

North Slope Borough

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Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Slope Borough Assembly Members
FROM: Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor
DATE: February 4, 2014
SUBJ: January Status Report

Good evening Assembly Members and listening audience. Taikuu, it is a blessing and honor for us to be able to meet here in the beautiful community of Anaktuvuk Pass. Quyanaqpak to the community for the warm welcome.

The **Department of Administration and Finance** held their internal budget workshops for all borough departments and I am pleased to report that the budget process is going well. Quyanaqpak to all departments for their hard work and focus to provide the best service to our communities.

I want to thank you, Assembly members for moving forward with the Housing Construction Loan Program last month. We have had many inquires about this project and my administration is preparing for the implementation of this program that will assist our residents with new home construction.

We launched our **new borough website** internally this month, and conducted training to department staff. The goal of the new website is to provide more information to our residents and to help increase and improve the level of services we provide as the home-rule government of our region. I think you will find our new website easier to navigate, and as we continue building the website, our residents and employees will have something to be very proud of. The **2013 Kivgiq DVD** is complete, and distribution begins this week with a complimentary copy provided for each of you today.

As you know one of the areas that we've been working hard on is on the issue of childcare in the region. My administration spearheaded the development of a **Regional Childcare Team** and under the guidance of this team we have made a lot of progress. We now have two PARs completed, one for the Barrow childcare and the other for Nuiqsut. With our partnership with ASNA and the northern region non-profit office for early learning named *thread*, we have completed detailed project plans, management plans, and parent handbooks. We are working

closely with the state licensing office and Ilisagvik College for the training component. Sustainability is an issue that the North Slope Childcare team so efforts are underway to develop a Childcare Fund. Our team also worked hard in partnership with ASRC's MarketPlace initiative to encourage local residents to start home childcare service as a small business. We look forward to a productive year to make childcare a reality in each of our communities.

The Christmas and New Year season brought concerns to my office about the Postal Service, and I've directed my staff to work with the Postal Service as to what we can do to take the initiative and help our residents. In addition to our Division of Government and External Affairs working on the issue, the **Department of Human Resources** connected with the Postal Service and were able to put MJP employees to work with snow and ice removal and other duties that do not require special clearance. We'll continue to work with the Postal Service to ensure that there is equity between our residents and the rest of the nation.

In other good news, I recently signed an MOA between the borough and the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) to increase the number of viable internships that we provide to our students. I want to publicly thank **Director Hepa of the Department of Wildlife Management** and her staff as well as our **HR Director Lucy Leavitt** for their support on this great initiative.

The month of January also brought more snowstorms, so the **Department of Public Works** has been swamped with snow removal in all our communities. We thank each and every resident for their patience during this time while the department does all that it can to provide services.

Director of the Capital Improvements Program Management (CIPM) Harold Snowball has been very busy aligning the department to meet the needs of the borough and its residents. Director Snowball and I traveled to Kaktovik with School District officials to meet with local residents on the placement of the new high school gym. I also pledged to the community that the Borough would work to demolish and clean up the old power plant site.

The **Department of Planning and Community Services** continues to prepare the Capital Improvements Program ordinance and I have directed my staff focus projects that maximize benefits to all of our communities and residents. The Department is actively seeking to move land selections forward, and we are pleased to be making progress to that end. The department is also making good progress in the Comprehensive Plan. The Inupiat Heritage Center unveiled a new exhibit this week and completed the Kivgiq DVD that I spoke of earlier.

The **Department of Health and Social Services** is planning a regional health summit that will focus on making healthy choices. Director Doreen Leavitt is partnered with Healthy Communities advisor Dorothy Edwardson to engage our young people, community members and healthcare practitioners in a direction that will set healthy standards of living for our youth and community members. The Summit is scheduled for April 14-16 to be held tentatively at Barrow High School.

The **Fire Department** is working closely with regional and local partnerships to increase capacity as well as improving medevac services and cooperative efforts to keep our residents safe and have access to emergency services. These efforts recently paid large dividends when our local emergency responders in Nuiqsut were aided by a rescue crew from ConocoPhillips' Alpine facility who medevaced a Nuiqsut resident to Anchorage when foul weather grounded our own

Search and Rescue planes and off-slope-based medevac crews. I would like to give a heart-felt thank you to our local first responders as well as to ConocoPhillips for working together to save lives.

The Fire Department is still reaching out for volunteers and Gwen Edward, Captain/Prevention Officer is reactivating the Explorer program to encourage our youth to join this service.

The **Police Department** is fully engaged to monitor ice road traffic this year, and plans are underway to hold a public meeting to help address concerns of alcohol and drug traffic through our ice roads. NSB Departments are working together to make this a productive gathering.

The **Department of Search and Rescue** is responding to a letter from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regarding eight recommendations that were issued to prior administration, and I commend the department for having taken the initiative to comply with these recommendations early on. We will be preparing a formal response to the NTSB.

Quyanaqpak to the residents of Anaktuvuk Pass for your warm welcome to your beautiful community, and it is an honor to be here with you today.