



**City Council Minutes  
May 5, 2015 ~ 5:00PM**

**Regular Meeting  
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at City Hall. Mayor Pete Hallgren called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

City Council members present: Mayor Pete Hallgren, Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith, JW Musgrove (telephonically)  
Corey Vanden Boom, Audrey Brown

City Council members excused: Lonny Meeks, Sherman Stebbins

City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Stephanie Prestwich  
Library Director Joyce McCombs, City Clerk Pat White

Eleven members from the community were present at the beginning of the meeting, which was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Hallgren asked to add Councilman Sherman Stebbins' letter of resignation to *New Business*.

Leith moved to approve the May 5, 2015 agenda as amended; Brown seconded. Motion carried.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Vanden Boom moved to approve the April 21, 2015 minutes; Leith seconded.

Brown asked to change her comment about what the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) surveyed (bottom of page one) from "the whole area to determine where buried barrels and metal fragments were" to "a certain gridded area to search for unexploded ordnance and metal fragments" so firefighters could access the Gerstle River testing site.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Brown, Leith, Vanden Boom, Musgrove, and Hallgren).

**COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Dawn Grossmann reported she will be at the Legislative Information Office (LIO) three days a week, 2:30-6:00pm, serving as Representative Jim Colver's aide in the Delta community throughout the summer and when legislators are not in session. She invited the public to meet with Representative Colver at the LIO on May 7, 4:00-5:00pm, to wrap up the most recent legislative session and she distributed flyers, inviting the public to attend a meeting with Rep. Colver at Rika's Roadhouse the same day, 6:00-8:00pm, to discuss securing Rika's boat landing and parking lot as public access.

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Carol Austin reported after working on a plan for 2 ½ years, a draft of the *Delta Junction Community Trail Plan* is now available at the Community Library, City Hall, Cooperative Extension, and online ([www.deltajunctiontrails.com](http://www.deltajunctiontrails.com)). It lays out the community's desire for safe and legal trail access and year-round outdoor recreational activities for users of all ages, abilities, income, and trail interests; pedestrians, motorized vehicles, bicyclists, horseback riders, skiers, snowshoers, and dog mushers. The plan is a guide for creating and enhancing trails in Delta Junction over the next ten years and will be used to market trail proposals to build support and find money to build the trails. Austin said the Delta Junction Trails Association (DJTA) started the project in February 2013 with input from community members living in the area and technical assistance from the National Parks Service, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. In order for the trail plan to succeed it must reflect the desires and needs of area residents. She asked the public to review the draft plan and communicate via mail (POB 710) or email ([deltajunctiontrailsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:deltajunctiontrailsassociation@gmail.com)) before the public comment period ends on May 27, 2015. Does the plan match the public's vision for trails in Delta Junction? Are there any red flags to be aware of? Are there any issues that have not been addressed? Any trail opportunities that have not been evaluated? What else should be considered before moving forward? Austin said comment sheets, a large-scale map, and the *Trail Plan* will be available at the Sullivan Roadhouse on May 8, 4:30-6:30pm, and she encouraged area residents to attend, review the draft plan, and offer additional input.

Brown asked how many trails were identified in the *Delta Junction Community Trail Plan*.

Mindy Eggleston said 16 trails were prioritized by the general public with an additional ten listed as suggested trails. She encouraged public input (through May 27) and said DJTA will start developing the final plan at a meeting on May 28.

Brown expressed appreciation for the dedication and hard work from those involved in the trail plan.

Leith said it is a fine example of community volunteers working together.

Eggleston attributed public involvement and said, "It takes a village ..."

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Jessica Zeffery, a resident in Brewis Subdivision, read her letter, dated April 30, 2015, which expressed concern with high-speed traffic and lack of precautionary signs, particularly because of the number of families and small children in the area. She suggested installing speed limit signs, children-at-play signs, or speed bumps.

Discussion followed regarding an acceptable speed limit, installing signs at the start of Brewis and on two sides of the loop, and repositioning the offset stop sign on the corner.

## **REPORTS**

**Emergency Services** – Audrey Brown reported:

- The City of Delta Junction's ISO Public Protection Classification is now 8B.

Tvenge said 8B is an improvement over the City's previous rating (9) and it is the best possible rating without having fire hydrants. Homeowners should contact their insurance companies with the new rate classification, which should reduce insurance premiums.

- The Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD) responded to two recent fires without any loss of life.

Discussion followed regarding the automatic aid agreement with Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department, mutual aid with Fort Greely, and medical standby from Delta Medical Transport.

- Delta Medical Transport donated a first aid kit to the Delta Junction Trails Association.

**Cemetery** – Mike Tvenge reported up to three gravesites are prepared each fall for winter burials and the last of the pre-dug graves has been spoken for.

Discussion followed regarding whether or not to prepare more graves in the future.

Leith said three is enough.

