

# CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT APRIL GENERAL MEETING

## FLOOD EMERGENCY/DISASTER FUNDS

No update from the FEMA representative on the timing of the application review.

## ARP

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) has been released, and states and municipalities are scrambling to understand what it means, how it can be used, and if it will assist local governments that have been impacted because of the pandemic. The Alaska Municipal League (AML) and the National League of Cities (NLC) are providing briefing for updates to the release of the plan.

The ARP is funding designed to assist in the economic recovery from the pandemic. The ARP is very similar to the CARES Act, expanded to cover additional needs such as loss revenues for tourism reliant states and local governments. If you have been following the budget process you may have seen a line item with \$99k annotated with the ARP designation. This is the very conservative estimate amount we received from AML.

What we know so far:

- The program runs until December 31, 2024
- Funds for Gustavus will go through the state and be paid in 2 installments: ½ following enactment and ½ 12 months following receipt of the first payment; Small city grants cannot be greater than 75% of the FY2019 budget
- There is a specific, separate Capital Project Fund of \$10 billion for broadband grants

The current description of eligible expenses as of March 25:

- to respond to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;
- to respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the metropolitan city, non-entitlement unit of local government, or county that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work;
- for the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such metropolitan city, non-entitlement unit of local government, or county due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the metropolitan city, non-entitlement unit of local government, or county prior to the emergency; or
  - *Allows revenue replacement. The base year to measure lost revenue against is not the most recent full fiscal year, but the most recent full fiscal year **prior to the emergency.***
- to make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

There remains lots of questions and a need for clarifications. Within the next few weeks, more details should be released. Call City Hall if you have any questions and keep an eye on the News and City Face Book page for updates. For a copy of the Plan, contact the Clerk or go to the City Web Page.

## OLD POST OFFICE BLDG

The City did not receive a response to the RFB for the evaluation of the old post office building. I am working with Council member Lewis in developing an approach to address the building. Given the direction by the Council to explore the extent and costs to repair the building and make it serviceable, the following suggested steps are provided for consideration.

Combining some projects could assist in shortening the completion. Bundling small RFQ's, following the P&P for small purchases under \$10k, projects could include the following examples (thanks Mike):

- Remove dilapidated outside entries and replace with new. We could specify making one or both larger, or providing for future expansion to have a larger covered porch, at least on the main entry on the road side.
- Evaluate and restore the septic system.
- Plumb bathroom sink and toilet as needed.
- Paint exterior (could be done by volunteers—maybe council members?)
- Service heater to return to service. (returning the oil heater to service is the cheapest, but we could do a heat pump in the future.)
- Some basic landscaping

Maybe Ben could be used to assist or complete some of these projects.

Remember, this building is within a state designated historic district and exterior work must meet the guidelines established by the state historic preservation office (SHIPO). This shouldn't be an obstacle given that we want to renovate and repair the building. Also, this project could be a candidate for the ARP funds.

One other consideration. If we convert the building to a commercial use and lease it for a local business, we will need to identify another building for storage and covered work area for Ben. One suggestion would be to look around the community for a small building to repurpose, or construct/purchase one and place it near City Hall for easy access to utilities, etc. Again, this could be eligible for ARP funds. Regardless, this investment will provide for 2 purposes and address the need to restore the City's asset.

## **ADOT STORAGE BUILDING**

As a result of the Mayor's recent letter to ADOT and selected individuals, Representative Hannan's office responded with the following e-mail.

Hello Mayor Cannamore,

Thank you for your letter regarding the derelict DOT building in Gustavus. I, for one, appreciated your candor. Our office followed up after your letter and extensive discussions about many aspects of DOT operations and deferred maintenance projects throughout the subcommittee process, and we have received what I hope is favorable and definitive information. The department's legislative liaison responded to some of my inquiries with the following statements:

*“Southcoast Region asked DFS [Division of Facilities Services] about a year ago to contract the demolition of this facility, but there were insufficient funds at that time. Since then, Southcoast Region obtained a hazardous materials assessment that clears the building for demolition. **Demolition will occur before Gustavus school starts this Fall which, the department believes to be August 25th.**” [Emphasis added]*

*“Southcoast Region will accomplish the work with its own forces under current or next fiscal year Highways & Aviation component budgeted funds.”*

*“NOTE: This building has recently been identified for demolition using federal COVID stimulus funds. Southcoast Region and DFS will prioritize COVID stimulus funding ahead of Southcoast Region’s Highways & Aviation budget if it becomes available before the planned demolition.”*

Our office will continue to monitor and follow-up on this matter as we get closer to the stated August deadline, but hopefully DOT will take action on this project sooner rather than later. Please keep us apprised of any progress.

