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**City Council Minutes**  
**March 7, 2017 ~ 5:00PM**

**Regular Meeting**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**  
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The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at City Hall. Deputy Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

City Council members present: Mayor Pete Hallgren (telephonically), Deputy Mayor JW Musgrove  
Jennifer Brant, Lou Heinbockel, William Brennan, Freda Degnan

City Council member excused: Audrey Brown

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

Ten members from the community were present and the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Musgrove reported two checks would be added to *City Purchases over \$1,000*.

White asked to move proclamations from *New Business* to after Tiki Levinson's presentation under *Request to Speak*.

Heinbockel moved to approve the March 7, 2017 agenda as amended; Brant seconded. Motion carried.

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

Heinbockel asked to add "to the landfill" to the end of the sentence, "Pogo is having problems with their septic system, so haulers are making more deliveries ..." in the City Administrator's report on page two of the February 21 draft minutes.

Brennan moved to approve the February 21, 2017 minutes as amended; Degnan seconded. Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

John Lewis reminded the Council about the emergency preparedness course on Saturday, April 1 at the Community Center, 8:00am-2:30pm. The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management will facilitate an evacuation and mass care exercise that focuses on a tour bus colliding with a semi-truck full of chemicals. The incident is staged at the Triangle, and the Tanana Bridge in Big Delta will be impassable. The goal is to educate the community in managing an incident, which happens to be a real possibility given the fact that so many buses and tankers travel through downtown Delta Junction. Lewis reported a train struck a bus in Biloxi, Mississippi earlier today, killing at least four and injuring almost every one of the 50 bus passengers. Thirty-five people required transport to surrounding hospitals.

John Lewis reported Kim White, a Delta Chamber board member, has been working on a logo for the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway, to be shared between Delta Junction, Fort Greely, and Tok. He asked to allocate \$300 to pay for the design. [The circular design will be customized for each of the three communities and the logo will be used on banners and memorabilia commemorating the 75th anniversary.]

Discussion followed regarding using funds out of the 75th anniversary account, into which the City donated \$1,000 on January 17 and an anonymous donor contributed another \$5,000 thereafter.

Hallgren moved to authorize spending \$300.00 out of the 75th anniversary account to pay for the logo design; Heinbockel seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Brant, Brennan, Heinbockel, Hallgren, Degnan, Musgrove).

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Tiki Levinson, Delta-Greely School Librarian, reported Delta Community Library Director Joyce McCombs was recognized as this year's recipient of the Audrey P. Kolb Public Library Service Award during a recent conference in Ketchikan. The award was established in 1991 to recognize librarians, volunteers, library advocates, and library board members for significant and innovative activities that improve libraries throughout the state. Referencing the March 2,

2017 Congressional Record, Levinson reported U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan recognized McCombs as the award recipient on the floor of the Senate and acknowledged her 30th anniversary of employment with the Delta Community Library on March 9. Levinson said McCombs has grown the new library, built in 2004, into the “hub of our community” because of Knitting Club, Book Club, adult coloring, and multiple educational and cultural events. The Delta Community Library has been designated as a 5-Star Library by the Library Journal for the past six years. McCombs has served as secretary for the State Library Association, she helped establish a salary schedule for library employees, and she’s worked to provide Internet services for area residents, making Delta a richer place to live. Pam Krepel, a retired teacher and current library aide at the school district, said, “We are better informed, more literate, and more able to deal with our long, cold winters because of Joyce’s unfailing energy. She’s a shining example of how much impact one person can have on a small community.”

McCombs said the award was unexpected. She had served on the nomination committee in the past and awards were typically given to those involved in statewide projects, i.e. video broadcasting (OWL) or establishing libraries in Native villages. Senator Sullivan used her favorite phrase, “a library is a community living room,” because patrons write Christmas cards, apply for jobs and Permanent Fund Dividends, prepare tax forms, and take online distance education classes. Delta’s library is the only public library in the United States that has direct support from a military installation.

#### **Proclamation - Library Director Joyce McCombs**

Musgrove acknowledged McCombs’ accomplishments, some repeated from Levinson’s presentation and others, i.e. McCombs’ loyalty when library hours were reduced to ten hours per week and her listening to “many a tale, both fiction and non-fiction.” Musgrove said he especially appreciated the reading programs geared toward toddlers and the continual flow of vehicles in the library parking lots that show the number of patrons that utilize Wi-Fi services. Musgrove presented McCombs with a framed proclamation.