**Mayor** – Pete Hallgren reported he, Leith, and Brown serve on the Fort Greely Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), which met on April 29. RAB consists of a group of local people who are knowledgeable and interested in cleaning the environment from contaminants. The Army makes plans each year to clean different sites and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) signs off on them. The board meets annually now; no longer twice a year. The old nuclear power plant, which was decommissioned in the 1960s, continually comes up in discussion. The annual inspection report can be found on the Fort Greely RAB website. The former Gerstle River RAB came under Fort Wainwright during BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) and has since disbanded. Fort Wainwright is again investigating what they call "data gaps" because of inadequate record keeping.

Brown said a contractor was hired to research records from the 1960s and 1970s, which is expected to take several years.

**City Administrator** – Mike Tvenge reported:

- City Hall received two notifications from Alaska Wireless Network about cell tower administrative updates; one on Nistler Road and one on Sawmill Creek Road.

Discussion followed regarding whether to establish a buffer zone or regulate cell towers as other communities do and public opposition and covenant restrictions of a proposed cell tower in Sweeney Viewridge Subdivision (2014).

- A Request for Proposal to clear airport subdivision streets (taxiways) will be presented at the May 19 meeting.
- He and Bristol Engineering, landfill cell design contractor, are working on a plan to build a perimeter road and excavate Cell #2. The design will include ready-for-bid documents should the work not be done in-house.

Discussion followed regarding subsidizing the landfill by \$65,000 over the past ten months and George Sandlin delivering multiple loads of Delta Sanitation's stockpiled garbage to the landfill every week.

- Ken Hudson from the Department of Commerce and Community Economic Development (DCCED) will attend the June 2 Council meeting to discuss compliance issues with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and whether to continue with the program or get out of it.

**Finance** – Stephanie Prestwich reported:

- Aetna, the City employee's health insurance, declared a "holiday" in which policyholders will not be required to pay premiums for May, June, or July. It amounts to \$38,000 in budget savings for FY15 and \$19,000 for FY16. Medical rates will stay the same and dental, vision, and audio rates will drop by 15%.

- There were 56 transactions on the credit/debit card machine at the landfill during the month of April.

- The first draft of the FY16 budget, which she distributed, was ready for an upcoming work session.

Discussion followed regarding waiting until May 19 to schedule a budget work session.

**School District** – Corey Vanden Boom reported:

- The Delta High School is hosting a band concert and interviewing for scholarships.
- A School Board meeting is scheduled on May 7.
- High School Graduation is on May 14, the same day that school lets out for the year.
- Kindergarten Roundup was held on May 1 and approximately 50 children attended.
- Teachers and staff are clearing out classrooms and rearranging (because of closing the Fort Greely Middle School).
- The school district will use the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena for a surplus sale on May 16.

**Library** – Mary Leith reported:

• The Library Open House on April 25 was one of the best. Approximately 334 people attended, there were 88 baskets in the silent auction, over 40 items were raffled, and about \$10,000 was raised.

McCombs said the Library Board held five separate work parties and an all-day Saturday to prepare for the open house.

- The Elementary School field trips started today. Nine more classes will visit the library in the next week.
- Summer Reading begins June 9 (elementary) and June 11 (middle school) and Preschool Story Hour will also be part of the summer reading programs.
- Library Aide Kailey Mills returned from college and will be working at the library for her third summer.

**Park / Recreation** – Corey Vanden Boom reported she and Tvenge met with High School Coach Dave Schmidt about upgrades needed at the park ball fields. One request is to move a fence on one of the three softball fields that are regulation size for adult slow pitch. The High School Softball plays fast pitch.

Tvenge said it will require a gate and 320 feet of 4-foot high fencing.

Discussion followed regarding whether to put in a permanent fence or a temporary mesh fence for the High School games.

Vanden Boom asked to make one field regulation sized for fast pitch and leave the other two fields in case adult leagues are formed sometime in the future.

**Public Works** – Mike Tvenge reported a culvert was repaired on Deborah Street.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****Community Park Outhouses**

Tvenge referenced a memo, dated May 1, 2015, and reported purchase of new outhouses was approved on March 3 (and April 7). He asked to alter the decision to make both outhouses dry. The Rocky Mountain models would require less maintenance and they would be open longer. The Denali Flush would be dependent on warm weather. An engineer must design them and DEC must approve the permit application.

Brown moved to approve purchase of two Double Rocky Mountain outhouses; Vanden Boom seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Musgrove, Vanden Boom, Leith, Brown, and Hallgren).

**NEW BUSINESS****Resignation from Sherman Stebbins**

[Councilman Sherman Stebbins submitted a letter of resignation on May 3, 2015 due to moving outside the city limits.]

Vanden Boom moved to accept Sherman Stebbins' letter of resignation with regret; Leith seconded.

Discussion followed regarding appreciation of Stebbins' willingness to help out, i.e. by mowing the park, hauling garbage, boarding the park pavilion, installing playground equipment, etc., his outspoken personality, and his kindness.

