



~~~~~  
**City Council Minutes**  
**August 4, 2015 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, August 4, 2015 at City Hall. Mayor Pete Hallgren called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00pm.

City Council members present: Mayor Pete Hallgren, Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith, JW Musgrove (telephonically)  
Audrey Brown, Freda Degnan, Sebastian Saarloos (appointed)

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

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

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Leith reported two additions to the agenda:

- *Letter of Resignation from Lonny Meeks* under *New Business* (page 4)
- *PO#00051 to Purchase Orders* under *New Business* (page 4)

White reported two additional changes to the agenda:

- *Consideration and Potential Hire of New City Administrator* would follow *Appointment to Seat E / Oath of Office*
- New topic, *Landfill Cell Construction Project*, would follow *New City Administrator* discussion (page 2)

Leith moved to approve the August 4, 2015 agenda as amended; Brown seconded. Motion carried.

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

Leith moved to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2015 meeting as presented; Musgrove seconded.

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

**APPOINTMENT TO FILL SEAT E / OATH OF OFFICE**

White stated one letter of interest was received for the Seat E vacancy, Sebastian Saarloos'.

Hallgren disclosed that Saarloos' family business, Delta Surveys, is presently working on the new landfill expansion project, but it is not a permanent job.

Saarloos referred to his time on the City Council (October 4, 2011 through September 17, 2013) and resigning because of moving out of the city limits and not being able to contract survey work from the City. He said he intended to live in the city limits for the duration of the Seat E term, he would abstain from voting on anything pertaining to cell development at the landfill, and he would be able to add an element of knowledge to Council discussion because of working on the project. Delta Surveys has completed all work on other City projects: Rest Haven Cemetery, Granite Avenue, Triangle, old rifle range, and Reeve Avenue.

Leith moved to accept Sebastian Saarloos' letter of interest and appoint him to fill the Council vacancy; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five voting (Leith, Degnan, Brown, Musgrove, and Hallgren).

Saarloos read the Oath of Office and took his seat at the Council table.

**Consideration and Potential Hire of New City Administrator**

Hallgren referred to the recent resignation of City Administrator Mike Tvenge, effective July 24, and explained that under the Delta Junction Code of Ordinances the administrator is an employee of the mayor. The City Administrator position was advertised within the State of Alaska with the first review scheduled for today, August 4. Ten responsive applications were received, but none came close to Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith's experience in municipal government and her history with the City; 27 years on the City Council, ten of them as mayor, directly supervising the past three administrators, Hallgren, Tvenge, and Bill Mandeville (mid-80s), and, due to multiple (11) years as Mayor Pro tem, she has been involved far beyond the duties of a normal Council member. He recommended hiring Leith with a start date of September 8, the day following Labor Day. Hallgren said he will be out-of-state August 5/14 and Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith will act as both Mayor and Interim City Administrator. Once Leith is hired, her position on the City Council would remain vacant

until the municipal election on October 6. Leith will attend the Alaska Municipal League (AML) Summer Conference for mayors and managers in Ketchikan August 16/21.

Discussion followed regarding the City of Nome hiring a local resident after searching for a manager for 11 months and Hallgren choosing to search locally before advertising nationwide.

Brown said hiring Leith will bring continuity and a vast history of experience.

Saarloos moved to hire Mary Leith as the new City Administrator; Brown seconded.

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

Hallgren referenced his memo, dated July 31, and said the recently adopted pay schedule sets out Leith's pay, which would be \$77,879 plus benefits with an additional 12.75% City contribution to a 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. (City Administrator is a non-PERS position.)

Discussion moved from *Additional Public Comments* (page 4)

Sherman Stebbins congratulated Leith as the new city administrator, but said he was disheartened with the hiring process. He said the Council had different options and basically dipped into the reserves to pay for a full-time administrator. Other options would have been to hire a part-time administrator for 25 to 30 hours each week or defund the position and let Council members take a more active role in the leadership of the community. He explained current world issues that could drive the cost of oil and create a worse scenario for the State of Alaska. He believes the City of Delta Junction will suffer from dwindling resources, which is why he proposed a bed tax to generate revenue (April 2015). He asked to consider options when finances become tighter.

Hallgren said the fiscal cliff is still two years away if all of the City's major funding goes away. The City received FY16 funding from Pogo (\$150,000), Revenue Sharing (\$141,115), and Federal PILT (\$909,489.98), which is almost \$80,000 short of what was budgeted (\$989,272). He agreed with Stebbins and said he expects the City Administrator position will become less demanding in the future.

Dana Mock congratulated Leith also, but said, "As an outside observer, the hiring process did not appear to be kosher." He questioned why applicants did not receive a phone call or opportunity for an interview and why a committee or panel was not called upon to make a group decision.

Hallgren said the City Administrator position was advertised statewide. Ten responsive applications were received, most of them within Alaska. The first review of applications was advertised for today, but nobody in town came close to Leith's qualifications and experience. Non-responsive applicants were asked to resubmit with information that was missing from their applications. Two applications were received from two previous administrators / managers.

