



**STAFF REPORT
MARCH 2013**

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCE:

Figures are still rolling in for the conference, but we should make a 'profit' of around \$36,000 for this year's event. Expenses were up quite a bit because of the rising cost of food and various speakers' fees and travels, but we also took in more in sponsorships compared to recent years and quite a bit more in registrations.

We cut a check for about \$19,000 to Your Clean Energy for Aleutians Energy Planning work, and are waiting for reimbursement from AEA for the first installment of that contract. We have been told they're quite slow with payments, which isn't a surprise.

As one would expect, our 11 year-old printer/copier died the week of the conference, so we got a new deskjet color printer/copier/scanner for the office. This one, in addition to being much newer, also fits our office size and printing needs much better. The previous printer was more suitable for industrial print jobs and was only B&W. We had it picked up and recycled. A new printer was already in the budget. Next up for the office may be a new phone system within the year, and moving our digital files off our local server to a cloud based system.

Staff has not had time to follow up on looking into 401k style plans or healthcare plan additions since the conference, but will do some research over the next month.

PROJECTS/OLD BUSINESS:

Regional Energy Planning

Aleutian/Pribilofs: SWAMC and subcontractor have visited almost all communities involved in this regional plan. Subcontractor will begin drafting community plans and alternatives based on data collection, resource inventory, and situational analysis of energy as it stands today. 3 communities remain for site visits, to take place within a month.

Bristol Bay: Contractors are in the process of developing complete energy pictures (data, resources, GIS, programs, etc) for each community. Sub-contractor from UAF-Economics is also developing project comparison models.

Kodiak: We have not formalized an agreement with them but it is pending. Presenting on energy planning to Kodiak Rural Forum in April.

2013 Annual Conference

We received very good feedback for this year's conference, and attendance was higher than normal. Our online evaluation had 47 respondents, 36% Private & 64% Public. All respondents reported adequate or better communication, professionalism and quality of our organization and conference. All respondents indicated SWAMC's strategic direction was on track, with strong support for Board and Staff. The Energy topic was most important to respondents. Please see complete [survey results here](#).

CAPSIS Request – Vessel Replacement

Based on Rep Herron's idea and at the request of the membership, SWAMC submitted a capital request to the Legislature in the amount of \$100,000 to fund a pre-design/pre-feasibility for a Tustumena replacement.

AmeriCorps VISTA- STEM Coordinator

Cameron worked with the public libraries in Dillingham and Kodiak to develop the Innovation Centers / Broadband Grant in each. Based on interest expressed at the conference's workforce panel, we began developing a mentorship and job shadowing program that introduces students to industries and careers in their area.

Economic Geography Update

Staff has not had time to follow up with Northern Economics since the conference. We intend to receive answers to the Board's questions, however.

NETWORKING/MEETINGS:

Varner participated in a BBNA Grant Workshop on Feb 26 to present on SWAMC and economic development.

On March 1st, Obrien participated in the Alaska Food Policy Council's Production Working Group teleconference.

On March 1st, Obrien and Dean held a teleconference with the Kodiak Library to refine the Innovations Center / Broadband Grant

On March 5th, Dean met with Paul Baker of Anchorage's Loussac Library to discuss the Innovation Center concept.

On March 6th, Obrien and Dean held a teleconference with the Dillingham Library to refine the Innovations Center / Broadband Grant

On March 11th, Obrien met with Wynne Auld of *Energy Action* to discuss potential ideas for using Biomass in the Kodiak Regional Energy Plan

On March 12th-14th, Obrien traveled with Andy Baker of *Your Clean Energy* to Unalaska to conduct site analysis for the Aleutians Regional Energy Plan

Varner was in DC to participate in a workshop on March 13-14 sponsored (and paid for) by the National Association for Development Organizations that looked at new development models and metrics for rural regions. He represented Alaska in this small discussion, and our area was not surprisingly the most rural of all regions represented, presenting a unique and educational perspective.

Varner met with Sens Begich and Murkowski and their staffs on March 15 to discuss Conference resolutions and other issues important to SW Alaska, including energy, fisheries, and broadband. Sequestration effects were also discussed, of course. Each Senator was hand delivered a SWAMC 25th Anniversary vest!

Varner testified on the ARDOR program in front of House Finance on March 18.

Varner and Obrien met with Deborah Vo of AEA and Robert Venables of Southeast Conference on March 19 to discuss our energy planning efforts and SEC's experiences.

Staff attended an AEA Regional Planners meeting on March 20.

Varner attended a Bristol Bay energy planners meeting on March 20, after the AEA meeting.