

Bristol Bay Native Corp. Makes Plans At Meet

By MARILYN RICHARDS

The Bristol Bay Native Corporation may soon be following in the footsteps of the NANA regional corporation.

In May, 11 village corporations in the NANA region, excepting Kotzebue which is the largest, had merged with the parent corporation NANA.

The passage of the Omnibus Bill and an Alaska Native Foundation study which concluded many village corporations may go bankrupt for population, geographical and economic reasons enabled NANA to take action.

The stockholders of BBNC met for their third annual meeting in Dillingham Sept. 25. They had voted to do a study on the possibility of a merger. A study for geographical representation on their board of directors was also approved.

The Southwest Alaskan-based Native corporation purchased Peter Pan Seafoods, Inc. last year. A majority of the region's stockholders depend upon commercial fishing. This spring, a group calling itself the Concerned Stockholders' Committee was organized to protest the acquisition of Peter Pan and to demand information concerning the financial condition of the seafood company at the time of purchase.

The group currently has a suit against BBNC, which in turn has a counter suit. Officials of either

organization were unavailable for comment.

The issue of Peter Pan was

raised again at the meeting by few stockholders. However little

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emotion and interest was displayed compared to last spring, and several persons called for other business. Jay Gage, president of Peter Pan, announced an anticipated profit of \$3 million by March of 1977. He added there were plans for expansion of the company through more acquisition or building of new facilities.

Bill Bishop, BBNC's manager of subsurface resources, announced that the first exploratory oil well began operations two weeks ago in Ivanoff Bay.

Anchorage's historic hotel, the Westward, is also being purchased for a reportedly \$20 million from Western International by BBNC. The sale has not yet been finalized, but the corporation's general manager Bob Bacon said negotiations are still under way with the Hilton corporation for management of the hotel. The acquisition of the Westward will be one of the largest yet made by a regional Native corporation.

A "first class hotel" and resort in the Tikchik Lakes area will also probably be developed within the next few years.

President of the corporation is Harold Samuelson. Board members include Boris Kosbruk, Hjalmer Olson, Wilbur Bavilla, Donald Nielsen, William Nelson, Ronald Aaberg and Herman Schroeder, Sr. Re-elected were Robert J. Clark, Freeman Roberts and Frank Woods Jr. Replacing Nels Franklin is Paul Matsuno.

Election judges were Alaska Federation of Natives President Sam Kito, United Bank of Alaska President Arnold Geitz and Ron Trevithick of Touche Ross and Company.

In closing remarks to the stockholders, Kito called AFN the "advocate voice of the State of Alaska which represents the people of Alaska." He mentioned the re-joining of the Aleut and Arctic Slope corporations to AFN and added "past differences have to take a secondary position to what is now happening to the state."

Kito stressed "what is to happen to the future of the Alaska Native is predicated on unity."

Roger Lang, past AFN president, was parliamentarian of the meeting. Lang said it stopped raining in Dillingham when he arrived and then quipped, "God doesn't let it rain on me and John Borbridge." The rain resumed after Lang's departure.

Door prizes were awarded at the meeting. Winning \$100 savings bonds were Katie Nielson, Robert Heyano and Norman Albert. Blanche Murphy won two. A \$50 bond went to Dennis Albert. Floyd Murphy, Blanche's husband, won a \$25 bond.

Dorothy Larsen, BBNC stockholder relations, said, "This was the best meeting we've ever had."