



**City Council Minutes
December 1, 2015 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, December 1, 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 JW Musgrove, Lou Heinbockel
Sebastian Saarloos, William Brennan, Freda Degnan, Audrey Brown
City employees present: City Administrator Mary Leith, Library Director Joyce McCombs, City Clerk Pat White
Special guests, Senator Mike Dunleavy and Representative Jim Colver, and five members from the community were present and the meeting was partially broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Musgrove moved to approve the December 1, 2015 agenda; Brown seconded.
Hallgren reported topics that would be postponed to the December 15 Council meeting:
✓ *Unfinished Business: Land Clearing at Delta Airport Subdivision*
✓ *Unfinished Business: Purchase Order #0317*
✓ *New Business: 2016 Holiday Schedule*

Hallgren called for objection with none being offered. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Brown moved to approve the minutes from the November 24, 2015 meeting; Degnan seconded.
White reported two edits and a clarification that were made to the November 24 draft minutes.
Hallgren called for objection with none being offered. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

John Lewis reported receipt of two weather monitors, all-hazards alert devices, from the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management at JBER (Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson). He presented one to the City Council to be kept at City Hall. The other one was given to the school district. Lewis said the weather monitors give advance warnings about evacuations, hazards, and other emergencies that affect the local area. He will try to get monitors for First Student (school bus service) and the Elementary School also.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

State House Representative Jim Colver briefed the Council and listening audience about concerns that generated from meetings held in Delta on March 5 and May 8. He explained progress on improving the Tanana River boat launch, acquiring Tract B, property adjacent to the High School, for expansion of the Career Advancement Center, high gas prices, budget cuts that affect funding for education and maintenance of State highways, replacement of Ruby Creek Bridge at Mile 235 Richardson Highway, and possibly repaving 20-to-30-mile sections south of Delta to Valdez over the next three or four years.
State Senator Mike Dunleavy explained the drop in oil prices, the challenge to reduce the budget, the \$3 million-plus deficit, and exhausting savings within three or four years if oil prices and oil production do not improve. He said most legislators support cuts, which could be between \$700 million and \$1 billion, but the budget cuts would affect schools, cities (Revenue Sharing), and roads. Cuts will not be known until Governor Walker delivers his proposed budget on December 15. Dunleavy said he supported reducing the size of government and discussing the Permanent Fund Dividend, but he did not support taxes or user fees because if every Alaskan, 730,000 men, women, and children, were to pay \$5,000 each it would not close the deficit gap. Dunleavy said he believes Alaska has a great future, even though the State is currently in a down cycle.

Colver said Alaska must be prudent with existing resources and must establish a long-range plan. The public needs to be involved in decisions and Alaska needs a gas line for its future.

Discussion followed regarding a feasibility study on the gas pipeline if it passes on December 4th, Dawn Grossmann serving as a local liaison for Representative Jim Colver and Jessica Leija as liaison for Senator Mike Dunleavy, smaller communities depending on Revenue Sharing and it being \$140,687 of the City's FY2016 budget, the City conveying any possible Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funds last year to Partners for Progress, the State of Alaska's mandate to adopt an operating budget, and the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund (CBRF) that was established in 1990.

Heinbockel asked that the State Legislature forgive the no-interest loan, which happened during Tony Knowles' administration when Fort Greely was downsizing and put up for reuse (late 1990s). Allvest proposed a prison to a private group of local residents (Citizens for the Advancement of Delta), but the Legislature would not deal with a private entity, so the City, as the only local government, assumed their role. The City chose to back out of the sole-source agreement and Allvest immediately sued. The lawsuit was settled and the City was left with a \$1.2 million debt. The State of Alaska paid it and the City repays the no-interest loan to the State by paying \$50,000 annually. Heinbockel said the current landfill expansion project will require another half million dollars to complete. He asked that the State excuse the debt, so that the amount spent on payments can be put toward funding the landfill project. It would accomplish both, eliminating the debt and finishing the new cell development at the landfill. Heinbockel added that he was adamantly opposed to the State spending \$60,000 to survey a road to Ambler and he was angered by the State not being able to maintain rest stops on its highways and charging people to park at State recreation sites.

