

SLOPE BOROUGH MEET DEC. 2

Lengthy Delay of Meet Almost Cause Law Suit

Borough hearings scheduled for December 2 at Barrow may last two or more days, according to representatives of the Arctic Slope Native Association, which has petitioned the State to create a first class borough north of the Brooks Range.

Beginning on the evening of December 2, ASNA and other groups will introduce evidence and testimony for and against this form of home rule for the people of the slope.

Local Affairs Agency head Byron Mallott will chair the hearings, which will be held almost a year after the Arctic Slope's original petition to form a first class borough. According to prominent sources, scheduling of the hearings barely avoided legal action by the Arctic Slope to end what they considered unreasonable delays.

According to a report commissioned by the Local Affairs Agency and prepared by the Anchorage accounting firm of Peet, Marwick, Mitchell and Co., revenues from a borough encompassing most of the area north of parallel 68 degree north could pay for basic city services with

a property tax mill rate of two to four mills.

This is approximately one tenth the mill rate used in most stateside cities.

The accountants' estimate assumes the North Slope Borough would tax oil interests in the same manner the Kenai borough does—considering pipeline and non operative drilling sites as improved property subject to taxation.

Building of the trans Alaska pipeline and operation of the Prudhoe Bay oil fields would considerably increase borough revenues.

Despite considerable local pressure, the city of Barrow, with a population of over 2,000 still has no high school. All of the communities in the proposed Slope borough—Kaktovik, Anaktuvik Pass, Wainwright, Point

Borough...

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Hope, Point Lay, etc., are lacking sewage and water facilities.

Sewage disposal has been a major problem in Barrow, along with a shortage of living space due to federal installations on all sides.

The Local Affairs Agency projection assumes construction of sewage and water facilities in these areas in its figures. Cost of these facilities at Barrow, Kaktovik, Wainwright, Point Hope and Anaktuvuk Pass would be in the range of \$15 or \$35 million dollars according to figures provided by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

Another aspect the ASNA considers crucial to self government is the land use planning capacity home rule would enable them to develop.

Subsistence hunting, for example, could be furthered by zoning certain areas for "no use"—closing them to both industry and residential use and giving game animals "room to live."

Although no concerted opposition has emerged to the North Slope Borough proposal there have been rumors of developing opposition. A recent report prepared for the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, unfavorable to the idea of a home rule borough on the north slope, was recently forwarded to State Attorney General John Havelock.

The hearings in Barrow will be the major focus of local and Alaskan input into decisions by the Local Affairs Agency and the Rural Boundary Commission as to whether to approve the Borough proposal.

The ASNA has designated home rule as one of their highest priority objectives, an objective which rates considerable attention despite focus on the land claims battle in Washington and on their pending suit claiming prior aboriginal title to the Prudhoe Bay oil fields.