

**City Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**May 15, 2018 ~ 5:00PM**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at City Hall. Mayor Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

City Council members present: Mayor JW Musgrove, Deputy Mayor Freda Degnan  
Alan Levinson, Pete Hallgren, Audrey Brown (telephonically)  
Jennifer Brant (arrived 5:11pm), Lou Heinbockel (excused 5:58pm)

City employees present: City Administrator Mary Leith, Finance Officer Stephanie Erickson  
Administrative Assistant Flower Cole (arrived at 5:52pm), City Clerk Pat White

Fifteen residents were present during part or all of the meeting, including seven Boy Scouts who were working toward their *Citizenship in the Community* merit badges. The meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Brown moved to approve the May 15, 2018 agenda as presented; Degnan seconded.

Heinbockel requested moving *Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2018-03* (page 3) to June 5, 2018 because he will not be able to attend that meeting when it is adopted. He wants to propose changes to the covenants and also be present for the public hearing.

Discussion followed to postpone the public hearing and adoption to June 19, 2018.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote to approve the agenda as presented.

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

Brown moved to approve the May 1, 2018 minutes as presented; Hallgren seconded.

White reported two corrections that did not alter the content of the draft minutes.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

**COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

Dawn Frazier, speaking on behalf of the Delta Pioneers, Igloos #19 and #35, said the Pioneer membership will contribute \$2,000 toward the survey and appraisal of Pioneer Park. They would also like to make a show of good faith to help toward its purchase depending on the price. Frazier thanked the City Council for diligently progressing toward making the park part of the community.

Leith, referencing an October 11, 2016 letter from Dianna Leinberger, Natural Resource Manager with the Division of Mining, Land, & Water, said the City is responsible to pay for the survey and appraisal. (The State of Alaska no longer authorizes conveyance of land to cities and non-profits for public and charitable use.) The parcel was reduced from 4.49 acres to 3.49 after the Alaska Highway right-of-way was removed. An appraisal from a state-approved appraiser will be done after the survey. The (1996) lease from the State of Alaska expires October 15, 2021. Leith said the cost to purchase Pioneer Park will be 50-percent of its appraised value. The survey will be paid from the FY18 budget and the appraisal from FY19.

Gabe Pease-Madore, Prevention Officer at Delta Forestry, explained a *Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI) Fuels Reduction Grant* through the State of Alaska, reimbursing homeowners for clearing spruce trees 100 feet from their homes and out-buildings. The program does not determine how trees are downed and pricing depends on tree size. Removing a five-foot spruce is worth \$4. Tall spruce that require a skilled professional can price out at \$90. Firewood can be kept, as long as it is stacked away from buildings, or it, slash, and brush can be hauled to the biomass site on the west side of the Richardson Highway across from the airstrip. Delta's geography is a checkerboard of spruce trees and Forestry's goal is to encourage homeowners to create defensible space around their homes. Residents sign up with the program, Forestry personnel assess property and mark trees, a price is agreed upon and paperwork is signed, homeowners cut down and remove the trees, and Forestry reassesses the property and issues a check to the homeowner. Pease-Madore referred to the 1999 Donnelly Flats Fire and said Chinook winds died at 6:00am, the moment the fire reached Allen Army Airfield and Jarvis Creek. One hour earlier it would have jumped Jarvis and devoured multiple homes. The May 11, 2018 fire at S Valley Farm on Tanana Loop Extension traveled half a mile within ten minutes and burned 250 acres. It could have replicated

the same level of the Donnelly Flats Fire. No structures were damaged and the fire established a much-needed fuel break in the North Eielson, Reeve, Jack Warren area. Pease-Madore explained the “fuel lines” that have threatened the local area for many years. He hopes Delta residents take advantage of the grant offer and also utilize the community burn pit. The grant is good for 12 months, but could extend up to three years.