Hallgren agreed with requesting forgiveness of the prison debt (\$650,000 outstanding).

Musgrove expressed disappointment in forecasts which resulted in the State's current deficit problem and that the current oil flow is up slightly, but nowhere near what it was in the 1980s.

Brennan thanked the two legislators, particularly for assisting with the prison debt.

Discussion followed regarding gathering history about the debt to deliver to Senator Dunleavy and Representative Colver and making progress on property ownership for the expansion of the Career Advancement Center.

Hallgren called to recess at 6:09pm and reconvened the meeting at 6:19pm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Land Clearing at Delta Airport Subdivision – postponed to December 15, 2015

Purchase Order #0317 to Delta Wind in the amount of \$889 – postponed to December 15, 2015

Capital Improvement Projects

Hallgren asked to create a Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) list and prioritize it at the December 15 meeting. He supported Lou Heinbockel's suggestion to use unrestricted City funds to pay for the "big dig" at the landfill if the State would forgive the annual \$50,000 payments.

Heinbockel said he did not agree that the existing cell at the landfill will last another five to seven years as projected, but, if the annual payment were to be excused, the City could match it for three to five years, which would be enough to finish the landfill excavation project.

Hallgren said there is approximately \$100,000 remaining in the existing grant and he felt it would be advantageous to restart the "big dig" next spring. He said Mary Leith found that the equipment would be available at the same rate as this year and City employees would perform the work. He added that most legislative appropriations do not go into effect until July 1, so grant funds can be devoted to the project as long as it is spent by June 30, 2016.

Saarloos agreed with using grant funds and, if CIP funds are granted, the project could be completed in September and October. He suggested using the Mt. McKinley account (\$133,889.70 as of October 14, 2015) toward the landfill project. He clarified that the whole cell needed to be completed before any trash is put in it, so that its 20-year lifespan does not drop to ten. Referring to the CIP list, he asked to include road upgrades, specifically adding D-1 material to gravel roads. Discussion followed regarding constructing eight-foot wide paved pathways at the park, part of the 2014 CIP request, to be completed next summer, putting the unfunded emergency generator to serve the City "campus" (City Hall, Community Center, and Library) back on the list, one-third of the landfill cell project completed, \$300,000+ left in the landfill closure account, a \$25,000 grant for the heating system at the library, replacing the Ford diesel truck with leftover funds from the plow/sander grant, grant funds available to fix the septic system at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena, and continuing to request funding for Partners for Progress.

Hallgren reported one of the chimneys at the Community Center is leaking from outside and a section of the ceiling is showing water damage. More information will be known once City employees are able to look into necessary repairs.

Saarloos reported that the (2014 CIP-funded) City Park outhouses that were installed in September were because of requests from local citizens and he encouraged the listening audience to give input for 2016 projects within the next two weeks.

Heinbockel asked to not request CIP funding if the City has necessary funds to fix the Community Center roof.

NEW BUSINESS

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 218093 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$1,737.60 for fuel to heat landfill shop and run landfill equipment

CK# 218094 to Morley Electric in the amount of \$8,645.00 for contract work at Public Works building (lift station for septic system and air compressor installation)

CK# 218095 to BDO USA LLP in the amount of \$27,409.00 for initial billing of annual audit

Heinbockel moved to approve check numbers 218093 through 218095 as presented; Saarloos seconded.

Discussion followed regarding status of projects, whether they are near completion (218094), and whether to expect more billings from BDO (218095).

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

2016 Holiday Schedule – postponed to December 15, 2015

REPORTS

Emergency Services – Freda Degnan asked about the status of the Fire Station doorbell and signage.

Leith reported Public Works employees would finish wiring the doorbell within the next day or two and she is still working on ordering decals for vehicles and signs for the Fire Station, Public Works building, and Park outhouses.

Discussion followed regarding Leith using the (2012) City logo for decals and signs.

Airport – JW Musgrove reported he is creating a rate schedule for airport usage that can be published, similar to standard forms for use of other City facilities.