Saarloos said the mayor made a recommendation and the Council made the decision to hire Leith.

Stebbins said he agreed with Mock, but also understood that the City Administrator serves at the pleasure of the Mayor.

Hallgren said he has been through several hiring processes, but has never been through one as easy as hiring Leith and, if she had no applied for the position, he would have asked for Council input before making a recommendation.

### **Landfill Cell Construction Project**

Hallgren referred to his memo dated August 4, 2015 and reported that the plan to develop the new landfill cell has already changed since equipment for the project was approved at the July 21 meeting. M2C1 worked on getting the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), necessary to stop erosion from hindering the project, and two of their employees are conducting the Certified Erosion and Sediment Control Lead (CESCL) inspections. Hallgren said the City is acting as the general contractor instead of putting the project out to bid and, because of that and dealing with many details, he asked M2C1 engineers to make suggestions whenever something could be useful to the City crew. He explained need for a second 40-ton rock truck (\$17,900 from Airport Equipment Rental plus \$3,000 delivery and \$1,500 pickup), which would cut costs and increase production by eliminating wait time. Secondly, he recommended renting an excavator with a thumb (\$17,000 from AER plus \$1,500 delivery and \$1,500 pickup) instead of renting the excavator without a thumb (\$13,500 from Global Equipment Services, approved on July 21). AER prices are based on 200 hours per month. The crew is on day two of the project, they are committed to working with the GES excavator for another 28 days, but they would like the excavator with thumb delivered by August 26. Lastly, Hallgren asked to hire a another journeyman heavy equipment operator to operate the second rock truck at \$35/hour while at the work site and a lesser pay while traveling to the work site (\$17.56).

Discussion followed regarding a number of years remaining in the current landfill cell, AER reserving and delivering another excavator to the landfill by August 24 or 25, and the three operators checking in each morning at the Public Works building before driving to the landfill.

Leith moved to 1) obtain a second 40-ton rock truck from Airport Equipment Rentals for \$17,900.00/month plus delivery and pick up (\$4,500.00), 2) obtain an excavator with a thumb from Airport Equipment Rentals for \$17,000.00/month plus

delivery and pick up (\$3,000.00), and 3) hire a temporary journeyman heavy equipment operator at \$35.00 per hour prior to renting more equipment; Brown seconded.

**Motion passed** on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Brown, Degnan, Leith, Saarloos, Musgrove, and Hallgren).

### **REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Diane Sam introduced herself as a Local Government Specialist with the Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA). Aside from working on the community mapping project, she provides land management and planning assistance to small municipalities across the State of Alaska. She distributed *Planning and Land Management Section Community Mapping* brochures that were updated July 2015 and said the Legislature provides grant funding to DCRA, but requires a 50-percent match. Priorities were to map communities in the North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, Denali Borough (Anderson, Healy, McKinley Park), and Alaska Highway region (Delta Junction, Big Delta, Dot Lake, Dry Creek, Eagle/Eagle Village, Healy Lake, Northway, Tetlin, Tok). Sam said the Northwest Arctic Borough was done in January and the North Slope Borough communities map was done in June. Referring to her letter, dated June 22, 2015, Sam explained an inter-governmental flood risk management team known as the Silver Jackets who will apply for matching funds with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to map two flood-risk projects, one for Delta Junction and the other for Eagle, Tetlin, and a portion of Tok. Whether they are successful will not be known until October or November. The Delta Junction project is estimated to cost \$175,000 and of that, \$87,500 is needed for the match. Mid-September 2016 is the last opportunity to get the aerial photography because long shadows throw everything out of proportion thereafter and the legislative grant ends June 30, 2017.

Discussion followed regarding whether Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) or other local entities would support the mapping project, comparing DCRA maps with Google Earth, the last profile map dated 1980, survey information not being mapped unless property is recorded, maps considered a thorough land audit that are used to show lot lines, public infrastructure, and land uses (i.e. old dumpsites, future boat ramp or emergency use area, etc.), capabilities of overlaying the City's existing address system and other information, ways to partner (issue Request for Proposal, select a contractor, participate in monthly teleconferences, pay invoices that are previously approved by the project manager, and identify public facilities), the importance of having local input, DCRA acting managers or co-managers, less than a handful of companies that fly and take low-level photography, more companies that collect survey data, and the City issuing a letter to support the Corps' efforts in applying for matching funds to map Delta Junction.

Sam encouraged the City Council to comment on the maps, even if choosing not to be a financial partner. As the project manager she would provide periodic updates.

Hallgren called for a recess at 7:05pm and reconvened at 7:12pm.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **Gaming Permit Application – Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association**

White reported Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association's gaming permit application is new to Delta Junction. They intend to hold raffles and a moose derby. A hunt is not required to win one of the 30 prizes in the \$5-ticket raffle. Tickets for the Big Bull Moose Derby are \$20 each and must be purchased prior to moose season. Prizes are given for three categories: Largest three overall, largest in the Ladies Division, and largest bull taken in the Junior Division (under 16). Where the moose is shot does not matter, but the rack needs hauled to one or more of the five measuring stations to compete. Contact the Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association (488-2884) for more information.