#### **Proclamation - Whitestone Farms**

Musgrove presented Aaron Seeger of Whitestone Farms with a framed proclamation, expressing appreciation for loaning their Zamboni while the City’s was getting repaired over a four-month span. Hockey has been a thriving sport in Delta Junction since the 1970’s, but ice requires constant cleaning to host games and tournaments and to allow players time to practice skating skills and game techniques. Whitestone’s generosity helped ensure a successful 2016-2017 season.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS – none**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **City Purchases over \$1,000**

CK# 218822 to Overhead Door in the amount of \$2,623.00 for repair and maintenance of six doors at Fire Hall and eight doors at Public Works building

CK# 218824 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$9,569.28 for fuel to heat buildings and operate Zamboni (\$654.51) and landfill equipment (\$583.00)

CK# 218825 to Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$5,000.00 for FY2017 donation

CK# 218826 to Aetna in the amount of \$21,859.80 for March group health insurance

Hallgren moved to approve checks 218822 and 218824 through 218826 as presented; Brennan seconded.

Discussion followed regarding regularly scheduled maintenance of overhead doors, whether to create a line entry for it in the annual budget, and whether there is potential for savings by coordinating maintenance of facilities at the same time other local businesses and homeowners receive services.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Degnan, Hallgren, Brennan, Brant, Heinbockel, Musgrove).

#### **Red Cross – Request to Use Former Rescue Squad Office**

John Lewis reported Red Cross volunteers need a centrally-located space that is accessible 24/7 one to four times each year. Most importantly, the space must provide privacy for displaced families. Interviewing clients typically requires one to three hours at any time, day or night. Lewis asked to use the old ambulance office, which is currently used for storage. They would need only a portion of the room, enough for a desk and chairs.

Musgrove asked if Council members wished to charge, put a time limit on leasing the office, or establish rules.

Heinbockel said to charge the same as storing the Red Cross trailer in the Public Works building. Zero.

Leith reported Hales & Associates recommended drafting a use agreement.

Hallgren asked that Red Cross show proof of insurance, including hold harmless, and to list the City as additionally insured. He suggested including a clause that either party can end the agreement without cause with a 30-day notice and another one to make the agreement non-exclusive so other entities can use the office space also.

Heinbockel moved to authorize the Red Cross to utilize office space in the southern end of the Public Works building where the Delta Rescue Squad used to be; Hallgren seconded.

Discussion followed regarding restroom access and authorizing the City Administrator, Mayor, and City Attorney to draft and finalize an agreement.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Brennan, Degnan, Heinbockel, Hallgren, Brant, Musgrove).

### **Talus Enterprises – Extend Airport Subdivision Clearing Contract**

[City Council approved extending Talus Enterprises' land clearing contract on December 20, 2016 (from the end of December 2016 to February 28, 2017). At the time work was substantially completed, timber was sold, but the wood was not yet removed.]

Leith reported Talus employees do not work when temperatures are 20 below or colder and she asked to offer them another extension.

Heinbockel said there is no time restraint because nothing will be accomplished until May or June anyway. Snow melt will give a good idea of what was cleared. It will also show that a lot of stumps were removed.

Heinbockel moved to extend Talus Enterprises' contract through April 15, 2017; Degnan seconded.

Hallgren said he preferred to not extend Talus' contract if it delays approval of the final plat. Electricity would not be installed until after the survey. He asked to research costs associated with developing Airport Subdivision I.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Hallgren, Degnan, Heinbockel, Brant, Brennan, Musgrove).

### **Payroll – Direct Deposit**

Musgrove reported conversations with City Attorney Jim DeWitt about proposed changes to the Employee Policy and establishing direct deposit of employee payroll.

Prestwich said direct deposit costs nothing as long as bank balances are maintained. Roughly 55 checks, including payroll, are written each month. Paying electronically could be beneficial for both employees and vendors.

Discussion followed regarding a gap between employees submitting time sheets and when bank deposits are made, allowing time for employees to adjust to the new process, six employees in favor of direct deposit, and continuing to issue written checks for those who don't.

Brennan moved to approve direct deposit of payroll with a two-month written notice to employees, effective June 2017; Brant seconded.

Heinbockel asked to publish a pay schedule so employees know the exact date money is deposited in their accounts.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six in attendance (Brennan, Brant, Heinbockel, Hallgren, Degnan, Musgrove).

