

SCOMM

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DESCRIPTION: LARGE POSTER SIZED REPORT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STUDY 1979, FINAL REPORT

DILLINGHAM

September 30, 1979

16 Participants

Generally, Dillingham was described by the participants as a well knit one with fishing being the unifying ingredient. Subsistence and commercial fishing is the backbone of the outlying village economics.

GENERAL CONCERNS

More tax on fishing boats needs ^{ed} and dock facilities need to be improved. It is anticipated that there will be little direct impact from bottom fish and oil development, but there may be some indirect effects.

Lack of local match money.

Increasing cost of freight being flown in is a problem, and smaller communities are suffering as a result.

Sewer and water is needed for Alemnigik.

An extended health care facility is needed in Dillingham.

Working on development of the herring industry. Cooperative members are being sought.

CONCERNS RELATED TO PROPOSED LEGISLATION

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Frightened by fear of taxes if borough is formed.

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KOTZEBUE

November 16, 1979

22 Participants

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The Committee should not create another layer of bureaucracy to provide services. A great deal of organization exists in rural Alaska already. No boroughs should be mandated. What should be mandated is financial support as the Kotzebue area has no tax base. The people are not ready for a borough.

Providing services on an areawide basis is important but the communities could get together to do this without the formation of a borough. A regional government might not benefit the villages--they might in fact receive fewer services. In the North Slope borough the regional government has consolidated power and taken it away from the villages.

(The fifteen points made by the City Council of Kotzebue in reviewing the Local Government Study proposal were discussed. See attached statement.)

Regional services can be provided on a service specific basis. State agencies could be authorized to contract for delivery of services.

GENERAL CONCERNS

Economic

At the present time, CETA is providing many of the basic funding for municipal services. A reliable source of money is needed to operate and maintain the services which have been provided by federal money. CETA does not really pay enough to live on and the turnover of employees is great. Some of the employment criteria used by CETA is too restrictive.

Providing local match money is a problem. The NANA Strategies require a 30% local match and CZM requires a 20% match. This is a very real problem for areas where there is no economic base.

Recording System

The lack of a record system for land ownership is a problem. It would be helpful to have a system. The records have been moved from Kotzebue to Fairbanks and these land records should be regionally located so they can be used by the people. Government "red tape" cited as a problem.

Regional Planning

Economic resource planning needs to be done. Planning grants need to be available on an ongoing basis.

In the NANA Regional Strategy, the recommendation is being considered to make the overseeing group a loose organization of city mayors. These collective regional representatives would meet when necessary to make decisions related to general planning. There is time to develop their Coastal Zone Management Plan and there is a mechanism for local input in the development of the plan.

NOORVIK
November 17, 1979
32 Participants

47

GENERAL CONCERNS

Public Safety

One of the first concerns mentioned in Noorvik was that cited in the NANA Regional Strategy Report, as a priority for the need for funding for "Search and Rescue." The local organization is reimbursed for some expenses from the state; however, when they do not have formal authorization from the state troopers for an operation, they do not receive funding. The \$15,000 allocated for Search and Rescue for the current year has almost been expended. Local control over spending for these activities is desired.

The turnover in police personnel has been high. There are a number of factors which may be responsible, primarily peer pressure exerted on the individuals who are policemen. There are family resentments as certain families seem to be singled out by the police. Also, the courts do not support the public safety people. The District Attorney does not back the local police and this has a demoralizing effect.

In Noorvik it appears that the CETA pay for police is adequate as they are only needed on weekends. There is not much happening weekdays. It seems as if those who become police are only in it for the money as once they get paid, they quit. Even those who have received training seem subject to the pressures mentioned. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration seemed to be more effective in this regard than CETA, as the former paid for two individuals who could be supportive of each other and some continuity was provided in this way.

Schools

There was a concern that the role of the advisory school boards has not been clearly defined. In hiring, the Board acts on the recommendations of the REAA advisory members and there are often personality problems between the teachers and principal.

Also, the question was raised on the relationship of village school personnel with the villagers. It was felt that some isolation existed between the village and the school community and that there was not enough informal and personal interaction.

Economic

Unemployment is a major problem. Bingo is one of the few sources of revenue. The finances of the city organization are dependent on CETA monies.