Saarloos moved to show no objection to Tanana Valley Sportsmen's gaming permit application; Musgrove seconded.

**Motion passed** by unanimous consent.

### **REPORTS**

**Emergency Services** – Audrey Brown reported there are still over 200 active wildfires in Alaska, even though the rain and cooler temperatures have brought relief. She cautioned everyone from being casual while burning.

**Airport** – JW Musgrove reported some mowing was done at the airport and they intend to do more if weather cooperates.

**Cemetery** – Mary Leith reported the granite memorial wall has been mounted in the center of Rest Haven Cemetery and three gravesites have been prepared for winter burials.

**Mayor / City Administrator** – Pete Hallgren reported:

- He reviewed the Liewer Community Trail between the High School track and Harper Avenue. The Delta Junction Trails Association (DJTA) received a \$40,000 grant and will begin construction on the hiking and ski trail. Portions of the trail are located on school district property, Ron Liewer's property on Harper Avenue, and it crosses a portion of Quartz Avenue, an undeveloped platted street.

Saarloos said Delta Surveys is marking property lines and will later survey it. There will be three separate easements, one each for the school, Ron Liewer, and the City.

Hallgren reported Resolution 2015-03, dated November 4, 2014, authorizes him to issue a non-exclusive license for DJTA to cross Quartz Avenue. The trail will connect to the park, the library, the Richardson Highway, and the path that leads to the campground. It will later tie into the River Walk Trail, which will be located west of the Richardson Highway.

- The new plow/sander truck is ready to be shipped and is expected to arrive within the next two weeks.
- A permit application was filed today by M2C1 Engineering for the park outhouses. The goal is to have the project completed before winter.

Discussion followed regarding locating a crane to install the outhouses.

- He and Tvenge met with Chamber Board members on July 16 to discuss use of the Visitor Center and he will draft a potential agreement at a later date.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported:

- The filing period for the October 6 municipal election is August 27 through September 11. Candidate packets will be available on August 7, but filing will not be accepted until August 27. Four seats will be on the ballot: Seat A, a three-year term, which is currently held by Mary Leith, Seat D, a one-year term, currently held by Freda Degnan, Seat E, a three-year term, which is now held by Sebastian Saarloos, and Seat F, a two-year term, which is vacant (see Lonny Meeks' resignation at bottom of page 4).
- City staff (Letha Burcham and Pat White) received a good report from passport inspectors on July 22.

**Library** – Mary Leith reported library staff are regrouping since summer activities have ended.

**Community Outreach** – Sebastian Saarloos suggested using a large monitor or screen that links to a computer to search for a piece of equipment and also display agendas, presentations, maps, purchases, or anything related to meeting topics.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - none

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#00027 to Arctic Office Products in the amount of \$746.92 for white board for finance office, file cabinet for Public Works, and time card machine for scale house at landfill

PO#00028 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$1,109.90 for landfill gas and oil

PO#00029 to Bristol Engineering Services in the amount of \$31,571.25 for contract work on landfill expansion, 5th billing

PO#00030 to GES Rental LLC in the amount of \$18,500.00 for dump truck rental, July 29/August 26

PO#00031 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$5,150.00 for legal services (USARAK)

PO#00032 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$2,500.00 for legal services (NFIP, DMT contract, USARAK)

PO#00033 to John Johnston in the amount of \$511.00 for Library Internet conversion on July 24/25

PO#00034 to Med-Tech Resource in the amount of \$1,929.65 for Delta Medical Transport supplies

PO#00035 to NC Machinery in the amount of \$7,853.83 for D6 and Skidsteer repairs

PO#00051 to Aetna in the amount of \$15,888.14 for employee health insurance, August payment

Leith moved to approve purchase orders 00027 through 00035 and 00051 as presented; Saarloos seconded.

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

### **Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2016-01, An Ordinance Repealing Code of Ordinances Chapter 4.30, Flood Hazards (Removing the City of Delta Junction from participation in the National Flood Insurance Program)**

Hallgren reported introducing Ordinance 2016-01 would be postponed to September 1 when a full Council can be present.

### **Letter of Resignation from Councilman Lonny Meeks, Seat F**

Hallgren reported Lonny Meeks submitted a letter of resignation, effective August 1, 2015.

White explained that appointment could be as early as August 18, but must be by September 1.

Discussion followed regarding filling the seat within 30 days and advertising for letters of interest by the close of business on August 17.

Saarloos moved to accept Lonny Meeks' resignation with regret; Brown seconded.

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

## **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Flower Cole asked to map the entire REAA (Regional Educational Attendance Area) if the City is to partner in the community mapping project. She also announced that the annual Soup at the Sullivan Roadhouse fundraiser is scheduled for 11:30 on August 19.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 7:58pm; Leith seconded. Motion carried.