### **Employee Policy Plan Changes**

Musgrove reported he has observed unwritten policy practices that are not reflected in the Employee Policy Plan. He asked to address five primary concerns that can be easily fixed without waiting three or four months to correct them. The Mayor cannot fix them, but the Council can.

Discussion followed regarding each of the problems (day meals, work at home, vacation buy back, pay day, and cold weather days) and scheduling a work session with employees (5:00pm, March 14).

## **REPORTS**

**School District** – William Brennan reported parent-teacher conferences are March 8/9, there is no school on March 10, and a regional basketball tournament is scheduled March 9/11.

Brennan was excused at 7:00pm.

**Mayor** – Pete Hallgren reported he will not be available for the next two Council meetings, but he will be present for the second one in April (18th).

**City Administrator** – Mary Leith reported:

- The draft patent for the Visitor Center property is being processed and, after all these years, the City now owns it.
- Letha Burcham will attend the AML/JIA Public Entity Risk Management Seminar in Anchorage March 8/9.
- The City will be required to pay for the survey and appraisal of the Pioneer Park. Only two comments were received during the public comment period, one from the Pioneers of Alaska and the other from Bertha Baugus, a neighboring property owner.

**Finance** – Stephanie Prestwich reported the local community experienced 9-1-1 failure because of disconnecting former dispatch lines that were thought to be no longer useful. The decision was made at the February 7 meeting, the work order was submitted on March 1, and lines were cut on March 6, resulting in no 9-1-1 service for approximately one hour.

Dialing 9-1-1 actually forwards to the two dispatch lines before connecting with Fairbanks Dispatch. Prestwich said ACS will identify the phone lines to prevent a repeat incident.

Musgrove questioned 9-1-1 service in an unincorporated area. What happens when someone dials 9-1-1 from a cell phone in Tok or Black Rapids?

**Emergency Services / Public Safety** – Freda Degnan reported on a recent house fire that was contained to its attic.

**Library** – Freda Degnan reported:

- About a dozen students from Raven Home School and their parents celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday at the library on March 2. They enjoyed looking at the Dr. Seuss collection, listening to stories like *Green Eggs and Ham*, and watching *The Lorax* movie. One parent read the library's Russian version of *Horton Hears a Who*. The library provided snacks and juice, book bags with pencils, bookmarks, buttons, and stickers.

- Angie Barnard will hold her annual chocolate tasting class at the library on March 17, 7:00-8:30pm. Mysteries of flavored chocolates will be featured as well as the history of chocolate from ancient times to present day. A cacao pod will be displayed and a door prize will be given, but space is limited to 20 students, 18 and older. The class is \$10/person and includes samples to take home.

- The Delta Library Association Open House and Basket of Books Silent Auction will be April 22, 10:00-4:00.

Library Board members are busy organizing and gathering donations from local businesses and individuals.

**Airport** – JW Musgrove reported local pilots upgraded the runway snow drag. It is used to hard pack the snow, making the airport surface smoother and prolonging the ski season.

**Park / Recreation** – Jennifer Brant reported the hockey season ends in the next two to three weeks, even though temperatures have been minus 30 and 40. A few elementary classes have been able to enjoy the ice also.

Discussion followed regarding the Delta Skating Association planning a cleanup day, rink doors needing repair, replacing lightbulbs in the parking lot sign, scheduling maintenance for the Zamboni, covering the thermostat in the furnace room, mounting the fire extinguishers at the rink, status of the warmup shack, the school district routinely clearing snow inside the park ballfields, high snowfall this year that could create drainage problems in the ballfields, and determining who can clear the park paths to the ballfields.

**Public Works** – Lou Heinbockel reported increased amounts of unprocessed septic waste are still being delivered to the landfill.

Leith reported Pogo is expected to resolve their septic issue soon, but meanwhile the Department of Environmental Conservation permitted use of the standby pond where there is a larger holding capacity.

Heinbockel said the current pit will need to be drained this summer.

Leith said repairs to the Volvo loader will be done on March 9/10.

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

White reported the Veterans Administration Rural Health Outreach Team will be in Delta the end of the month to assist veterans and their families. They will be at the Senior Lounge on March 29, 9:00-5:00, and March 30, 9:00-2:00, at the Moose Lodge on March 29, 6:00-8:30pm, and at the Community Center on March 30, 5:00-6:30pm.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hallgren moved to adjourn at 7:26pm; Degnan seconded.

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: March 21, 2017