Assessments will be done before fire season starts and again in July when it slows down. Homeowners should inquire whether fire-wise assessments can reduce their insurance rates. Pease-Madore noted that people do not typically burn in cleared areas. Burn barrels should be placed in an opening with surrounding dirt scraped clean, not tucked in the forest where peat moss becomes a fuel source once winter is over.

See additional comments under *Mayor Report* (page 4).

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Recovery of Spare Zamboni**

Musgrove recapped history about the Zamboni that was purchased by the School District in 1983. The City ended up with the title in 2005 after a transaction with the school (\$15,000 forgiven on a financial loan to keep the Zamboni in the community). The spare Zamboni was then loaned to Fort Greely to maintain their ice.

Leith reported the Zamboni was auctioned by the Army in 2013 (sold on February 7, 2014) without authorization from the City. Emails and written letters were sent back and forth. The last letter, dated April 23, offered a settlement of \$5,720, the price the Army received for the Zamboni when it sold. Richard W. Postma, Jr., Department of Army Supervisory Attorney-Advisor, requested a response to their offer by May 31, 2018.

Heinbockel moved to reject the \$5,720 offer and ask for \$15,000, the amount the City paid the School District for the Zamboni in 2005, because it will cost more than \$5,720 to replace it.

Musgrove called for a second to the motion with none being offered.

Brown said even though the Army was wrong to sell City property, she believed neither more time nor money would recover the loss of the Zamboni. There will not be any opportunity for a better settlement.

Brown moved to accept the \$5,720 offer; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren explained history about BRAC (1999 Base Realignment and Closure) negotiations that resulted in Missile Defense’s presence at Fort Greely instead of a prison.

Brant questioned whether other options were considered, i.e. \$15,000 and/or replacing the spare Zamboni with one that is cycled through the next military demo process. She said they clearly admit wrongdoing, so it would cost them nothing.

Heinbockel said Delta supported Fort Greely’s skating program for many years. It is only right the Department of Defense be given the chance to be fair to the community by providing another spare Zamboni.

Brown added that any used Zamboni should cost the City nothing more than \$5,720.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in favor (Levinson, Degnan, Hallgren, Brown, Musgrove) and two against (Brant, Heinbockel).

Heinbockel excused himself from the meeting at 5:58pm.

### **RFP – Audit Firm**

Erickson asked for input regarding the Response for Proposal (RFP) draft for an audit firm.

Hallgren moved to authorize issuance of the RFP for audit purposes as presented; Degnan seconded.

Discussion followed regarding Erickson using a template to draft the RFP, advertising it, and welcoming response from BDO.

Erickson said BDO, the City’s current audit firm, will charge the City for collected data from previous years should they lose the bid.

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

## **NEW BUSINESS**

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

CK# 219480 to Aetna in the amount of \$14,693.15 for May group health insurance

CK# 219481 to GVEA in the amount of \$4,263.79 for April electricity

CK# 219482 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$1,675.00 for legal services (airport covenants)

CK# 219483 to Delta/Greely Youth Baseball League in the amount of \$1,000.00 for donation for 2018 season

CK# 219484 to Morley Electric in the amount of \$4,120.00 for LED lights at the landfill shop

CK# 219485 to M2C1 Construction & Engineering in the amount of \$4,000.00 for SWPPP at Airport Subdivision II

CK# 219486 to Delta Transport Services in the amount of \$5,021.42 for heating and equipment fuel

CK# 219487 to Alcan Auto & Truck in the amount of \$1,099.17 for dump truck batteries (\$940.00), welder helmet (\$8.44), battery for Fire Department rescue sled (\$99.39), air filter for Skid Steer (\$51.34)

Degnan moved to approve checks 219480 through 219487 as presented; Brant seconded.

Discussion followed regarding eight LED lights (\$440 each) and eight reflectors (\$75 each) for the landfill shop that require protective design prior to installation (CK# 219484) and volunteers preparing ballfields, disputing the April 19, 2018 news article in the local paper that reported youth baseball was in jeopardy (219483).

