



**City Council Minutes  
September 15, 2015 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at City Hall. Mayor Pete Hallgren called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

City Council members present: Mayor Pete Hallgren, Mayor Pro tem Sebastian Saarloos, JW Musgrove  
Audrey Brown, Freda Degnan, William Brennan

City Council vacancy: Seat A – to be filled after October 6 Municipal Election

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

Eleven members from the community were present during different parts of the meeting and it was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Hallgren reported two amendments to the agenda:

- ✓ Council would take a short break to step outside to see the new grader and end dump with plow and sander
- ✓ Add PO #00148 to *Purchase Orders* under *New Business* to pay for the motor grader (page 4)

Musgrove moved to approve the September 15, 2015 agenda as amended; Brown seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with six Council members.

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

Saarloos moved to approve the minutes from the September 1, 2015 meeting; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with six Council members.

Saarloos moved to recess at 5:05pm; Brown seconded.

Saarloos moved to reconvene the meeting at 5:15pm; Musgrove seconded.

**PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

John Lewis reported the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and Delta-Greely School Superintendent Laural Jackson submitted a joint request to Pogo Mine for a generator to run the radio station during potential power outages. Pogo granted funds to purchase the portable generator, which was on sale for \$2,300, so the High School radio station will have capabilities to broadcast emergency information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Lewis said the community is very fortunate for Pogo's contribution and he thanked the Pogo-organized Delta Junction Community Advisory Board that supported the request. The generator should be hooked up within the next month.

Saarloos questioned whether a decision was made regarding the school district's request to reduce landfill rates to support their efforts in cleaning scrapped materials around their facilities.

Leith said there had been no further discussion since she brought it up at the September 1 meeting.

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Kassie Farrar referenced her memo dated September 15, which explained \$300 (approved April 7, 2015) spent on Chokecherry and Mountain Ash trees, caging, stakes, and fertilizer spikes. She reported she began work on the Tree Beautification Project in early April and planted three more saplings in May. She explained dealing with drought, wind, inability to keep up with watering, and Plant Kingdom's superior stock being the reason for this year's Chokecherry's survival. Farrar said she sprayed the birch trees with pesticides, placed fertilizer spikes, and pruned several trees. She was pleased with the vigorous growth of older saplings and with the total number of trees (28) restored or replanted in the median since undertaking the project (September 2011). Farrar said she is hopeful others will get involved in the project and she asked the City Council to consider putting in an outside water spigot on either end of the Public Works building,

out of the way of emergency vehicles. It would help in filling the 300-gallon tank, which takes 40-45 minutes. Watering takes another hour and a half.

Discussion followed regarding getting a cost estimate to install a spigot and appreciation for Farrar's dedication in protecting and restoring trees in the center of town.

Hallgren said he doubted "this town would be half of what it is without the help of all the volunteers" and told Farrar she does more than her part in making Delta what it is.

### **Brian Corty – Local Television Status**

[Local residents will need a digital converter box or a newer television built after 2005 to pick up local broadcasts after September 15, 2015, the federal mandate for analog signals to switch to digital.]

Hallgren reported, in Brian Corty's absence, that he was able to receive public television stations, but nothing else.

Saarloos said he is interested in hearing information about the television status because he could not pick up anything except Channel 7 (NBC), which is still analog, and PBS, digital, despite purchasing a new antenna.

Tim Sharp, Wildlife Technician with Donnelly Training Area Natural Resources, referred to a flyer about a Sandhill Crane migration survey and read, "The purpose of this study is to help the Natural Resource Office, responsible for Donnelly Training Area lands in Delta Junction, notify military personnel of changes in Sandhill Crane roosting behavior. Cranes have been observed to move away from their traditional roosting areas on the Delta River bed to agricultural fields in the spring." Sharp said they are trying to understand where they are moving to, if at all, in the fall, their behavior and habitat choice, and human effects, including helping military personnel avoid training in crane-heavy areas while keeping Delta Junction a wonderful place to view their migratory habits. They have conducted surveys every spring and fall since 2011 and have noticed that there are not many cranes on the Delta River bed in the spring. He asked for public support by reporting observations (seeing and hearing cranes) on their Web site (<https://sites.google.com/site/dtacraneurvey/home>).

Brennan asked if recordings are available, so that small children can identify a Sandhill Crane.

Sharp said he would post a link to a YouTube video, if he is unable to post Sandhill Crane noises. Referring to the *Fall 2015 Recreation Map* for the Donnelly Training Area he said September 25 would be the last day to access military training areas.

Discussion followed regarding the need to reapply for a Recreational Access Permit (RAP) because of recent changes to the U.S. Army Recreational Tracker (USARTRAK) system, RAP requirement to access military land, and obtaining information at USARTRAK (<http://usartrak.isportsman.net>).

