Partners for Progress with Alaska's Communities

RurAL-CAP ACTION REPORTS

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CAP SPONSORS 15 AT MAMMAL HEARINGS

Upper Yukon Development Corporation Holds Meeting

By VINCE SLY

The Upper Yukon Development Corporation held its quarterly meeting on May 2, 3, 4, 1972 here in Fort Yukon.

Eight of the ten villages were in attendance as were guest speakers Tim Wallis of Tanana Chiefs Conference, Roger Huntington of Local Affairs Agency, William Pfisterer of the Fort Yukon Teacher Corps project, Andre Schalk of the State Fire Marshall's Office and Larry Irving of the Rural Development Agency.

Also present were students from the villages who were permitted time off from school to attend the meeting and witness how priorities are worked on and decisions are made that will affect their villages.

Jonathon Solomon, as Chairman, presided over the three day gathering as villages gave reports on conditions and upcoming projects in their areas and various state agencies gave descriptions and information on their services.

Roger Huntington described the process for villages to incorporate as 4th Class Cities and outlined advantages, such as Revenue Sharing, that can be derived from such status.

This summer's Neighborhood Youth Corps programs and the availability of funding for village projects was discussed by Larry Irving of the Rural Development Agency office in Fairbanks.

Educational projects were of great concern as two programs were discussed. The Teacher Corps program which emphasizes equiping people to teach in bush Alaska, was explained by Fort Yukon team leader Bill Pfisterer.

Also, the bilingual education program, scheduled for Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon this fall was discussed by Dick Mueller of the Wycliff Bible Society, who has been very instrumental in bringing this program to the area.

Tim Wallis, Vice President of the Tanana Chiefs Conference discussed the Land Claims Act and other areas, such as education and health services that Tanana Chiefs is involved with now that the regional corporations are to be formed.

Deputy Director Resigns Post

Nels A. Anderson, Jr., Deputy Director for RurAL CAP has resigned from RurAL CAP effective April 30, 1972. Mr. Anderson was employed by RurAL CAP on September 1, 1970 as a program specialist and later promoted to deputy director on March 10, 1971.

His future plans are to return to his hometown, Dillingham, with his family to assume the position of executive director of the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA).

Mr. Anderson said, "My work with RurAL CAP has enabled me to develop skills which have qualified me for the position with BBNA. Without the experience gained with RurAL CAP I am sure that I would not have been considered for the job. I feel that RurAL CAP is one of the finest agencies that exists in Alaska today

"It can only continue to achieve greater heights in assisting the people in rural Alaska."

He also commented, "I will remain with the Bristol Bay region as long as it takes to organize the region and villages under the provisions of the Alaska Native Land Claims Act. It is difficult to say at this time if I will remain there for many years, although I intend to keep the Dillingham/Bristol Bay region as my permanent address."

John Shively, Executive Director commented that RurAL CAP will feel the loss by Anderson's resignation as he has been a great asset to the agency in its work to alleviate poverty in the State of Alaska. However, his work will not cease as he goes back to assist his people in Bristol Bay.

Gaining Momentum-

Regional Hi-School Concept Grows

The movement to have regional high schools has been gaining momentum, with two important organizations recently passing resolutions requesting that plans be developed for education of students within the state.

The RurAL CAP Board of Directors have expressed great interest in having high schools built in rural areas and several members reported at the last board meeting that the bodies they represent had passed resolutions supporting this concept.

Eddie Hoffman, who is chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association of Village Council Presidents Community Action Program said they passed a number of resolutions at a recent three-day meeting in Bethel.

One of the most important, he commented, was that forced airplaning of students to other parts of the state and country come to an end.

State and federal government agencies were requested to develop plans immediately for education of students within the AVCP CAP region, preferably in the home village.

Mrs. Sue Linford, representative of the Alaska Congress of Parents and Teachers to the RurAL CAP Board, said that during their April meeting a motion was passed that their Board of Managers go on record as favoring the concept of – and requesting the implementation of – local area high schools for the State of Alaska.

This information was to be distributed to the State Legislature, State Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education, she stated.

The Alaska Congress of Parents & Teachers has a membership of over 10,000 and the AVCP CAP represents 55 villages in southwestern Alaska with a population of approximately 14-15,000 people.