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

### **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**

Leith reported LeMay Engineering & Consulting updated the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) that was released in 2011. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved it and the Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) has yet to approve it. The City Council has up to one year to adopt it by a formal resolution upon FEMA's approval. Leith said a signed resolution and the edited HMP will be sent to Patrick LeMay once corrections and changes are made.

Degnan moved to approve Resolution 2018-03, adopting the *Delta Junction and Deltana Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017 Update*; Hallgren seconded.

Brown said she is uncomfortable approving the (130-plus-page) document without having read it.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in favor (Levinson, Degnan, Hallgren, Brant, Musgrove) and one opposed (Brown).

### **Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2018-03, An Ordinance Providing for Covenants for Airport Subdivision II**

Hallgren, referring to comments during *Approval of Agenda* (page one), said he assumed comments would be accepted tonight and the public hearing and adoption would be postponed to June 19 or later.

Hallgren moved to introduce, hold the first reading of Ordinance 2018-03, and set the public hearing, second reading, and adoption date no sooner than June 19, 2018; Brown seconded.

Musgrove said covenants are necessary before the plat can be approved. Several volunteers scrutinized multiple airport subdivisions across the nation. City Attorney Jim DeWitt reviewed the covenants and said most subdivisions in Alaska have twice as many pages.

Hallgren questioned the format, whether the covenants would be part of the Code of Ordinances. He clarified that the covenants apply to Airport Subdivision II, not Airport Subdivision I. He asked if office buildings or mobile homes are prohibited and whether there are other applicable zoning restrictions, i.e. no shooting.

Musgrove referenced City Code §3.07.011, Regulation of Firearms: Discharge of center-fire cartridges (1.7 caliber and larger) within city limits is banned for the taking of game, and §3.07.012, Exception to Regulation of Firearms: 3.07.011 is not to be construed to prohibit the use of firearms in constructed or established shooting ranges or in the reasonable defense of persons and property. He said City Code prohibits shooting large animals.

Hallgren noted that airplane hangars make excellent indoor small-bore shooting ranges. He questioned fly-in campgrounds, but restricting port-a-potties.

Musgrove said a semi-permanent ADEC-approved structure would be acceptable.

Discussion followed regarding revising verbiage in articles 3, 5, and 6.

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

## REPORTS

**Mayor** – JW Musgrove reported:

- The *Employee Policy Handbook*, the existing *Employee Policy Plan* combined with a 2008 rewrite that was drafted by Guess & Rudd but never adopted, is almost ready for a final review. The updated handbook will be presented to the City Council after City Attorney Jim DeWitt returns it.

- A shelter for displaced families was set up at the Community Center during the May 11 fire. The Red Cross trailer was activated, so cots were available. Musgrove said he wished to personally thank Fairbanks Red Cross personnel and local residents who volunteered to help in whatever capacity they could. Preparations for the shelter were disbanded by 5:00pm, but circumstances could have easily escalated to a much larger crisis. Delta Forestry is still monitoring the fire.

Hallgren said air tankers were used on the fire within two hours. Preparations to relocate residents was fast-paced. Efforts did not work perfectly, but a lot was learned. He said Fort Greely's involvement and advice were much appreciated, as was Mike Paschall, who coordinated efforts and kept people informed. The event ended successfully because of combined efforts from volunteers and personnel from the Fort Greely Fire Department, City Fire Department, Rural Deltana Fire Department, Delta Forestry, and elements of Fort Wainwright.

- Corey Groppe and Rob Bevard are temporarily operating the landfill since Richard Mitchell retired in April. They were temporarily authorized overtime and extra mileage. The City has received resumes, even though the equipment operator position has not yet been advertised.

Leith said she felt the landfill operation will require a full-time employee. The job description will be reviewed before the position is advertised.

Hallgren asked to inquire about purchasing cover material because of difficulties in screening gravel.

