

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #187 (2000-2001)

January 22, 2001

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION ON CHUGIAK HIGH SCHOOL SEWER AND
GIRDWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WATER ISSUES

PERTINENT FACTS:

The District has been in recent meetings and dialog with AWWU regarding the provision of water to Girdwood Elementary School and sewer services to Chugiak High School. This memorandum summarizes the issues related to these discussions.

Chugiak High Sewer Service

Since 1998, AWWU has been evaluating the sewer needs in the Chugiak/Peters Creek area, as part of its Northern Communities Water & Sewer Project. To fund Phase 1 of this project, AWWU has obtained a combination of Federal funds and local matching funds in the amount of \$6.85 million. Phase 1 planning includes the extension of the sewer main to South Birchwood Loop and Chugiak High School, as well as other areas along the Old Glenn Highway. However, the \$6.85 million in available funding is inadequate to complete all of the planned improvements. The District is on record supporting an effort to obtain Federal or other funds to extend the sewer main to Chugiak High School.

The septic systems at Chugiak High School are functioning adequately at this time. There was a problem with a sewer backup at the start of this school year, but this problem was the result of a broken sewer line and clothing and other articles flushed into the system at the end of last school year. The backup occurred prior to where the sewer pipe enters the septic system, and does not reflect on the functioning or capacity of the septic system. When funding becomes available for AWWU to extend the sewer to Chugiak High School, the District will support the connection to public sewer. However, it appears that the current septic arrangement is adequate and can function for several years without any anticipated problems.

Girdwood Elementary School Water Service

The District and AWWU have been discussing the extension of the AWWU water system to Girdwood Elementary School. There appears to be no doubt that the school will eventually be connected to the system. The only issues are when, how, and who pays for the extension.

The Girdwood Elementary School is serviced by an on-site well, which provides an adequate and safe water supply to the school. The District operates its own water treatment facility at the school, which provides chlorination of the water at appropriate levels. The water is tested regularly to DEC standards, and to date there has been one incident of well contamination resulting from the Glacier Creek flooding in September 1995. The District is in the process of installing a charcoal filtering system in the treatment plant, to remove VOC's (Volatile Organic Compound) and other harmful chemicals, if they ever become present in the water supply. To date, this has not been a problem, and the new filtering system is being installed as a proactive measure in the event of any chemical infiltration into the aquifer serving the well.

AWWU, as part of its overall service plan for the Girdwood area, is searching for an appropriate site to locate a 500,000 gallon water tank. One of the most likely sites identified for a tank is an unused portion of the Girdwood Elementary School site. If AWWU were to purchase this land and locate its water tank there, the cost to the District of connecting to the system would be approximately \$500,000. If AWWU locates its tank elsewhere, or if the District decides to extend the water main to the school prior to AWWU bringing service to that area, the expense would be approximately \$1 million greater. At this time, there is still a shortfall in AWWU's funding to complete this project.

CC/RA/RB/sl

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