White reported Title 29 requires vacancies be filled *within* 30 days and appointment would be scheduled for the Council meeting on June 16, 2015, the new Council member would serve out the year until the next regular election in October, and Seat D would be on the ballot as a one-year term. [CORRECTION: White advertised Seat D, requesting letters of interest be submitted by the close of business on June 1 with appointment made at the City Council meeting on June 2, which would be *within* 30 days as directed by Title 29.]

Brown thanked Stebbins for his service on the City Council.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Leith, Vanden Boom, Brown, Musgrove, and Hallgren).

**Resolution 2015-05, A Resolution Requesting FY16 Payment in Lieu of Taxes Funding from the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development**

Leith moved to approve Resolution 2015-05 to request FY16 PILT funding from DCCED; Vanden Boom seconded.

Tvenge reported the Federal PILT is the City's largest source of revenue. Funding for FY2016 is expected to be \$989,000.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Leith, Musgrove, Brown, Vanden Boom, and Hallgren).

**Resolution 2015-06, A Resolution to Continue Participation in the AMLJIA Loss Control Incentive Program for the City of Delta Junction**

Leith moved to approve Resolution 2015-06 as presented; Brown seconded.

Tvenge reported City employees participate in monthly safety teleconference meetings, earning credits toward purchase of safety equipment, i.e. gloves, goggles, vests, etc., the City of Delta Junction is in good standing statewide, at the Platinum Level, and partnering in the AMLJIA Loss Control Incentive Program benefits both City staff and the general public.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Vanden Boom, Leith, Musgrove, Brown, and Hallgren).

### **Lawn Contractor Request for Payment Adjustment**

Tvenge reported bid opening for the 2015 lawn maintenance contract was held on April 15 and it was awarded to lone-bidder, J&D Lawn Care, on April 21 for \$11,100. The bid specs specified, "Contract payments shall be made by dividing total contract amount into three equal payment amounts and paid July 1, August 3, and September 1", but Jimmy Terry has asked to amend the payment schedule.

Jimmy Terry said according to the contract he must prepare the cemetery for Memorial Day weekend, but would not receive any payment until July 1. He asked to be paid bi-weekly as he was in 2012 and 2013, starting on June 3. Discussion followed regarding issuing checks after they are approved at Council meetings, whether amending the payment schedule would show prejudice to other potential bidders who would have bid had the payment schedule been different, whether payments in June would affect the FY15 budget, debris left from the Chamber's Festival of Lights fireworks in February, and tabling the conversation to the next meeting.

Hallgren moved that Tvenge and Prestwich make a recommendation (about adjusting the lawn contract payment schedule) at the May 19 meeting; Vanden Boom seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Musgrove, Brown, Leith, Vanden Boom, and Hallgren).

### **Employee Salary Schedule**

Leith distributed a *Proposed Employee Salary Schedule* that she, Vanden Boom, and Meeks prepared and reported that data was collected from the school district, the Federal government, and other municipalities. The proposed salary schedule mirrored the school district for hourly-wage employees and the Federal government's grades and years of employment for salaried employees. The schedule spelled out annual step increases and also included cost of living allowance (COLA), which would be addressed each year. New hires would be given credit (step increases) for every year of experience, up to five years if it is within the last ten years. Step increases would require an annual evaluation between January and March, City administration would draft an evaluation form, and, if adopted, the *Employee Salary Schedule* would be built into the Employee Policy.

Discussion followed regarding rewarding employees for doing their jobs well, increasing the budget by approximately \$60,000 to implement the new salary schedule, not including COLA in the FY16 budget, employee contributions toward insurance benefits, drawing from City reserves to balance the budget, and continuing discussion about the salary schedule during the budget work session.

Vanden Boom excused herself at 7:10pm.

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#17985 in the amount of \$1,150.00 to Airport Equipment Rental for rental of Skidsteer to sweep streets

PO#17986 in the amount of \$4,449.90 to Buffalo Fuel, Inc. for heating fuel and gas

PO#17987 in the amount of \$3,054.00 to Cougar Mountain for new accounting software

PO#17988 in the amount of \$821.13 to Delta Professional Development for vehicle gas and oil

PO#17989 in the amount of \$647.16 to Sam's Club for paper, envelopes, and kitchen supplies

PO#17990 in the amount of \$588.80 to Joyce McCombs for reimbursement for books, cleaning supplies, and office supplies

Musgrove moved to approve purchase orders 17985 through 17990 as presented; Leith seconded.

Discussion followed regarding renting a Skidsteer because the City's Skidsteer is awaiting repairs in Fairbanks, attaching a broom to the rented Skidsteer to sweep streets (PO#17985), and new accounting software, training, and support (#17987).

Motion passed on a roll call vote with four in attendance (Musgrove, Leith, Brown, and Hallgren).

### **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Hallgren called for additional public comments with none being offered and, as an additional Council comment, he thanked the Council for approving removal of the dead moose near Harper Avenue (as discussed at the April 21 meeting).

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 7:16pm; Leith seconded. Motion carried.