



**City Council Minutes
September 6, 2016 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, September 6, 2016 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
Freda Degnan, Sebastian Saarloos, William Brennan

City Council members excused: Lou Heinbockel, Audrey Brown

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

Five members from the community and two out-of-town guests were present and the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Musgrove moved to approve the September 6, 2016 agenda; Brennan seconded.

Hallgren reported Dawn Grossmann would speak under *Comments from the Audience*.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Saarloos moved to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2016 regular meeting as presented; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Dawn Grossmann read her letter, dated September 6, requesting support to stop the bank erosion along the Tanana River that threatens the Big Delta State Historical Park. She asked the Council to “consider donating landfill rock to buffer and protect the 250 feet of embankment ...” and she said the rock could comprise \$34,000 of the project’s expenses.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

Brooks Ludwig, Northern Region Superintendent, Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation (907-451-2698), reported 60 feet of riverbank has been lost in the past 20 years, 15 feet in the past year alone. Three hundred fifty feet of riverbank in front of Rika’s Roadhouse was hardened in 2006. Ice jammed last spring and forced water to the west side of the Tanana River, damaging private property upstream, south of Rika’s Roadhouse and the Big Delta Historical Park. Four hundred fifty feet of the riverbank is now threatened, but the most urgent is 250 feet. Ludwig explained the dramatic changes from May to July, moving one of the telegraph structures away from the river, and taking action during cold weather while the Tanana is receded. Alaska State Parks has not received any Capital funds in the past two years, but they were able to glean \$100,000 from 2014 and 2015 projects to put toward the Big Delta erosion. They hope to generate \$50,000 from crowd fundraising, which closes on September 23 (fundyourpark.org/campaign/detail/4717). He reported large donations between \$10,000 and \$29,000, the engineer’s estimate of \$319,000, soliciting requests for proposals by December, completing the 250-foot erosion project by April 2017, which will also prevent the river from cutting behind the 2006 project and taking out Rika’s Roadhouse, the ferryman’s cabin, and the vehicle scales. Ludwig asked the City Council to consider donating 1,200 to 1,500 cubic yards of rock, roughly 100 feet by 15 feet, from the municipal landfill. They are looking into blasting boulders to get the preferred fractured rock, but they are appreciative of whatever they can get. Discussion followed regarding getting riprap from Donnelly Creek, protecting the 1900-era buildings and buried artifacts, the historical park erosion garnering nationwide attention, and the public issuing checks to State of Alaska and giving them to Ludwig or Monica Gray, Natural Resource Technician in the Delta office (895-2113).

Saarloos suggested offering incentives such as issuing a one-year pass to camp in State parks for a \$100 or \$500 donation.

Musgrove moved to donate any usable rock from the City Landfill to protect the Big Delta State Historical Park, as long as it is not designated for cover material; Saarloos seconded.

Discussion followed regarding the project engineer inspecting landfill rocks next week, whether Parks would provide equipment to load and haul rock, landfill rocks not suitable for fill, but could serve as barriers along the top shoulder of the embankment, and incorporating root wads into the project.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Brennan, Saarloos, Musgrove, Degnan, Hallgren). Senator Mike Dunleavy reported Pogo has some interesting ideas about the erosion problem and are willing to help with the project. Changing subjects, he said the legislature is beginning to address Alaska's fiscal issues. He believed they will arrive with a balanced budget even though 66% of revenue was lost in roughly 18 months and oil production nor the price of oil are expected to rebound.

CORRESPONDENCE

Municipal Election - Notice of Vacancies – Filing Deadline = September 9

White reported the filing period for the October 4 Municipal Election opened on Thursday, August 25 and will close at 5:00pm September 9. Ballots will be inspected at the September 20 meeting, so absentee voting can be available at City Hall on Wednesday, September 21.

Hallgren reported that he authorized City staff to oversee absentee voting for the School Board (REAA) Election in October and the General Election in November. (Busy Bee provided absentee voting to local residents after the Alaska Court System stopped in 2008 and the City stepped in to help during this year's Primary Election after Busy Bee's owner announced they were closing.) Since authorizing staff to oversee absentee voting on August 16, Eileen Herman bought back the business and Busy Bee reopened today. They also contracted with the Division of Elections to oversee absentee voting two weeks prior to all state-run elections, including the 2016 elections in October and November. [Busy Bee hours of business are Monday/Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm.]

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Delta Medical Transport Proposal – Use Delta Rescue Squad Ambulance(s)

Leith reported no agreement has been made or action taken since Tony White, owner of Delta Medical Transport, requested early payment (May 3, 2016) of the contractual agreement (\$12,500 payable July 1, 2016). The electrical system failed in one ambulance on July 7 and their second ambulance went down on July 14. They were given permission to use the 2011 Delta Rescue Squad ambulance on July 15 and, as of September 2, they had logged ten runs.

