

City Alcoholism Program Scrutinized

With a possible total of \$452,269 federal, state and local funds available for the Fairbanks alcoholism program, head of Health and Social Services Glen Wilcox appeared before the city council in council chambers Monday morning to request an additional \$282,164.

Revenues come from three state, two federal and one city source. State agencies are the Office of Alcoholism, the Division of Corrections (state jail) and the revenue sharing program which funnels down from the state to the city. Federal agencies are the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Public Health Service. And general revenues come from the city.

Wilcox said that if all the

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money his department is asking for to cover nine months were granted, it would break down this way: city, \$31,795; revenue sharing, \$126,000; BIA, \$163,089; health service, \$9,000; Division of Corrections, \$27,000 and the state alcoholism office, \$95,385.

But since proposed needs for various projects come to \$734,433, this leaves the program with the \$282,164 deficit already mentioned. These include money for contracts for referral/rehabilitation — detoxification, Halfway House, the supportive living program and outpatient counseling.

Questioned by council members on the value of the program, Wilcox said, "We do pretty well know how to rehabilitate people, but we don't exactly why it works."

He also said those being helped by the programs showed a great reaction to "people caring about them. It's a tremendous motivation to want to help."

The laws, he emphasized, are set up to take care of both ordinary intoxicification and true alcoholism. Real alcoholics undergo much more extensive treatment than someone who has just had too much to drink

and needs a "sleeping-off" place, he said.

One major difference between the program here as opposed to those outside is the high incidence of Natives involved — 87½ per cent against 12½ per cent Caucasians. Because of this, and because of the different economic classes, it is exceedingly important to keep the present program going at full strength, he added.

He concluded by saying that Fairbanks has the most unified alcoholism program in the state and has been chosen as a model city for others to use as an example.