

# Calista Corp. to move closer to people

by Geoff Kennedy  
for the Tundra Times

BETHEL — The Calista Corp. is moving closer to the people back home.

At the Native regional corporation's annual meeting in Kasigluk earlier this month, Calista President Johnny Hawk announced plans to open a satellite office in Bethel and to coordinate Calista's annual meeting with its nonprofit arm, the Association of Village Council Presidents.

Calista hasn't decided when or where it will open its Bethel office, but will operate a small office staffed by two or three people, said George Gardner, general manager of Village Management Services, a Calista subsidiary.

"It's just a very good business decision to have at least an office of some kind in the region," Gardner said. "We are missing out on many opportunities to take advantage of being in the region developing business opportunities to employ Calista shareholders on an ongoing basis.

"More employment in the region is, of course, an important goal."

The president of the AVCP, Myron Naneng, welcomed the decision.

"It's a long time coming," Naneng said. "It seems like that is an issue that has come up at every convention."

"We need to work more closely together," he said. "We'll do everything we can to make their relocation to Bethel easy."

The AVCP may be able to rent some office space to Calista, Naneng said.

He also praised Calista's decision to hold next year's annual meeting in Quinhagak, either immediately before or immediately after the AVCP annual meeting.

At the Oct. 15 Calista meeting, incumbents Margaret Phillips of Chuathbaluk, John P. Angaiak of Bethel and Johnny Hawk won reelection to the Board of Directors.

Arthur S. Heckman of Pilot Station won the seat vacated by Matthew Nicolai, who did not run for reelection.

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*—Myron Naneng*

Despite profits of \$180,000 last year and \$1.5 million for the first eight months of this year, Calista will not declare a dividend for 1990.

Calista has lost too much money in previous years, Gardner said. Calista lost \$20.6 million in 1987 and \$11.3 million in 1988.

While the recent turnaround has encouraged Calista officials, the slight

profits don't justify a "meaningful" dividend to shareholders, Gardner said.

"It might be a few years before Calista is able to do that," he said. "Certainly, if a business gives all its properties to its shareholders, that eliminates the possibility of expanding and developing greater profit and profitability."