Leith said Groppe and Bevard are welding holes on the grizzly and she is researching a portable screener.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported Guess & Rudd will assist in updating the City Code of Ordinances. To make the project as cost effective as possible, Jim DeWitt will do the initial review, highlighting obvious issues from his knowledge as City Attorney the last few decades. Associate Attorney Michael McLaughlin will draft the first revision after making changes in statutes and case law that impact the City Code.

**Finance** – Stephanie Erickson reported:

- Application for the FY19 Community Assistance Program was submitted. It will be approximately \$97,000.

- A Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) audit will be conducted on May 17.

**Emergency Services / Public Safety** – Freda Degnan reported:

- Vern Heintz served as the Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD) Fire Chief for the past eight years. He stepped down during the DJVFD meeting on May 1 and issued a letter, dated May 15, 2018, asking the City Council to appoint Tony White as the new DJVFD Fire Chief. Heintz was elected Captain with other officers: Andrew Morton–Assistant Chief, Bobby Ross–Training Chief, and Mike Zastavskiy–Lieutenant.

Degnan moved to appoint newly-elected officers as presented; Hallgren seconded.

Brown said Tony White's contract to provide the community with ambulance service is a conflict of interest.

Hallgren said the Fire Chief is an unpaid volunteer position, so there is no apparent financial conflict. Also White was elected by the members of the volunteer fire department.

Discussion followed regarding 12 active members on the DJVFD as of Christmas 2017 and the status of White's business, Delta Medical Transport, LLC.

Hallgren said he appreciated Vern Heintz' dedication to the community.

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

- Four back-to-back fires were put out, aside from the May 11 fire. Degnan encouraged residents to obtain burn permits online ([dnr.alaska.gov/burn](http://dnr.alaska.gov/burn)) or from the Delta Forestry office. Forms are available at City Hall and the library, but must be delivered to Forestry.

**Library** – Freda Degnan reported library staff are hosting field trips for elementary classes and preparing for summer readers.

**Airport** – Alan Levinson reported the ground has dried and the runway and tie-down areas are in good shape.

**Park / Recreation** – Jennifer Brant reported:

- Delta Skating Association hosted a successful cleanup day at the rink.
- The City Park has been busy with High School baseball and softball. Youth baseball is scheduled to start, followed by soccer. Water was turned on at the park pavilion. The broken pipe was repaired, so the sharp edge was capped. Hand sanitizer stations were installed in the outhouses.
- The City Park could use more cleanup.

Leith said a new dumpster was delivered to the park near Deborah Street. The Little League provides a dumpster near the fields on the west side of the park.

**LEPC / Emergency Preparedness** – Audrey Brown reported on the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting on May 14:

- The WUI grant offers homeowners up to \$2,500 to remove trees.

See Gabe Pease-Madore presentation – pages 1+2.

- Forestry’s Public Information Officer (PIO) Tim Mowry and akfireinfo.com are excellent sources about wildland fires.
- The May 11 fire was discussed, particularly concerns regarding the need to improve communications.
- As of May 14, 68 people have signed up for the house numbering project. LEPC discussed the grant and its spending plan.
- The State of Alaska is pushing Ready, Set, Go! (RSG!), a program about preparing and evacuating during an emergency situation.
- The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Spring Preparedness Conference in Anchorage, April 10/13, was one of the most educational conferences ever offered.
- Public Health Nurse Elena Powers presented updates on the flu vaccine exercise and future projects.

**Public Health** – Audrey Brown reported kits to safely dispose of medications are available at the local Public Health office and at City Hall.

**Additional Reports** – Audrey Brown reported she will attend an AML Board meeting in Anchorage on May 21. A new executive director will be selected.

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

Flower Cole acknowledged the upcoming departure of Craig Cugini, Deputy to the Garrison Commander, and expressed appreciation for his service to Fort Greely and Delta Junction.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Brown moved to adjourn at 7:48pm; Hallgren seconded.