer Operations and SKW Joint Venture Emergency Below Ground Repair Crew performed four emergency Water & Sewer repairs in February in three communities.

The North Slope Borough Planning & Community Services Department has overseen the Coastal Winter Access Trail (CWAT) since 2018. Our third season has successfully made about 20 roundtrip caravans with up to 50 vehicles going either way between Utqiagvik and Prudhoe; this includes a handful of roundtrips from Wainwright to Utqiagvik as well. We want to thank Eskimos Inc. subcontractors Olgoonik Corporation, Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation, ALT -Alaskan Contractor, and all who are involved in making this year’s CWAT possible. Quyanaq!

I continue to listen to your concerns and make them a priority and the Borough staff works hard to make sure you receive a response. These responses are read into the record each month during a regular public meeting with Assembly Representatives from your communities. This report, in addition to detailed monthly progress reports, demonstrates our sense of accountability and the importance of transparency in government as we promised. Additionally, I would like to congratulate our graduates across the North Slope. You have proven that even in the times of a pandemic, resiliency and hard work pays off! I would like to express my warmest congratulations to the successful NS Whaling Captains and whaling crews. Good luck to all the whaling crews along the North Slope!

My God continue to bless us all!
Mayor Harry

Employee of the Month: Recognition of a job well done!

March 2021: Alva Ahvakana Sr.

Alva Ahvakana Sr. has served as Fire Fighter/ EMT in Wainwright for over seven years. He has shown dedication in his position and has been able to fill in as Acting Fire Chief when called upon. He and several firefighters got the LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) activated during a major storm in 2019. During the coronavirus outbreak, Alva again took responsibility and acted on the Chief’s behalf to keep the people and employees informed. He also keeps our vehicles on the road, making minor repairs and working with our mechanics in Utqiagvik for other maintenance needed to keep our response vehicles running. He is a vital employee and someone who we can depend on. Quyanaq Alva, for your service, to ensure your community is safely being taken care of.

Riley Sikvayugak Jr. was hired by the NSB Public Works Department in November 2019 for the position of Plant Operator in Anaktuvuk Pass. In addition to performing his job, he demonstrates a commitment to his awesome crew and the people around him. He responds to any outages or assists with any difficulties that may occur. If there is a problem that he doesn’t know how to solve, he does his best to find the solution. He enjoys working hands-on to “make the hours go by,” as he says. Riley Sikvayugak Jr. is an outstanding employee who is more than willing to learn anything and everything he can about his profession, and he never turns an eye when asked to work overtime. He is a great asset to our company and is an all-around great employee. The way he carries himself says a lot about him as a person. He is a vital employee and someone we can depend on. Quyanaq Riley, for your service!

May 2021: Jack Henry Jr.

The NSB Public Works Department hired Jack Henry, Jr. in September 2013 for a Temporary Laborer. He moved up to Heavy Equipment Operator Mechanic Trainee and now the Lead Power Plant Operator in Pt Lay. In addition to performing his job, he demonstrates a commitment to his crew and the people around him. On December 3, 2020, Leo Ferreira III, Power Plant Operator, was on shift and smelled smoke in the generator room. He noticed smoke and took immediate action. Lead Operator Jack Henry, Jr. arrived and began measuring the wall’s temperature around the exhaust pipe. Jack directed the Fire Department to punch a hole in the wall and doused with water. The Fire Department and DPW staff monitored the area of the fire to ensure the fire was completely extinguished. Without their quick thinking and the Fire Department response, the community of Point Lay would have lost their Power Plant. While it would be easy to say we were lucky, the fact is, luck did not play a part. Instead, it is the dedicated commitment of these individuals that saved the day. Jack is an excellent leader for his crew and leads by example; he gains a lot of respect from his coworkers and the community. Quyanaq Jack, for your service!

April 2021: Riley Sikvayugak Jr.

The NSB Public Works Department hired Jack Henry, Jr. in September 2013 for a Temporary Laborer. He moved up to Heavy Equipment Operator Mechanic Trainee and now the Lead Power Plant Operator in Pt Lay. In addition to performing his job, he demonstrates a commitment to his crew and the people around him. On December 3, 2020, Leo Ferreira III, Power Plant Operator, was on shift and smelled smoke in the generator room. He noticed smoke coming from the wall and called Fire Department. Lead Operator Jack Henry, Jr. arrived and began measuring the wall’s temperature around the exhaust pipe. Jack directed the Fire Department to punch a hole in the wall and doused with water. The Fire Department and DPW staff monitored the area of the fire to ensure the fire was completely extinguished. Without their quick thinking and the Fire Department response, the community of Point Lay would have lost their Power Plant. While it would be easy to say we were lucky, the fact is, luck did not play a part. Instead, it is the dedicated commitment of these individuals that saved the day. Jack is an excellent leader for his crew and leads by example; he gains a lot of respect from his coworkers and the community. Quyanaq Jack, for your service!
Alaska Division of Public Health: 1st contact, Close Contact, Prevent and Fully Vaccinated

What to do if you have confirmed (or suspected) coronavirus (COVID-19): If a health care provider contacts you here are some steps to help protect yourself and your household: Stay home, separate yourself from others, call ahead if you need to see a doctor, wear a face covering, avoid sharing personal household items, wash often, clean “highly touched places” and monitor your symptoms.

