

d. KPU Sales, Marketing & Customer Service Division – December 2024 Report

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TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mayor & City Council Initials: 

FROM: Delilah A. Walsh, General Manager File #: MGR25-016

DATE: January 8, 2025 Mtg. #: 01/16/25 MRd

RE: **KPU Sales, Marketing & Customer Service Division – December 2024 Report**

Attached for City Council review is the December 2024 report from KPU Sales, Marketing and Customer Service Division Manager Kim Simpson. Should the City Council have questions regarding the report, staff can respond accordingly.

**MANAGER'S REPORT
SALES, MARKETING & CUSTOMER SERVICE DIVISION
December 2024**

KPU's active and vacation internet accounts for December flat to November and were higher by 1% from last year, despite the elimination of cable this Fall. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of KPU's customers are subscribed to the 250 and higher plans, which is 7 % higher than last year. Managed residential WiFi increased by 48% over last year. KPU lost very few customers due to the sunset of TV. Staff were able to assist customers in selecting a new streaming service and techs went on-site to provide assistance in the conversion. KPU still continues to assist customers who have wanted to switch to a different streaming service by demonstrating them in our customer service office.

KPUtv provided video coverage of the KAAHC Winter Art's Fair including the youth art show, photographed the Community Tree lighting and Santa Meet and greet at Fire Station 1, released a special on the KPUtv+ app on local kelp production " Kelp Save the World?", as well as kelp shorts on mariculture, produced seven video holiday shopping shorts of local businesses, and live-streamed the 2024 Boat Parade on FB live for the community to enjoy. The team also live-streamed the entire Clarke Cochrane basketball tournament, and homecoming king and queen ceremony. They also inserted short videos featuring the Kayhi sports teams into breaks and pauses during the tournament. The team were able to get SE AK Wood Salvage to sponsor the tournament which will provide funding for more equipment at the school.

When the Hillside Road landslide occurred, KPUtv's media manager, Jason Baldwin, who is an FAA certified commercial drone pilot, stepped in to provide imagery of the slide into Carlanna Creek. He was able to apply for emergency authorization from the FAA to fly the slide area where he obtained full video of the entire slide, including close-ups of key sections, and imagery of the debris piles up and down stream. These were sent to the State of AK geologist for study.

KPU assisted the City with social media in posting hiring posts for open positions, council meeting announcements, the Tree Lighting and Santa Meet and Greet, Solid Waste Holiday schedules, Holiday closures, the City Coffee Klatch, the Letters to Santa campaign, public notices on the Hillside Road Slide, as well as re-posts of items published on the KPU Telcom and Electric Facebook sites. KPU Telecommunication's social media consisted of job openings, Holiday

closures advertisement of the KPU sponsored Food Drive, notice of the plan to live-stream the upcoming Boat Parade, a Holiday Greeting from KPUCS and the KPUtv Crew, a feature with pictures of the KPU Telecom crew delivering food and gifts to two needy families. KPU marketing assisted KPU Electric with several emergency outage notifications, job postings, advertised the KPU sponsored food drive, and informed residents about a new power shut-off scam. KPUTV's social media consisted of shopping shorts on seven local businesses, two "interviews" with local shelter cats, short features on Homecoming 2024, Kayhi Clarke Cochrane shorts and photographs, a featurette on the KHighlites Dance Team, the livestream of the boat parade, as well as still images from the boat parade, several panorama videos of the winter ocean and mountains

KPU wants the electric bill to appear in the Paymentus portal but Tyler did not have an option to present the actual bill to customers, and City IT was unable to help. As reported last month, KPU Telecom had staff who were willing and also able to make the PDF Tyler produces as a bill appear in Paymentus for the customer. Due to the talent of these Engineers, and their ability to write code, they were successfully able to devise a method so that the PDF would appear in the Electric payment portal of Paymentus, so customers will see the bill in addition to a dollar total when Paymentus for Electric is launched. Work is underway to put the code in place with hope for an Electric Launch by end of January 2025.

When a slide occurred on December 2, 2024 in the area of Hillside Road, division manager, Kim Simpson was activated as City of Ketchikan public information officer for the emergency. She worked the event for the next three days, touring the site, working with emergency responders and public works, and fielding calls from the media. She then produced three daily informational releases for the public. Also in the capacity of PIO, Kim attended the Alaska Municipal League in Anchorage to present a session on how-tos for emergency communications and response. Borough Clerk Kacie Paxton was also a presenter at the session, which was very well received. They provided an overview of the August 2024 slide and how communications were organized and delivered. Kacie and Kim also provided a check list of communication channels, and training recommendations for communities to use prior to an emergency and answered numerous questions of the attendees.

Kim, in addition to Marketing Manager Kendra Anderson, planned and managed the Community Tree lighting which took place on December 1st at the main fire station on Bawden. The community tree, located in front of the Federal Building had its lights turned on at 4 pm after a public count-down from ten to one. The attendees then processed to the firehall where City and KPU volunteers provided cookies and hot chocolate, assisted children with crafts until Santa arrived via firetruck at 4:15 pm. Tickets were provided for families to see Santa and take pictures. There were approximately 300 attendees on the rainy December afternoon. Tyler Rental provided porta potties for the event, and Alaska Tree Salvage donated their time to inspect and assess the tree's health prior to it being decorated.

Kim, Kendra, and Kelly Brown from HR planned the City Holiday party which took place on December 6th at Ted Ferry Civic center. Food was provided by the Landing, with music from Woody's Finest Hour. Gift certificates and prizes donate by division heads were awarded to attendees by ticket draw. A self photo booth was set up for attendees to use. Approximately 220 employees attended the party, which is a bit lower than years past; however there was a date conflict with the Nutcracker and Art Walk this year.

KPU Marketing ran the letters to Santa program this year. Letters were dropped in the Santa Mail box outside Fire Station 1 from December 1st to December 15th. Letters were answered by Santa's Elves (Kim, as well as several City Librarians) on postcards with customized notes. There were approximately 150 letters to Santa this year. Through this program, two families were found that had severe needs, asking for no gifts but only food from Santa. KPU Telecommunications staff volunteered to provided boxes of food, Christmas gifts, and gift certificates to local businesses to those families, and delivered the donations to the families on December 18th. This is not something that is ordinarily done, but the Telecom group were happy to fill a need when it was found that other local organizations did not have resources for these families.

KPU Customer Service sponsored a food drive for Love in Action, which offered locals a chance to win \$100 off their power bill for donations of 5 or more pounds of food. Response was wonderful with some locals providing entire basket-loads of food. In total, KPU was able to deliver

an entire truckload of food to Love in Action for distribution to hungry families. Approximately 800 pounds of food was delivered, primarily canned goods and dry goods.