

Funding sought to continue Commission's work

by Bill Hess
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There are many papers and documents spread across Dalee Sambo's desk, and most of them have something to do with fundraising. Sambo flips through one which is filled with names such as the Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the World Council of Churches.

Sambo had never intended to become a fundraiser, but as the director of ICC's Alaska office, the task of raising the bulk of the \$2.7 million needed to fund the Alaska Native Review Commission two-year study of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement act has fallen on her.

With three weeks of overview hearings which brought participants from far-flung locations on both hemispheres of the world, the commission is nearly out of money. If it is to continue on and hold the hoped for 35 hearings in villages across Alaska, Sambo's fundraising work is critical.

Don Gambell, the spokesperson for the ANRC, says that the funding situation for the commission is serious. The recent overview hearings and the village meetings held in Emmonak and Tununak added to the cost of setting the commission up, have used most of the funds gathered by the organization.

Yet Gambell, Sambo and Thomas Berger, the Canadian judge who was selected by the ICC to chair the commission, express optimism the funds necessary to complete will be found.

"Everybody knows this commission isn't rich," Berger said shortly after the overview hearings ended. "We've managed so far, I'm sure we will manage. I'm sure we'll complete our work. We're learning to live on a pretty tight budget."

Shortly after the ICC selected Berger to head the Commission, the North Slope Borough contributed \$500,000 to the organization of eskimo people living in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland.

The ICC in turn set the money aside for the commission. They had hoped to have the bulk of the rest of the more than \$2 million needed to finish the job by this spring.

According to Gambell and Sambo, the overview hearings cost approximately \$155,000. Approximately \$35,000 of that total came out of what was left of the original contribution of the North Slope Borough. The Humanities Forum of the North Slope Borough made a direct contribution of \$30,000.

An additional \$50,000 was taken from the original \$500,000 and given back to the North Slope Borough. The Borough in turn channeled that money into the Humanities Forum. After \$5,000 was taken out for administrative costs, the National Endowment to the Humanities added matching funds of \$45,000, bringing the total to \$90,000 which went back to the Commission for the

overview hearings.

Not counting the costs of staff, the final bill for the village hearings in Emmonak and Tununak is expected to be at \$5,000 to \$7,500 each.

An additional grant of \$10,000 has been awarded to the ICC for the commission's use by the Ann Roberts Foundation out of New York. Although these funds have not yet arrived, Sambo says they are hoping to channel them through the Humanities Forum to qualify for matching funds. If they are successful, this would bring the total to \$18,000, once administrative costs were removed.

Add this to the money still left in the bank from the initial \$500,000, say Sambo and Gambell, and the commission has approximately \$50,000 left.

Sambo has been working hard to come up with additional monies, and has other sources considering grant proposals. She is virtually certain some will come through, and she has high hopes for others.

One of these is a proposal for \$100,000 from the Human

Rights and Government of the Ford Foundation. There are other proposals ranging from small amounts of a few thousand dollars up to as much as \$800,000 from different private and public organizations as diverse as the Rockefeller Foundation, the World Council of Churches, and the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Indian Services.

Many of these proposals have been met with a high degree of interest, says Sambo, leaving her optimistic that grants will come through.

There have also been disappointments, such as the request for \$150,000 which was turned down by the Program for Administration of Native Americans, which operates under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Sambo says that even this had its positive side. "They told us to keep our eyes open for money in the Department of the Interior," she explains. "If we get that, then they could give us matching funds."

Sambo and Berger have made

two fundraising trips to New York, one last December, and one in February. When the ICC set up the commission, the agreement with Berger was that the ICC would provide funding for the commission, which would operate completely independent.

"I talk money, Berger talks process," Sambo says, explaining that when they meet with the people in the different foundations and organizations, she deals with everything that has to do with finances. Berger in turn explains the commission, and tells how he expects to conduct the hearings in the villages, and write his report.

All money that comes in will go to the ICC, which then uses it to fund the commission.

At one point, the ICC approached seven Native regional corporations, including the four ICC member regions: Arctic Slope, NANA, Bering Straits, and Calista, along with Bristol Bay, Kniag, and the Aleut Corporation with a request for \$100,000 from each.

This proved to be more

than the corporations, many of which are working under tight budgets themselves, could manage. Sambo says that they have still received some support from some of the regions. The Bristol Bay Native Association, which owns the Anchorage Westward Hilton Hotel, has given them reduced rates for their guests, and has indicated a willingness to talk about a cash contribution in 1985.

There also have been indications that some in-region support may be possible during village hearings, Sambo says. "Now that we have had some successful hearings, I believe it will be easier to get more help," she adds.

As she talks, Sambo flips through a list of 44 more foundations and organizations which she has not yet contacted, but plans to very soon.

"This has really been a learning process for me," she muses, "as well as for anybody who I go to to pick their brains. We're developing new strategies as we go along. We're going to get this job done!"