

# AFN Now Corporation—

## *Directors Increased from 3 to 12*

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Staff Writer

Members of the board of directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., meeting last week in Anchorage, increased the size of their board from three to twelve members,

to allow for board representation from each of the 12 regions defined in the Alaska Natives Claims Settlement Act, and established policy to prevent AFN officers and committees from obligating funds without permission of the 12-member board.

"This is insurance," said Tim Wallis, president of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, "so that AFN cannot commit any of the regions . . . The regions are the stockholders."

During four days of meetings, Alaska natives also met with Harrison Loesch, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Interior, and reviewed rules and regulations written to provide a system for carrying out the enrollment of all Alaska natives who qualify for benefits under the natives claims act.

Loesch advised native leaders to expedite enrollment of natives and the formation of regional and village corporations so that Alaskans can receive the benefits of the natives claims act.

Loesch, said Harry Carter, executive director of AFN, "cleared up several questions as

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# AFN Formulates into Corporation...

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far as interpretation" of the enrollment procedures is concerned.

"We have no quarrel with the procedures," Carter said, but the "guidelines for individual enrollment are questionable... There is general verbal agreement that these guidelines are not to be strictly followed," he explained, "but we need to rewrite them to allow an individual to register back to what he considers to be his home."

Carter said that the new 12-man AFN board of directors has not yet defined the "goals and objectives" of the central organization as to its responsibilities in the post-settlement era. "Nor is the relationship of the central organization to the regions" defined yet, he said.

His responsibilities are still for "in-house" administration, he said, but, "by strict interpretation of the bylaws adopted" last week in Anchorage, Carter would now be responsible directly to AFN President Don Wright, rather than to the board of directors of AFN.

Wright's job, AFN president, said Carter, is the "chief administrative officer for AFN, Inc.," and "sits as the presiding officer of the board."

But, Carter added, staff relationships "are not fully clarified yet."

Carter said that the 12 regions are represented on the board of directors by the following people:

- Copper River—Bob Marshall;
- Association of Village Council Presidents (Bethel)—Philip Guy;
- Arctic Slope—Joe Upicksoun;
- Bristol Bay—Nels Anderson;
- Chugach—Cecil Barnes;
- Cook Inlet—George Miller;
- Kodiak—Hank Eaton;
- Northwest—Willie Hensley;
- Aleut League—Flore Lekanof or Mike Swetsoff (This needs to be resolved by this region, Carter said, because Lekanof refused to step down from his position to allow Swetsoff on the board);
- Bering Strait—Al Nakak;
- Southeastern—John Borbridge;
- Tanana Chiefs—Larry Peterson.

Reorganization of the board of directors came about, Carter said, when the three original incorporators of AFN, Inc.—Willie Hensley, Roy Ewan and Flore Lekanof—voted to increase the size of the board from three to twelve members.

Then, Carter said, Ewan stepped down to allow Marshall to represent his region. But Lekanof, Carter said, refused to step down from the board to allow for the election of Swetsoff from his region.

The board was scheduled to meet on March 2 in Anchorage, but, said Carter, because of "serious time restraints," Wright has written letters to the board members asking them if they could meet today—or at a very early date—to consider such matters as

- Organization of regional corporations and selection of land within time specified in the native claims act;

- Problems in the current housing program which must be resolved if construction is to continue through this building season;

- Problems involved in interim funding. "We need the simplest legislation necessary to get us into business," Carter said. Attorneys have drafted proposed legislation to make the state corporation laws compatible with the recently passed federal law. This, he said, would be ready for review by Alaska natives today.

- Contracts for enrollment... "We have to get our heads to-

gether to standardize the approach" for negotiating contracts with each region, Carter said.

- Land Use Planning Commission. One native is to be named to this commission by the Governor, Carter said, but

"we have not yet considered who might best serve the native people of Alaska..."

- Enrollment—some guidelines need to be rewritten to allow an individual to register back to what he considers to be his home, Carter said.