Sharp reported information about wood cutting permits is not yet posted, so interested parties are asked to contact the Natural Resources Office (873-1616) to make arrangements to apply for permits.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **Election Ad, 2015 Ballot, Election Officials**

White referenced the election advertisement and reported three incumbents filed for seats in the October 6 Municipal Election: Freda Degnan (Seat D), Sebastian Saarloos (Seat E), and William Brennan (Seat F). No one filed for Seat A, so it could be filled by a write-in candidate who, according to City Code of Ordinances §1.10.020, must live within the City limits for one year to be eligible. The ballot must be inspected 15 days before an election per City Code of Ordinances §2.15.030(a) and election officials must be Council-approved per Code §2.15.010.

Saarloos moved to approve the 2015 ballot and the nine election officials as presented; Brennan seconded.

Hallgren abstained from voting because his wife, Fran, would serve as a Canvas Board official.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five voting in favor (Saarloos, Musgrove, Brennan, Degnan, Brown) and one abstaining (Hallgren).

### **Proclamation Honoring Richard Souhrada**

Hallgren honored Richard Souhrada and recognized him for many years of dedication to the Delta community.

## **REPORTS**

**Emergency Services** – Audrey Brown reported the City of Delta Junction's Insurance Services Offices (ISO) Public Protection Classification changed to 8B/10, effective August 1, 2015. City Administrator Mike Tvenge reported it on May 5 and that the new rating is the best possible rating without having fire hydrants. Brown reiterated Tvenge encouraging homeowners to contact their insurance companies to possibly reduce insurance premiums.

Discussion followed regarding the April 27 letter pertaining to "Delta Junction, Southeast County, Alaska," mutual aid agreement with Rural Deltana and the Fort Greely Fire Department, Kevin Knight being the new assistant Fire Chief for the City of Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD), and Lauren Morton submitting monthly fire reports.

**Airport** – JW Musgrove reported hunting season created a small spike in airport activity, grass has been mowed, and the runway is still in good shape from when it was graded and compacted (August 2014).

Discussion followed regarding area residents, both inside and outside of the City limits, donating their time to maintain the airport, local pilots using the City's John Deere mower tractor, privately-owned equipment, and rented equipment, and non-airport track rigs tearing up the ground.

**Cemetery** – Mary Leith reported there were several recent burials and more winter graves will be prepared.

**Mayor** – Pete Hallgren reported:

- Congressman Don Young will host a public meeting at 11:30am, October 12 at the City Hall conference room.
- New vault toilets (outhouses) were being installed at the park at the same time of the meeting. Hallgren explained issues with the 100-foot right-of-way on Aurora Avenue, which ends up inside the fence line of the park, and placing the Aurora outhouse without impinging on the ballfields. He asked to approve the encroachment of the City-owned right-of-way in the City-owned Park.

Discussion followed regarding possibly considering vacating that portion of Aurora sometime in the future and sketching an as-built to show dimensions of the right-of-way encroachment from the edge of the asphalt and from the fence.

Musgrove moved to approve encroachment of the new toilet vault in the Aurora Avenue right-of-way; Brown seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five voting in favor (Musgrove, Brown, Degnan, Saarloos, Brennan) and one abstaining (Hallgren).

- The City crew (Groppe, Bevard, Addison, and Kravets) are progressing on the landfill excavation project and Delta Concrete, under contract, will provide most of the maintenance to prepare roads for winter.

Discussion followed regarding assessing the excavation project the end of October, prorating equipment rentals, grant expiration June 30, 2016, any leftover funds to be used toward maintenance at the landfill, Airport Rentals repairing the thumb on the rented excavator, and Saarloos surveying the west boundary of the new cell last week and taking measurements once the project closes at the end of the month.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported qualified voters who are not able to vote at the polls on October 6 can apply for an absentee ballot through September 25 or vote in person (September 18 through October 5) at City Hall. Provisions are also available for a voter with special needs (September 16 through October 6).

Hallgren reported the Municipal Election will be held on October 6 and a special meeting to certify the election results will be held on October 13. A new deputy mayor, aka Mayor Pro tem, will be elected by the Council, special interests will be assigned, and another Council member will be appointed to the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

**City Administrator** – Mary Leith reported:

- The plow truck/sander arrived September 3 and the grader arrived today.
- Heritage General Contractors prepared foundations for the new vault outhouses last week, they placed them on the foundations today, and she, M2C1 Construction and Engineering, and Heritage will inspect them tomorrow.

Musgrove said the hook on the crane weighs as much as one of the outhouses.

Saarloos said it cost well over \$10,000 to rent the crane with an operator for one day and to transport it.

- She is working on updating the annual rink agreement with the school district and the Delta Skating Association.

