

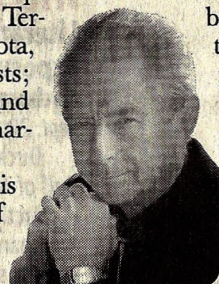
COMMUNITY
Xtra!

Business News

Wise Leadership

Last week I had the honor of co chairing the 9th Annual Alaska Oil and Gas Congress with North Slope Borough Mayor Charlotte Brower. This year's theme was "Advancing Alaska as a Global Energy Competitor". Several dozen speakers included the Governor; a US Senator; Alaska legislators; state commissioners and directors; energy journalists; oil experts from the Northwest Territories, North Dakota, and Texas; tax analysts; LNG consultants and others with global marketing expertise.

I am devoting this column space to brief sections of Mayor Brower's remarks made on Sept. 18 at the congress. You will see that Mayor Brower balances traditional values with economic needs of her people.



By Dave Harbour

[...] "Our Borough [The North Slope Borough] is the largest municipality in the United States in terms of acreage. It is the home-rule government for the eight communities within the 94,000 square miles of the Alaskan Arctic, north of the Brooks Mountain Range. [...] Our municipal government also provides support services to the oil field in Prudhoe Bay. Prudhoe Bay,

the largest oil field in the United States, is located in the northeastern portion of the Borough. It is also the origination point of the 800 mile trans-Alaska pipeline which terminates at the city of Valdez on Prince William Sound.

[...] The Inupiaq people have lived in this region for thousands of years. Together we harvest the bounty of both the land, and the sea. Our people not only survive, but we thrive because of the wisdom and culture handed down from our Elders and previous generations.

[...] One of the lessons that our subsistence lifestyle has taught us, is that working together is essential to the success of the group as a whole. This lesson is so important that cooperation is one of the Inupiat core values passed on to us by our ancestors.

The State of Alaska functions as a cooperative partner through their efforts to create and encourage investment in the oil and gas industry. But we must also look to our industry partners for their commitment to expand both their efforts and investment into our region. And in addition



Dave Harbour World Photography

North Slope Borough Mayor Charlotte Brower.

to their increased economic investment, we must continue to encourage that they continue to improve their commitment to safe, responsible, and sustainable development into the future.

I would now like to speak about the North Slope Borough's efforts to work as a proactive member of the team. Our borough continues to provide efficient access to quality utility ser-

vices. This is important to help meet the increased demand so we can all benefit from an economic revival in the oil patch.

[...] The North Slope Borough recently announced that we are investing over the next year, \$90 million in our Service Area 10 Utilities.

[...] The Borough's efforts to expand our public utility service are far from over. Design efforts are also ongoing

for an expansion of the Oxbow landfill, the development of waste stream reduction alternatives, and a coordinated metals recycling program.

[...] Ever since oil production was initiated in Prudhoe Bay in the late 1960's, we have lived with development in our back yard. Oil brought a lot of changes - some good and some bad - but most of our people believe the benefits have outweighed the challenges. Oil provided us with a tax base, which in turn gave us the foundation for a regional economy. The North Slope Borough is able to provide jobs for over 800 of our residents because of oil production, and our private-sector Native corporations are among the largest economic engines in the state.

The broad goal of the North Slope Borough has always been to maintain a healthy environment supporting Inupiat subsistence practices, while at the same time promoting economic growth and responsible resource development.

It is an exciting time with new activity in the Arctic, but also a time of concern. We have reminded the many visitors this summer that we are not just a battleground for competing agendas and propaganda. We have the most to lose from mistakes. We also have much to gain, if it is

done right.

[...] My people and I believe that unity, cooperation and teamwork are essential in the success of any effort, and this success could not be possible without their wisdom, dedication and willingness to invest in the future of our people.

I truly believe the actions of Governor Parnell and the Alaska Legislature, the commitment of the industry to invest in responsible development in our region, and the Borough's investments to support increased development demonstrates the Inupiaq value of cooperation at its best. It is my fervent hope that this spirit of cooperation continues to grow, and ultimately create a vibrant economic future."

Dave Harbour is Publisher of www.northerngaspipelines.com. He is a former Chairman of the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, the Alaska Council on Economic Education, the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the Hugh O'Brien Youth Foundation-Alaska. He is also Co-Chairman of the 9th Annual Alaska Oil and Gas Congress held in Anchorage this September.

The opinions in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.