What to do if you are a close contact to someone with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19): you must stay home for 14 days after last day you were in close contact. (includes not going to work, school and avoiding public places) Check temperature twice a day, and monitor your health and watch for symptoms. If symptoms develop, seek medical care, but call ahead of time, tell your doctor of your symptoms and avoid contact with others.

What to do if you have been asked to conduct self monitoring for coronavirus (COVID-19): take temperature twice daily (a temp over 100.4 is considered fever) and wear a face covering. Wash frequently, avoid touching your face, don’t share personal items, avoid close contact, stay home when possible, cover cough, disinfect frequently and avoid large gatherings.

What to do to prevent coronavirus (COVID-19): you generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected with the virus, close contact include: living in the same household, caring for a sick person, being coughed on or kissed by.

What you can do once you have been fully Vaccinated: visit inside home without mask with other fully vaccinated people (and with one unvaccinated who are not at risk) Travel domestically with out pre– or post– travel test and without quarantining after travel, travel internationally with out a pre-travel test depending on location and without quarantining.

Public Health Nursing (PHN) will be traveling to:
- Kaktovik May 10-12
- Atqasuk May 10-14
- Anaktuvuk Pass May 31 to June 5
- Nuiqsut June 14-18

The VET team will be traveling to communities:
- Wainwright May 3-6
- Point Lay May 10-12
- Nuiqsut May 17-20
- Atqasuk May 24-26

Healthy Community Awareness

Orange: Teen Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Blue: Colon Cancer Awareness
Purple: wear purple for Ashley Johnson-Barr Day
Purple, Green and Gold
Nuiqsut Paisaŋich: Planning & Inupiaq History Language and Culture

The Nuiqsut Tri-Lateral has worked diligently to update their Nuiqsut Cultural document Paisaŋich initially adopted in 1978 by the North Slope Borough Inupiat Heritage Center. A Tri-lateral resolution has been approved from the Nuiqsut Tri-lateral Committee.

The Planning Department presented the Paisaŋich update at the IHLRC Commission on April 19 and an IHLRC resolution was approved on April 20, 2021, adopting the update. The Nuiqsut Comprehensive Plan is being drafted and is being scheduled for leadership review.

The Nuiqsut Paisaŋich is a cultural plan first prepared by the Village of Nuiqsut and the NSB Planning Commission and Commission on History and Culture in 1979. In 2015 the City of Nuiqsut sought an addendum to the ethnographic portion for the original Nuiqsut Paisaŋich; this was prepared by Stephen R. Braund & Associates (SRB&A) and submitted in 2018, lacking and update to the land use and management plan the NSB Planning staff along with our contractors UMIAQ and Eskimo’s Inc in 2019.

The second addendum focuses on the management of lands within the Nuiqsut vicinity. It provides a history of the land use, discusses land management policies and the laws affecting the community.

Bottom (left to right): Ida Numnik, Alice Aaluk Solomon, Isabel Ahmaogak, Ethel Kuutuuq Leavitt Olemaun, Flora Aaglu Leavitt, Flossie Conner, Cynthia Annaqaq Ahmaogak, Nellie Panigeo, Hester Taklin Neakok, Hazel Katuk Panigeo, Faye Kimmiulak Nusunginya, Elizabeth Rexford

Distance Learning Internet Subsidy continued

What is the program?
The Distance Learning Subsidy Program was authorized by the North Slope Borough Mayor Harry Brower Jr., and approved by the Assembly for Covid relief. This program will provide a credit as a way to provide cost relief for telecommunications expenses for all North Slope Resident students K -12 grades that were enrolled in distance education for Jan. and Feb. 2021; including NSBSD, and any North Slope Resident students who are enrolled in any home schooling program. This is the 2nd part of the program. Everyone eligible needs to submit a new application.

Who is eligible to apply?
The parent or legal guardian of a student (or students) enrolled in the 2nd semester of 2020-2021 school year, with a distance learning curriculum, that requires an internet connection for the months of January and February. All North Slope Resident students K -12 grades that were enrolled in distance education; including NSBSD, and any North Slope Resident students who were enrolled in any home schooling program. This information will be verified against school records.

What will the amount of the subsidy be?
The amount will be determined based on the number of qualified applicants, and available funding. At the end of the application period, total applications received will be calculated to determine the amount that will allow us to serve the greatest number of people possible.

How can I apply?
The application can be found on our website at www.northslope.org/ information/cares. Once complete, send the complete application to NSBCARES@north-slope.org. Please attach a copy of your internet bill for Jan. or Feb. 2021. If your child is not enrolled with NSBSD, please attach 2nd semester 2020-2021 proof of enrollment. The application will be open from Friday, May 14th through Friday, May 28th at 5:00 pm. Once the application period has closed, submissions will be reviewed. Application assistance can be requested by emailing NSBCARES@north-slope.org or by calling 907-852-0204

Looking for something to read? Here are a few books about North Slope history and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Etok: A Story of Eskimo Power by Hugh Gallagher
Then Fight For It!: The Largest Peaceful Redistribution of Wealth in the History of Mankind and the Creation of the North Slope Borough by Fred Paul
Uqaluktuat: Elder’s Conference Women’s Session 1980 translated by Dorothy Panikpak Edwardsen
Fifty Miles from Tomorrow: A Memoir of Alaska and the Real People