**Finance** – Stephanie Prestwich reported the Aetna “holiday” was extended through October, which is another \$54,000 in savings on employee health insurance costs. Aetna premium costs skyrocketed a few years ago and the State of Alaska forced them to refund the excess in reserves to policyholders. Prestwich said Aetna was required to pay back six months in premiums as of May 2015.

**Lands** – Pete Hallgren reported the timber theft situation at the airport subdivision is progressing.

Discussion followed regarding making plans to clear the subdivision, cutting costs by clearing before it is surveyed, how much gravel would be used to develop subdivision roads, and deciding to stay in or exit the flood insurance program.

**Library** – Joyce McCombs distributed documents and reported:

- The Army Library's Million Dollar Makeover grant was filed on September 8 with a Power Point presentation done by Allison Long. McCombs explained the *Delta Community Library Wish List*: \$41,700 to update computers for the public and library staff, to include printers, Wi-Fi receivers, a server, and a Welcome-to-the-Delta-Library “splash page” showing the Internet policy, linking to the library webpage, accepting donations for Internet use, and keeping better records of library traffic; \$42,875 to refit the library with new LED fixtures; \$1,500 to make the fireplace functional; \$2,500 for laptop and tablet furnishings; \$1,300 to replace the front desk counter top and purchase an Interlibrary Loan storage cabinet and counter top; \$1,800 to replace the DVD rack; and \$8,325 to redecorate the children's section. McCombs said ten libraries across the United States will be awarded \$100,000 and the Delta Community Library is the only one that is not physically on an Army post, but the Army financially supports it with \$16,000/year.

- The Annual Numbers Snapshot details behind-the-scenes information. McCombs said there were 47,698 visitors at the library last year (July 1, 2014/June 30, 2015) and there were 49,601 items circulated. The Delta Community Library

has received the 5-Star Library Award from the Library Journal three times in the past five years and it is because the stats show library use in relation to the small population served. More than 500 hours are donated by volunteers every year.

- Libraries follow a reconsideration policy whenever a book is challenged and this year's challenge was And Tango Makes Three, a story about two male penguins at the Central Park Zoo who adopt an egg and became a happy family. McCombs reported the book was retained in the library's collection after it was challenged and Banned Books Week will be held at the end of the month. She said people are always astonished about what books are banned and the reasons why.

- Library staff proctored 24 tests in the past year for distance education students from seven different universities.
- 2015 operating expenses (\$226,348) increased from 2014 (\$202,197) and 2013 (\$203,914), but McCombs said she is hopeful that utilities will decrease with new LED lights. She also said she felt it was very cost effective to be open 52 weeks per year, six days each week.

- Martha Redbone will perform at the Fort Greely Aurora Community Activity Center (CAC) October 11, 7:00pm. McCombs said there will be an Open Post, admission is by donation, and receipts from meals and beverages purchased at the CAC will be used to offset the cost associated with dressing rooms.

- September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. New patrons from Fort Greely will be entered into a drawing for a free pizza from the CAC and new patrons from Delta have a chance to win a pizza from Pizza Bella.

- The Delta Imagination Library will host a "mixer" on September 19 at 6:30pm to encourage new membership. 260 children under the age of five are in the Delta program.

- Junction Readers Book Club members read more than 4,000 pages in the past year and more than 29,000 since starting in 2008.

**Public Health & Safety** – Audrey Brown reported the Delta Health Fair will be held on September 26, 8:00am to noon, at the Delta Elementary School. Alaska Health Fair, Inc. provides lab tests at reduced rates and mail results directly to the customer. Fasting is required for some tests. Volunteers go early, so they can get their blood drawn and eat a healthy breakfast before serving the public. Delta Medical Transport and IGA Food Cache are this year's sponsors.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - none

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#00121 to State of Alaska, DEC in the amount of \$398 for Sanitary Survey Inspection at rink (issued 9-3-15)

PO#00122 to State of Alaska, DEC in the amount of \$398 for Sanitary Survey Inspection at library (9-3-15)

PO#00124 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$8,497.27 for heating and equipment fuel

PO#00125 to PC Scale, Inc in the amount of \$2,189.00 for landfill scoreboard

PO#00126 to Delta Concrete in the amount of \$6,730.00 to grade roads, 8-25 / 8-28

PO#00127 to Airport Equipment Rentals in the amount of \$20,000.00 for excavator rental

PO#00128 to My Boiler Man in the amount of \$446.00 for maintenance, repair, and service of City Hall boiler

PO#00129 to My Boiler Man in the amount of \$290.00 to service boiler at library

PO#00141 to Airport Equipment Rentals in the amount of \$17,900.00 to rent rock truck 8-20 / 9-17