City Administrator – Mary Leith reported:

- Ordinance 2016-01, which was adopted on November 24, was emailed to Taunnie Boothby, Floodplain Manager with the Division of Community and Regional Affairs, on November 25. Boothby said FEMA requires additional documentation before finalizing withdrawal from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and she forwarded the ordinance onto Karen Wood-McGuinness, FEMA Region X NFIP Specialist. Boothby offered assistance should the City need flood risk reduction information or recommendations in the future.

- The second reading, public hearing, and adoption of Ordinance 2016-02 will be on the December 15 agenda. The Code of Ordinances pertaining to the section on the cemetery was last revised in 2004, but plot fees have not increased in 32 years. [Plot prices increased from \$130 to \$200 on August 2, 1983 per Ordinance 84-03.] Leith suggested the new rate of \$450/plot go into effect the first of the year.

Finance – Lou Heinbockel reported he appreciated Finance Officer Stephanie Prestwich issuing the Bank Register Report and that he was astounded to see that over \$114,000 was spent in November.

Hallgren said grant project expenses are identified in the report, but are not included in the \$1.756 million budget.

School District – William Brennan reported the school district is hosting a meeting at 5:30 on December 3 to discuss its strategic plan and the Elementary School Christmas Concert will be held at the High School on December 16, 6:00-7:30.

Lands – Sebastian Saarloos reported DNR is close to recording and deeding the Triangle Property to the City.

Hallgren reported he is halfway through drafting an agreement for the Chamber of Commerce's use of the Visitors Center.

Library – Sebastian Saarloos reported:

- The library will host the Delta Imagination Library's annual pajama party on December 4. Joyce McCombs will read *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* and children will participate in a holiday craft and cookie decorating.
- The Library Board held their annual elections last month and welcomed new board member Sheryl Seif. Officers will be elected by the Board on December 8. The Library Board will be working with the Foraker group and have recently set up a new account designated for an endowment and/or building fund.
- Sr. Library Clerk Angie Barnard is Co-Director of the Community Choir, which will perform at the Fort Greely Chapel on December 17 at 7:00pm.
- Library staff will host the annual Christmas party for City employees on December 11.

Discussion followed regarding an electrical outage causing outdoor lights at the library to stay on, setting outdoor lights to be on between 5:00 and 10:00pm, security lights left on inside the building, and Wi-Fi turned off each night at 10:00pm.

Public Health & Safety – Audrey Brown reported a Grief Share program, *Surviving the Holidays*, is scheduled in the office annex of the Delta Presbyterian – Faith Lutheran Church on December 6 for people who have lost a loved one.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel asked to surplus the fire truck that the City received from Juneau (2001) and also dispose of the 35-year old grader, which might be worth up to \$15,000.

Discussion followed regarding storing vehicles in the Fire Station where they can be serviced, recent damage to the fence at the City Park, and cleaning out the 2004, E450 ambulance before giving it to the Manley Hot Springs Volunteer Fire Department (as discussed November 3, 2015).

Emergency Preparedness / LEPC – Audrey Brown reported she would like to attend the *Natural Disaster Awareness for Community Leaders* training in Fairbanks on December 11.

Hallgren called for objection with none being offered.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Al Edgren referenced conversations earlier in the meeting about significant cuts in the State of Alaska budget and he said one person mans the Delta Forestry office, a result of urbanization of the Division of Forestry; rural areas are closing and being managed from Fairbanks or Anchorage. He asked the City Council to voice concern about keeping services in rural areas because if they move the initial attack force to Fairbanks, it causes an even bigger delay in responding to wild fires. He added that there is presently no staff supporting the \$2 million dollar timber industry in Delta.

Saarloos said he hoped the Council can make some headway with the marijuana issue.

Discussion followed regarding getting public input, introducing an ordinance to ban commercial marijuana establishments inside the City limits, opportunity for public input during the second reading of the ordinance, ruling about the ten-mile radius, more information needed about State regulations before making decisions, the State not issuing marijuana licenses until May 2016, and Saarloos gathering information and presenting options to the City Council in hopes of taking some form of action.

Tim Holoday Delta Wind reporter, suggested a special meeting to get input from the community.

ADJOURNMENT

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 8:12pm; Brennan seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: December 15, 2015