Hallgren said arrangements to use the Rescue Squad ambulance(s) will be made once DMT ambulances are back in service. The contract states DMT has permission to utilize Rescue Squad ambulances during emergency situations. Discussion followed regarding whether City insurance covers DMT using City-owned ambulances, a possible lease-to-own arrangement, and direction from State grant administrators to put any revenue generated from leasing the ambulance back into medical services.

Hallgren said he nominated Delta Medical Transport for the Outstanding Ambulance Award in the Governor's Annual Awards for Emergency Medical Services. More information will be online (sremsc.org/) as it becomes available and awards will be announced at the State EMS Symposium November 2/5 in Anchorage.

NEW BUSINESS

City Per Diem Rate

Musgrove questioned why the City's standard mileage reimbursement (56¢ per mile) is different from the IRS published rate (54¢), which changed last January (2016). He felt \$60/day per diem was reasonable, but disagreed with issuing reimbursement for travel before it has occurred. The current process is to reconcile expense after the function is over.

Musgrove moved to align City mileage reimbursement with the current IRS published rate, effective September 6, 2016, and to automatically realign it in the future whenever the IRS rate changes; Saarloos seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Musgrove, Degnan, Saarloos, Brennan, Hallgren).

Musgrove questioned how far in advance is acceptable to issue payments for travel reimbursement.

Discussion followed regarding whether ten days, two weeks, or five working days prior to departure would be adequate.

Musgrove moved to establish a policy to issue travel advance reimbursement no more than five working days before an event; Saarloos seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Saarloos, Brennan, Degnan, Musgrove, Hallgren).

Second Reading, Public Hearing, and Adoption of Ordinance 2017-01, An Ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska Providing for Amendment of the FY16 Budget

Saarloos moved to open the public hearing for adoption of Ordinance 2017-01; Musgrove seconded. Motion carried.

Hallgren explained changes to line items in the FY16 budget (excused rent for Visitor Center, increased lawn maintenance at both the park and the cemetery, increased fees for Fairbanks Dispatch services, increased expenses at the park, and added expenses to construct West Second Street). He called for public comment with none being offered.

Saarloos moved to close the public hearing portion of Ordinance 2017-01; Musgrove seconded. Motion carried.

Musgrove moved to adopt Ordinance 2017-01 to amend the FY16 budget as presented; Brennan seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Saarloos, Musgrove, Degnan, Brennan, Hallgren).

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 218556 to Follet School Solutions in the amount of \$1,025.50 for library software renewal

CK# 218557 to Interior Excavation & Trucking in the amount of \$27,560.00 for landfill hydro-seeding project

CK# 218558 to Aetna in the amount of \$21,859.80 for September group health insurance

CK# 218559 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$1,117.60 for fuel delivered to landfill equipment tank

Saarloos moved to approve check numbers 218556 through 218559 as presented; Musgrove seconded.

Discussion followed regarding recent whether fuel is suited for off-road equipment (CK# 218559) and software renewal price unchanged since 2004 (CK# 218556).

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Musgrove, Brennan, Saarloos, Degnan, Hallgren).

REPORTS

Airport – JW Musgrove reported:

- The surface of the runway is in good condition, but he is making inquiries to rent a compactor for a day. Area pilots generally volunteer their time to do the maintenance work.

- Hunting season has not affected traffic at the airport, but a fueling operation was set up in early September to help with a boating incident on the Goodpaster River.

White reported she issued inquiries on August 23 and September 2 about interest in the new airport subdivision lots. Ten of the original 27 are still interested in the 21 lots, six have dropped from the list, and the rest have not responded. Lot sizes (1.271 to 1.776 acres) and prices (estimated \$12,000 to \$15,000 in July 2014) were relayed in the emails.

Discussion followed regarding responses: how long it's taken to develop the subdivision and considering the proposed user fee (\$500 annual assessment fee) as a form of taxation instead of its intent, to contribute toward airport maintenance.

Mayor – Pete Hallgren reported:

- He, Saarloos, and Leith attended the AML (Alaska Municipal League) Summer Conference in Wasilla August 17/19.

Leith said big topics were the State budget, taxation, fundraising, PERS (Public Employees' Retirement System) pension fund, and 2014 marijuana legislation. She also explained a proposal to attach a voter registration to yearly PFD (Permanent Fund Dividend) applications.

Discussion followed regarding presenting a draft resolution on September 20 to support the effort to increase voter numbers.

Hallgren reported the average municipality has either ignored marijuana legalization or spent a tremendous amount of money on it. The ten-mile regulation is still in effect (if a municipality in the unorganized borough bans marijuana, the State automatically extends that ruling ten miles beyond the municipality's borders) as well as a requirement for a petition signed by a majority of residents, 21 and older, who live in the unorganized borough and within one mile of a proposed marijuana establishment. The ten-mile rule trumps the one-mile, but both impact the local area. [The City of Delta Junction adopted Ordinance 2016-03 on February 2, 2016, prohibiting commercial sales and businesses inside city limits.]

- An Air Force band from Hawaii will perform at Fort Greely on October 23.

Discussion followed regarding capability of the Community Activity Center (CAC) to accommodate the 12-piece band.