PO#00142 to Rent-a-Can of Delta in the amount of \$600.00 to rent outhouses at the City Park

PO#00143 to Goodyear Commercial Tire in the amount of \$850.00 to repair landfill Volvo loader tire

PO#00144 to AT&T Alascom in the amount of \$671.12 for September 9-1-1 phones and power

PO#00145 to RWC International in the amount of \$150,706.00 for new plow truck

PO#00146 to Hale & Associates in the amount of \$5,049.67 for insurance on rental equipment

PO#00147 to Fairbanks Concert Association in the amount of \$2,000.00 for shared expenses for library events

PO#00148 to Airport Equipment Rentals in the amount of \$386,450.62 for motor grader

Saarloos moved to approve purchase orders 00121, 00122, 00124 through 00129, and 00141 through 00148 as presented; Brown seconded.

Prestwich referred to 00121 and 00122 and reported that the State conducts inspections on water systems every five years. They failed to test the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena last year, which put it on the same rotation as the library. Inspections address water systems, not sewage, and water samples from every City facility are done quarterly (through ARS Aleut Analytical).

Hallgren reported RWC International's invoice (00145) covered the award (\$147,878) and a change order to shorten the wheel base (\$2,828).

Prestwich reported Landfill Operator Richard Mitchell ran over a rod that pierced the sidewall of a loader tire. The Goodyear repairman attempted to repair it onsite, but changed it out with an old tire and repaired it in Fairbanks (00143).

Saarloos asked about warranty on the new plow truck (00145).

Discussion followed regarding an inspection planned in the next few days and adjusting a "stop" to prevent the plow from impacting the front chrome bumper.

Musgrove reported a spare step was attached to the boom on the road grader when it was delivered and he suspects it will take a hit from the blade.

Discussion followed regarding the old grader being 35 years old and Airport Equipment Rentals conducting an inspection on the new one.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with six Council members (Degnan, Saarloos, Brennan, Brown, Musgrove, Hallgren).

**Resolution 2016-02, A Resolution Amending the Employee Salary / Step Schedule for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska and Adopting a CPI Index for Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)**

Musgrove moved to approve Resolution 2016-02 amending the Employee Salary/Step Schedule and adopting a CPI Index; Saarloos seconded.

Hallgren said the resolution would amend the *City of Delta Junction Employee Policy Plan* to include the salary/step matrix that was adopted by resolution on July 7, 2015 with explanations of employee grade assignments and regulations for the matrix schedule. A COLA (cost of living adjustment) would be applied to the figures in the matrix each year. The CPI (Consumer Price Index) is a percentage of inflation from the previous calendar year and Resolution 2016-02 proposes to adopt the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers for Anchorage. Anchorage is the only city in Alaska that has a CPI calculated by the Federal government and its percentage is the same as what the State uses for retirees' COLA.

Musgrove questioned accepting the percentage increase between steps 5 and 7 in the hourly wages of the Employee Salary Schedule FY16 because it is more than the standard (7%).

Hallgren recommended accepting the schedule that was already adopted. The footnote declaring the discrepancy was placed on the schedule for historical purposes. The salary schedule was adopted through the budget ordinance and it must be changed through an ordinance process.

Prestwich said no one fits into Grade 5/Step 6, but Rob Bevard, General Maintenance, will in May 2016. She explained calculating raises and, because employees were already in pay scales for Step 5 and Step 7, she divided those wages to come up with wages for Step 6. Decreasing it would put the employee's wages less than what they were currently making. Discussion followed regarding the schedule effective July 1, 2015, differences between Step 5 and Step 6 (10.5%) and Step 6 and Step 7 (10.25%), and whether the discrepancy could be corrected in the future (by ordinance).

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five voting in favor (Degnan, Saarloos, Musgrove, Brennan, Hallgren) and one abstaining (Brown).

Brown stated she abstained because she was uncomfortable voting for what she did not fully understand.

Hallgren called for objection to Brown abstaining with none being offered.

**Resolution 2016-03, A Resolution to Approve Amendments to the Cooperative Participation Agreement and Bylaws of the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association Inc. Effective July 1, 2015**

Saarloos moved to approve Resolution 2016-03 to amend the Cooperative Participation Agreement and Bylaws of the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association Inc. (AMLJIA) as presented; Brown seconded.

Discussion followed regarding the City's participation with AMLJIA and Hallgren recommending accepting the amendments and authorizing him to sign the agreement.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with six Council members (Saarloos, Brennan, Musgrove, Brown, Degnan, Hallgren).

**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Flower Cole reported the next Chamber of Commerce luncheon will be held at the Trophy Lodge on September 1 and the new Fort Greely Commander, Lt. Col. Detrice Mosby, will be the guest speaker.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 7:27pm. Motion carried.