

# Bylaw Changes Unprecedented

In an unprecedented action, the AFN Board of Directors adopted bylaw changes at its Dec. 11 meeting which would allow vacancies on the AFN Board of Directors that have been created by the withdrawal of former members to be filled by new regional organizations.

Currently, the AFN Board of Directors consists of three institutional boards: the Land Claims Board, which provides for representation from the 13 regional corporations; the Human Resources Board, which allows for representation from the 12 regional non-profit associations; and the Statewide Village Board, which represents the villages in each of Alaska's 12 ANCSA regions.

Under the new bylaw changes, if a regional corporation or a regional non-profit association indicates that it is

no longer interested in actively participating in AFN, the Board could then initiate a process to declare the organization's seat vacant. Once a vacancy on the board is declared, the bylaws provide guidelines for the seating of a new member organization.

While the Board approved the bylaw changes, Co-chairman Mary Jane Fate says that the action should not be taken as a signal that AFN is no longer interested in having the Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Association of Village Council Presidents rejoin the organization.

The two organizations withdrew their membership in AFN following the 1987 Convention, leaving the villages in their regions without representation on the Human Resources Board. The Human

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## *Bylaw Changes*

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Resources Board mainly addresses social and health issues.

"We have let AVCP and TCC know on several occasions that we want them to rejoin AFN," Fate said.

"They know they are welcome into the organization."

As outlined in the new bylaws, President Janie Leask sent formal letters of inquiry to TCC and AVCP on January 5 to determine their official membership status. Both organizations have ten working days to respond. The AFN Board of Directors will consider their responses at its Feb. 8 meeting in Juneau.

According to Fate, the bylaw changes were made by the board in response to several requests from villages in the AVCP and TCC regions that feel they are not being adequately represented in AFN. The villages would like to form alternative regional organizations to participate on the Human Resources Board.

"The interior people want to participate in a statewide network and should have the opportunity to do so," Fate said. "With these bylaw changes, a door is open for those villages to gain this representation and contribute to the statewide efforts."

## *AFN Appointment*

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Notti, of Anchorage, as its second recommendation. On Dec. 12, these recommendations were communicated to Assistant Secretary Swimmer by phone and letter. No formal selection has yet been made by the Interior Department. Christmas holidays and the transition of administrations in Washington have delayed consideration of the position. AFN is now urging that the decision be made as quickly as possible in order that the Bureau of Indian Affairs may proceed with critical issues of Native services and tribal rights.