

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

February 19, 2002

9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH BOARD

TAPES

02-7, SIDE A

CALL TO ORDER

Representative Carl Morgan, Co-Chair, reconvened the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee to order at 9:30 a.m. [Minutes pertaining to the portion of the meeting relating to legislation can be found in the 8:08 a.m. minutes of the same date.]

PRESENT

Committee members present were Representatives Meyer, Murkowski, Guess, and Kerttula.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

CYNTHIA NAVARRETTE, President/CEO Of The Alaska Native Health Board, offered an overview the ANHB's 2002 legislative priorities. She explained that the ANHB is a statewide Native health advocacy organization with membership including all 638 Compact members in the State of Alaska. She announced that she is present to discuss rural sanitation, runway lights in rural Alaska, and other concerns such as power cost equalization, borough formation, municipal taxes and other matters placing restrictions and additional costs to communities already dealing with less than desired economies of scale.

LINCOLN BEAN, SR., Treasurer, Alaska Native Health Board, spoke to rural sanitation issues. Mr. Bean stated his support for sewer and water funding, and stated his concerns over Little Davis-Bacon projects "coming at" rural areas. He cited several instances of not having water in Kake. He requested the committee's support for funding of water and sewer facilities. He concluded by thanking the committee for the work it is doing.

There was dialogue among committee members and Mr. Bean on the regions of the state where "honey buckets" are in use.

ANDY JIMMY, Member, Alaska Native Health Board, addressed the problems with landfills and runway lighting.

There was additional dialogue among committee members and Mr. Jimmy on landfill problems.

DONNA GRAFFIUS, Member, Alaska Native Health Board, spoke to landfill problems in Mentasta. She went on to discuss the communities concerns with Mentasta's water supply. Previously the public water supply was from Fish Creek, above which are two large sinkholes where the military deposited waste. This was unknown to the community and they are now trying to have core samples taken as proof. Another dumpsite was found but apartments were built on top of it. No environmental impact statements were done. She informed the committee that Mentasta has a population of 125 with 14 confirmed cases of colon cancer. She would like to establish a connection, but has a tough time working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She stated Mentasta does not drink safe water. Ms. Graffius spoke in opposition to SB 48 and SB 186.

FRITZ GEORGE, Member, Alaska Native Health Board, spoke on water and sanitation issues, as well as the need for continued funding of Power Cost Equalization. He concluded with the need for continued education of behavioral health.

RITA STEVENS, Treasurer, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; President/CEO, Kodiak Area Native Association, stated that funding for rural sanitation is essential. She related her personal experiences in traveling with the Denali Commission to six outlying native villages on Kodiak Island.

DON KASHEVAROFF, President and Chairman, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, expressed opposition to SB 184. He urged the legislature to deal with rural sanitation issues before state funds are depleted. He also urged action on runway lights. He reminded the committee that revenues from rural Alaska support Anchorage.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CO-CHAIR MORGAN announced that at the next meeting on Thursday, February 21, 2002, at 8:00 a.m., the committee would take up the Homer Annexation and HB 358.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The committee took no action.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Community and Regional Affairs Committee was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

NOTE: The meeting was recorded and handwritten log notes were taken. A copy of the tape(s) and log notes may be obtained by contacting the House Records Office at State Capitol, Room 3, Juneau, Alaska 99801 (mailing address), (907) 465-2214, and after adjournment of the second session of the Twenty-Second Alaska State Legislature this information may be obtained by contacting the Legislative Reference Library at (907) 465-3808.