

AFN To Reorganize

The Alaska Federation of Natives Human Resources Committee is on the verge of receiving a long-awaited face lift.

Early this summer, the AFN Board of Directors approved the creation by the committee of a non-profit corporation, separate from AFN, to run AFN's social service programs. The committee plans to meet Sept. 6 to select a president for the company and hopes to complete organization by the end of September, according to sources close to the committee and the AFN Board.

The reorganization effort began late last year when the committee confronted the federation Directors with the complaint that AFN, Inc. spent too much time working on land claims problems and too little time advocating for Native people on social issues such as bush justice, alcoholism or unemployment. AFN policies and operations are directed solely by the 12 Native regional profit cor-

porations created by the land claims act.

The Human Resources Committee, now led by Cliff Black, director of the North Pacific Rim Native Corporation, is drafting a constitution and by-laws to govern the company.

The idea of forming a new Native corporation gained popularity after other AFN reorganization plans were rejected. The first of these proposed merging the AFN Board of Directors with the Human Resources Committee; the second proposal called for the committee to merge with the Alaska Native Foundation.

The formation of a separate corporation to manage social service programs solves a dilemma that in recent years has been gnawing at Native leaders: the dilemma is that AFN has been put in the awkward position of criticizing the policies of government agencies with whom it had contracts to de-

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liver services to Native clients. Under the upcoming arrangement, AFN will apparently remain the statewide Native advocacy organization on land claims and social services. Since it will not be dependent on government agencies for contracts, AFN need not be so concerned about alienating state and federal officials who are sometimes sensitive about criticism that they are not serving the needs of Native people.

It is not yet clear whether the arrangement between AFN and the new non-profit corporation will be formalized by a written document or remain in the form of an unwritten understanding.