Some mineral wealth exists and could be developed for job opportunities. With the introduction of a cash economy, the villagers cannot survive without money. Reindeer herding is a possibility but does not employ too many people. BLM is cutting off grazing ranges and caribou are a problem when considering reindeer herding. Fish and Game are not managing caribou properly according to the Noorvik residents.

VENETIE
Oct. 19, 1979

40 participants (among this number were members of the Arctic Village Council who had flown to Venetie for the hearing)

Concept of Borough Government

There was discussion of the Yukon Flats Borough Study. It was stated that the group didn't know much about local government but must be prepared for it. They want to figure out something that would be for the good of the people in the future. They-- They are ready to sit down, talk, and figure out something that will benefit the people. They are ready to work with Doyon, the Tanana Chiefs, the state and the rest of the villages in the Yukon Flats area. Unity was seen as important. They must work together, support one another; they are one people, one tribe. And they should accomplish one thing at a time.

There was a feeling that they were being asked to respond to the idea of borough government when in fact it was a new concept for them. They have no basis for comparison between the effectiveness of state and borough government as they know nothing of the latter. They would need a chance to review the borough idea, explain it to their tribal members, sit down and discuss it in their own language. They have just been introduced to the concept.

The representatives from Arctic Village are not interested in the creation of a borough. They feel they don't want any part of the borough idea. They don't want to be bribed into being a borough and have passed a resolution in opposition to the borough concept.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

It was pointed out that the villages of Venetie and Arctic Village have a unique relationship with the federal government in that they have opted to maintain a reservation status under ANCSA. With the passage of ANCSA, the villages did not get a monetary settlement, instead choose to keep fee simple title to a large amount of land which had traditionally been used by their people. A main concern was the fear that in 1991 their land might be taxed. It was their understanding at the time the ANCSA was passed that there would be no taxation. Also, there has been no clarification of the status of the land which surrounds the reservation.

The orientation of these villages appears to be toward the federal rather than the state government. Through federal government grants the villages are implementing a long range plan which consists of airport projects, housing, sewer, water, timber development, status of land ~~clarification~~

clarification

*Ab. Nelson
Chairman
Settlement
Act*

GENNALLLEN

organization of tribal government, offices, etc.

They are trying to move from a subsistence way of life into the mainstream of America by studying laws, and trying to make acts of congress work for them. Bureaucratic red tape has been a stumbling block. They listen to the people, and get instruction from the people. They live their lives virtually the way their grandfathers did. They are finally realizing what is theirs. They want to keep their old ways but work with modern things. They feel independent as a tribe.

RECOGNITION OF EXISTING GOVERNMENTS

Indian Reorganization Act
The question of recognition of IRA and Tribal Councils was raised. The question was asked if the Constitution would need to be changed to accomplish this. The point was made that tribal councils are recognized by Federal government but not by state government for contracting.

DELTA JUNCTION

December 15, 1979

26 participants

GENERAL CONCERNS

Serrvice Delivery

Self-sufficiency of ^{noted} residents living in the surrounding areas of Delta Junction. They live in the hinterland by choice, realize their situation and are prepared to provide their own basic services or are able and willing to do without them.

Expressed concern related to how to rresolve the question of service delivery cost equity. Wherre you ayve an area with a regional center surrounded by a sparsely populated areas over considerable distances, they felt the quality/quantity of services decreases as the distance increases from the center and therre should be a cost equity factor built into the service area concept to recognize these factors.

Land

Getting land in to private ownership was seen as a top priority. Contorl of land is seen as the baiss of power and economic survival and the bais of our capitalistic system. Very opposed to government contorl of land whichh they feel is contrary to tyhe system. Interested in seeing the 10 % selection entirrylyemtn reinstated.

Comments re prroposed legislation

Generally opposed to the formation of a borough
The pipeline was seen as only a temporary vehicle for funding local government. There was concern thhat ~~once~~ the oil companies would die and they would be responsible for supporting the established burearucacy. They recognized however that while they have an incorporated city in Delta Junction, it is a state supportted local government. They impose no sales or porpoerty tax upon themselves.

Opposed to elimination of the 3rd class borough.

There were concerned that the DELta/Greely REaA could possibly be consumed by another area in the formation of local government. The REAA boundary as presently delineated is artificial and should have rrelated to natural watersheds.

They objected to the Tanan/Chiefs planning proposal but they didn't object if it only affected Native interest and their land.