RurAL CAP Brings 8 From Nome-Bering Area 7 from Kotzebue Area

In opposition to the way in which the current sea mammal legislation is worded, Rural Alaska Community Action Program has sponsored seven people from the Kotzebue area and eight from the Nome-Bering Straits region to testify at the hearings which were conducted in Nome and Bethel on May 11 and 12.

The agency staff prepared background material and obtained input from whalers of Point Hope, Wainwright and Barrow in an effort to ensure that the age old Inupiat cultural heritage is not destroyed.

Although populated centers such as Kotzebue and Nome are becoming more wage-earning oriented, many of the outlying villages in the Bering Sea, Kotzebue Sound and Arctic Sea regions rely heavily on a relatively small cash economy that is derived from arts and craft items.

Most Eskimos still make their own parkas and mukluks, the soles of which are made of oogruk, the heavy hide of the whale that is admirably suited to this use. Mukluks are the winter footgear of most northern Alaskans.

Also testifying at the hearings was Elmer Armstrong, Sr., from Kotzebue, President of the State RurAL CAP Board of Directors and president of the Kikiktugruk Area Community Development Corporation.

RurAL CAP was represented by John Shively, Executive Director, who was to testify at the Bethel hearing. He listed three major areas of concern in the statement which was to be presented at the hearing.

The first would be legislation placing a moratorium on sea mammals, the second is elimination of arts and crafts industry, and the third is the moratorium on the killing of bowhead whales under the endangered species act.

With regard to the moratorium on sea mammals, Shively said that it was felt that management of the resources would be favored because almost all species were increasing in number, with the possible exception of the polar bear.

The director stated that the agency is in total support of an amendment that would protect the Alaska Natives' right to hunt sea mammals for use in traditional arts and crafts industries.

The major animal involved here is the walrus, he commented, and their number has been increasing in Alaska. He felt that prohibiting the sale of arts and craft items in interstate commerce was not desirable because generally, items sold out of state brought higher prices, and elimination of this market would mean they would have to kill more animals to make the same income.

Concern that the bowhead whale may be placed on the endangered species list was voiced and Shively mentioned that there is no actual count as to their number.

It was suggested that any sea mammal bill should provide a section for the counting of these whales in a combined effort of Alaska Natives and wildlife management specialists, and also a section that would allow for research to provide for more effective hunting techniques to reduce the loss which may take place when whales are hit but not captured.

"In closing," he said, "I would like to stress very strongly that hunting of sea mammals is more than just a means of gathering food, although this in itself would be reason enough to allow continued subsistence hunting of sea mammals by Alaska Natives.

"The animals, particularly the bowhead whale, have a great cultural significance to the Natives of this state. Elimination of hunting of sea mammals would be a major step toward destroying the culture of the Alaska Native . . . . . The Alaska Native traditional hunting rights must be protected."

Nixon Designates This Week Small Business Week

President Richard M. Nixon has designated the week of May 14 - 20 as Small Business Week.

In his proclamation President Nixon said, "It is no curious accident that from earliest times, the expansion of America's frontier was closely paralleled by the robust growth of our Nation's free enterprise system. America's small business community is one of the most extraordinary economic forces in the history of mankind.

"There are now more than 8 million small businesses in this country. An unprecedented 287,000 new companies were incorporated just last year. 19 out of every 20 firms are considered small business, and they provide more than 35 million jobs and contribute more than 370 billion dollars to the gross national product."

The 5th Annual Subcontractors Conference and Small Business Awards Luncheon was held Tuesday, May 16, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington. Various speakers from Government agencies, private and enterprise and Capitol Hill addressed the conference.

On May 18 through 19, members of SBA's National Advisory Council and other prominent small businessmen from across the nation will meet for a two day conference in the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

The workshop-style meeting will be conducted by Mrs. Mary Lou Grier, Boerne, Texas, Chairman of the Council. During the conference, James E. Cline, a Marysville, Missouri banker, will be installed as new chairman of Council.

CATS AND KITTENS

Hundreds of unwanted and homeless cats and kittens are killed in Fairbanks every month. Don't be guilty of contributing to their pathetic picture. If you are concerned or would like to adopt a lovely neutered or spayed cat, call your local Pet Pride representative for information. Phone 456-7198.

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