- Recent discussion with Senator Lisa Murkowski included 1) PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes), which is now automatically included in the congressional budget and is expected to increase slightly and 2) the need to extend passing lanes on the Richardson Highway.

- He, Brennan, and local veterans met with Josh Revak from Senator Sullivan's Anchorage office on August 31.

Brennan reported Revak spent a whole week visiting with veterans in the community, making sure they are aware of benefits that are available to them and to intervene on their behalf. They hope to have a veteran's support officer in the community in the near future. In addition, it was suggested to establish a veteran's home in the Delta area.

City Administrator – Mary Leith reported:

- Summer hire jobs have ended and water has been turned off at the park and the cemetery.

- Salcha-Delta Soil & Water Conservation District personnel cut and cleared overgrowth near the park fences to prepare for herbicide application once they arrive.

- The new Ford pickup is scheduled to have the old Boss plow installed on September 8.

- There is a possibility of purchasing a four-wheeler with a blade or an older pickup with a blade to use around the landfill, in front of the garbage bins and around the gate. It would put less miles on the loader. She asked for input.

Discussion followed regarding waiting on input from Councilman Heinbockel.

City Clerk – Pat White reported:

- October 14 is the early registration deadline (discounted rate) to register for the AML Conference in Anchorage. Newly Elected Officials (NEO) training is November 14/15, regular conference sessions are November 16/17, and the AML business meeting, board elections, and board meeting are on November 18.
- The second regular Council meeting in November (15th) will be postponed to November 22.

Finance – Stephanie Prestwich reported new computers and laptops have arrived, auditors will be here the week of October 24, and she will research an alternate insurance once the audit is over.

Hallgren asked that local employees be part of the decision making before changing plans and types of medical benefits.

School District – William Brennan reported the school district issued a letter on August 24 asking for input from both parents and staff about a four-day school week. A draft plan will be presented in the next two or three months. Bill Burr is overseeing the project and interested volunteers can contact Sharon Waldo (895-4657 ext. 21 or swaldo@dgsd.us).

Lands – Sebastian Saarloos reported:

- He left a recorded message and sent an email to inquire about municipal entitlement on the Triangle property because the tracking site has not changed since May 2016.
- ARCS (Channel 17) is still building the high power digital translators, but unable to give a completion date.

Library – Sebastian Saarloos reported:

- Fiction, non-fiction, and juvenile fiction sections were recently weeded out to remove duplicate, damaged, and outdated materials. Some items were added to the book sale table along with a large selection of VHS tapes. The library now carries only DVDs. All sales are by donation.

- Baby Laptime resumes Tuesday, September 13 at 11:00 and Preschool Story Hour resumes Wednesday, September 14 at 10:00 and 11:15. There will be two sessions because of the large number of preschoolers. Parents can register by calling (895-4102) or stopping by the library.

- Joyce McCombs participated in a live video conference on August 26 via the Online with Libraries (OWL) network with librarians and children's program staff from Sitka, Homer, Skagway, Nome, and Kenai. They discussed space limitation, increasing use of electronic devices by children, book selections, handling mixed age groups, and encouraging parents to balance screen time with other activities like reading real books.

Emergency Preparedness / Public Health & Safety – Mary Leith reported in Audrey Brown's absence and said leadership training will be offered by Homeland Security & Emergency Management at City Hall on Saturday, September 24, 9:00 to 4:00, and the Alaska Health Fair is scheduled the same morning, 8:00am to noon, at the Delta Elementary School. Blood tests for B12 and Celiac Disease (gluten intolerance) will be offered in Delta for the first time in Alaska.

Public Works – Pete Hallgren reported in Lou Heinbockel's absence and said he and Leith authorized Mt. McKinley contractors to install a culvert on Kimball Street near the new bank location. The culvert does not appear to cause any problems with drainage, but City Administrator Mary Leith issued a letter stating Mt. McKinley will be responsible to divert any water runoff onto another portion of their property if necessary.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Musgrove reported there is no plan for the Visitor Center artwork (counter removed on May 7, 2016), although it has been stored altogether. He asked to move the wooden panels and inlaid rockwork to the Visitor Center for the winter, once the season ends, until word is received from the artists.

Leith said the undamaged wooden counter fronts can be used for wall hangings.

Tim Holoday, local newspaper reporter, said the countertop is part of Delta's history. He referenced an opinion piece that he wrote (August 18 edition of the Delta Wind) because of the number of local people who offered unsolicited comments. He asked the Council to make it right and put the counter back where it belongs.

LTC Detrice Mosby, Fort Greely Garrison Commander, said they are working with Fort Wainwright to cut costs; not realigning with them per recent rumors. She said the Civil Air Patrol moved to Fort Greely from Eielson Air Force Base in January and they are working to bring ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) to the Delta High School, they are continually encouraging the local community to attend Fort Greely events, and they are investigating cost savings to utilize the municipal landfill.

ADJOURNMENT

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 7:36pm; Brennan seconded.