

North Slope Borough

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Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: North Slope Borough Assembly
FROM: Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor *Charlotte Brower*
DATE: November 5, 2013
SUBJ: Status Report

Good evening Assembly Members and listening audience. My administration continues to work tirelessly to maintain a high level of support and service to our residents. We have repositioned ourselves to set the bar even higher as we strive to provide the best possible service to our communities. I have appointed Harold Snowball as the Director of the Capital Improvements Management Program, with Chris Dunbar as Assistant. Christine Davis is now Deputy Director of Human Resources to carry out my administration's goals in Training and Career Development. Annie Tiklook of Kaktovik joined us as an additional Advisor for Healthy Communities. Alma Ukpicksoun joined my team as Advisor for Government and External Affairs and as our lead for State Affairs. Please join me in welcoming and congratulating my new appointees.

On October 24th we closed on the 2013A G.O. Bond Issue at our Anchorage office. Bond proceeds received by NSB were \$103,296,000 (one hundred three million, two hundred ninety six thousand) with a total interest cost of 1.59% over the life of the issuance. Quyanaqpak to the Department of Administration and Finance for their hard work during this busy time of year.

The Alaska Supreme Court Live deliberated on a case involving climate change and protection of cultural resources at the Barrow High School, and I was invited to participate as an observer. It was wonderful to see so many students and community members engaged and motivated to be involved with cases that directly affect our way of life.

In mid-October, Nuiqsut fishermen reported harvesting *anaaqliq* (broad whitefish) with mold or fungus that they have not seen before. Samples of affected fish were sent to the **Department of Wildlife Management** for analysis. Staff responded by examining fish received from Nuiqsut fishermen and sent Billy Adams and Todd Sformo to collect affected fish & water samples, and to meet with the community about this concern.

The analysis of the fish mold turned out to be a mold that occurs in freshwater bodies across the globe from Alaska to Antarctica. It is known to 'flare up' in response to injury to individual fish and/or environmental stress such as high water temperatures and decrease in river flow. The water analyses by NSB and Alaska Biological Research, or ABR, were taken from two separate samples from the same location 24 hours apart, indicate that natural elements were at normal levels. Further water analyses are in underway by ABR. Only Aanaakliq (broad whitefish) appear to be the principle fish species affected. We do not have evidence of mold on *qaaktaq* (arctic cisco) to date.

According to a State of Alaska Fish Pathology Laboratory publication, there is no risk to human health. The Department of Wildlife Management encourages fishermen to maintain their traditional and customary practices when dealing with unusual fish.

The North Slope Borough **Human Resources Department** hosted a mandatory training session with supervisors on Communications, Conflict Resolution, and Diversity in response to the evaluations following the required Sexual Harassment training. Employees responded very positively to this training and participants came away with new skills to improve the workplace.

The NSB Health Department Health Board, ASNA Board and SSMH Governing Body held their annual joint meeting workshops to develop goals and objectives among boards for the year. The top three health concerns to be addressed by all three boards are homelessness, elder care and funding for continued and additional health programs across the North Slope. Plans are underway between ASNA and the NSB Health Department to strategically plan elder care for the North Slope. I am very proud our **Department of Health & Social Services** and commend the hard working staff to improve health care services on the North Slope.

The **Department of Planning & Community Services** is working hard to update the Comprehensive Plan and will begin a new cycle of Capital Improvements Program meetings with North Slope Communities. The public was inspired by a series of televised broadcasts through 360 North and GCI that showcased historic films by the Inupiat Heritage Center staff.

In the area of Public Safety, the **Police Department** continues its work to block the illegal trafficking of alcohol and drugs into our communities. This leads to a concrete decrease in the number of crimes, injuries and domestic violence. The **Fire Department** celebrated Fire Prevention Month by making presentations to schools. These proactive efforts help our children to have skills that can prove to be life-saving as we approach the cold winter months.

The Department of Public Works re-opened Laura Madison Road and Ahkovak this past week, and those of us in Barrow are very happy for this. The Department continues to address above and below ground leakage, and collaborative efforts between BUECI, Risk, Public Works, Health Department and Mayor's Office assured a smooth process for possible contamination of water in Barrow earlier this month. The Department is now fully positioned to proactively respond to power outages with additional staff. The efforts of this department to respond to many years of unmet infrastructure needs is commendable.

This concludes my summary report for the month of October. Have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving season!