Best,  
Stephanie

**Stephanie Andrew**

Office of Representative Sara Hannan  
Alaska State Capitol  
(907) 465-4767

**WORK AT THE AIRPORT**

ADEC approved the initial work plan for the airport project, but since then, ADEC and ADOT have had further discussion on a number of concerns from the community that we are still working on, namely asphalt sampling and evaluating potential PFAS emissions via fugitive dust and asphalt plant operation. Results from recent testing of the airport’s asphalt found that there is PFAS in the asphalt. Additional testing of the asphalt was conducted on April 7 and 8. The Soil Management Plan is being updated to account for the discovery.

The work plan can be found under the “documents” tab from this link:  
[Division of Spill Prevention and Response \(alaska.gov\)](https://www.alaska.gov/asp/DivisionofSpillPreventionandResponse).

**UPDATE ON WATER GRANT THROUGH VSW**

Village Safe Water (VSW) continues to inquire if we can qualify for a state grant for a community water project. Questions continue about not having an existing water source and if the requirement disqualifies us from a study grant. However, VSW did provide the following program that may qualify for ARP funding, or other funding options. The following information was provided and is from the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Healthy Homes and Communities program. For the full information sheet, contact the City Administrator or the Clerk.

**ANTHC Portable Alternative Sanitation System (PASS)**

The Portable Alternative Sanitation System (PASS) provides basic sanitation needs: handwashing, clean drinking water, safe human waste disposal, and quality of life improvements in the home. It is not a replacement for, nor provides the same capabilities, as a piped water system.

**Portable.** The biggest drawback of a typical piped water and sewer system is that it is not portable. Many Alaska communities are vulnerable to flooding and erosion; therefore, some funding agencies have been reluctant to invest in infrastructure. The Portable Alternative Sanitation System can be disassembled and reassembled in a new location as needed.

**Alternative.** The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and partners – Cold Climate Housing Research Center, Lifewater Engineering and Camp Water Industries – have designed and implemented a low-cost sanitation alternative for communities impacted by climate change and lack of sanitation services. The PASS systems allow homeowners a safe, effective approach to water treatment and sanitation without the high operations and maintenance costs associated with piped infrastructure.

**Sanitation.** The PASS has been implemented in three Tribal health regions: Maniilaq, Tanana Chiefs Conference and Yukon-Kuskokwin Delta. These regions currently have communities that use self-haul, honey bucket or outhouses. Exposure to raw sewage places community members at risk for waterborne pathogens. This innovative system vastly improves hauling by limiting exposure to waste, minimizing odor, and reducing frequency and weight of hauls.

**System.** The system is entirely homeowner-based, designed to address the most basic sanitation needs and can be moved with the individual or community. The systems are stand-alone modules; as homes are moved to the new village site away from the eroding coastline, residents can bring their clean water and safe waste disposal systems with them.

### **Typical PASS system layout and components**

**Rain catchment.** For a roof catchment area of approximately 1,200 square feet, it is possible to recover nearly 3,000 gallons or more of rain each year to supplement the quantity of water hauled to the home.

**Water filtration system.** The water treatment system incorporates filters and chlorination for point-of-use treatment to ensure safe, pathogen-free drinking water. Typical raw water sources include: rain catchment, rivers, springs, community watering points and snow and/ or ice.

**Safe water storage tank.** The 50-gallon OR 100-gallon tanks provide filtered potable water storage and feed the handwashing sink by gravity instead of requiring electricity.

**Low-flow sink.** The sink conserves water while providing for better hygiene by eliminating the wash basin.

**Waterless urinal.** The urinal provides a separate waste option for liquid waste.

**Separating dry toilet.** Waste is separated into liquid and solid components where the liquid is disposed of into a seepage pit and dry solids are disposed of with solid waste. This toilet provides the option to capture urine in a container or to use as a vented honey bucket.

**Integrated ventilation fan.** An energy-efficient combined ventilation system dries the solid waste, reduces odors, and ventilates the home.

**Seepage pit.** Liquids are disposed of into a seepage pit which works with the natural environment to dispose of waste.