

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
May 7, 2019 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at City Hall. Mayor Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

City Council members present: Mayor JW Musgrove, Deputy Mayor Freda Degnan
Alan Levinson, Lou Heinbockel, Pete Hallgren (telephonically)

City Council members excused: Charles Lester, Audrey Brown

City staff present: City Administrator Mary Leith, Finance Officer Stephanie Erickson (until 7:09pm)
Library Director Joyce McCombs, City Clerk Pat White

Eight members from the community and four out-of-town guests were present at the beginning of the meeting. Michael Prestegard monitored radio equipment while the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Musgrove reported check# 220075 in the amount of \$4,933.88 would replace check# 220071 (\$7,762.88). Rent for the loader used at the airport (\$2,829) was pre-paid anonymously. (See *City Purchases* - page 3)

Heinbockel moved to approve the May 7, 2019 agenda as amended; Degnan seconded.

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

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Heinbockel moved to approve the minutes from the April 16, 2019 meeting; Levinson seconded.

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

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Jackie Becker asked 1) if the Chamber could piggyback with the City's lawn contractor to maintain the grounds around the Visitor Center and 2) if the City could meet with the Chamber to discuss adding major maintenance of the Visitor Center to the upcoming budget.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

Heather Stossmeister and Steve Hilton – Upcoming Soccer Season

Heather Stossmeister introduced herself and Steve Hilton from the Deltana Youth Soccer Association and thanked the City's part in removing the 200-to-300-pound concrete blocks left from the football goal posts (requested August 7, 2018). They filled in the holes, but need help with purchasing grass seed to create a flat, smooth area, to repair other bare spots, and to hold soil in areas with deep ruts. Stossmeister said they had 181 youth (16 teams) register last year and, because there are now seven different age groups, they expect more. Discussion followed regarding aligning schedules with Fairbanks teams, providing the City Administrator with a diagram of proposed improvements, and getting soil from either Ptarmigan Heights or the airport subdivision.

Julie Smith, DNR, Division of Mining, Land, and Water – State Gravel Pit

Julie Smith, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, Land & Water, introduced herself and Cleo Wilson from the Department of Transportation (DOT). She referenced her May 2, 2019 letter and reported they revised planning for the Delta Townsite Gravel Pit material site (ADL 419669) by reducing its expansion to 12 acres. (Initial proposal in December 2015 expanded the gravel pit from 2.043 acres to 29.6.) DNR's latest proposal for the material site includes increasing the northern buffer that is adjacent to a private property to 100 feet, leaving the other three sides with 50-foot buffers, limiting active areas to five acres at any one time, grading depleted areas to a stable slope and covering them with overburden or grass seed to prevent wind-blown dust, maintaining the depth of the gravel pit to what currently exists, DOT controlling access to the site via the existing road and locked gate (to stop people from dumping trash), DOT coordinating with Forestry regarding potential timber sales, and limiting operating hours to 8:00-6:00 M-F unless temporarily suspended during a declared emergency.

Hallgren said 12 acres is more agreeable, but the City still has an ordinance (§4.45) prohibiting gravel pits, “any hole in the ground that measures 50 feet or more ...” He said he also opposed the DOT material site being used for private sales because of competing with commercial gravel pits that are located outside the city limits.

Smith said DNR’s role is to manage State lands for Alaskans, not restrict the material site for DOT use.

Hallgren expressed concern with not recognizing the Council’s position to protect the community from floods. He briefly described the (2004) Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Army that cost hundreds of thousands in litigation (to protect the community from fire).

Smith said State Statute requires DNR work with communities to develop plans, but they cannot adopt a community’s plan without going through another public process. They would be covered if the City waived its ordinance pertaining to gravel pits.

Musgrove referenced a February 16, 2016 email from Mandy Willingham from DNR, stating, “Reclamation will include smoothing/grading side slopes and covering the depleted pits with a thin covering of stockpiled overburden (vegetation and soil) and/or seeded with native plant species; it will not include filling the pits in.” He asked to research the State not having to comply with the City Code of Ordinances.

Heinbockel said it was difficult to understand how DOT could utilize 12 acres of gravel in the next couple hundred years, based on its imprint left from the mid-1960s. He also expressed concern with selling material to private contractors and competing with private industry.

Wilson said some of the gravel pits surrounding Delta Junction are DNR-managed (owned by the State of Alaska). Others were right-of-way grants given to the State by BLM in the 1960s and are restricted to DOT use.

Smith said DNR does not have management authority over those gravel pits, even though they are on State land. The patent specifies the gravel is for DOT only.

Wilson said the Delta Townsite Gravel Pit would be used for maintenance and operation. The last gravel pit was used on a construction project. Material that was sold to contractors was an oversight.

Discussion followed regarding installing a gate with a lock, whether the Delta River could be mined, and Smith contacting Mary Leith after communicating with her regional manager.

Sebastian Saarloos, Delta Surveys, referenced Julie Smith’s May 2 letter about reclamation, “Maximum depth of the material site will be approximately what it is now or shallower.” Saarloos suggested measuring and documenting the depth in relation to its surrounding area and/or require an exact depth.

New CEO for Cross Road Health Ministries

Dawn Frazier, local representative serving on the Board of Directors for Cross Road Health Ministries, reported they oversee the clinic in Glennallen and the Interior Alaska Medical Clinic (IAMC) in Delta Junction. She introduced Bill Whittington, the new CEO for Cross Road Health Ministries.

Bill Whittington reported IAMC, a not-for-profit, opened in March 2014. They are expanding office hours to accommodate patient encounters, 9:00-9:00 M-F and 10:00-5:00 Saturdays. They are also negotiating to lease or purchase the entire building where they’re located. They presently utilize the basement level. Thereafter they plan to bring in a mid-level provider (PA, NP, MD) and specialists, and open both an urgent care and an assisted living center. (Quality Care, an assisted living facility, occupied the upper level above IAMC from 2013-2018.) Whittington said they are soliciting donations to purchase a backup generator for \$25,000, specifically to protect medications that require regulated temperatures.

Request for Variance on South Clearwater

Sebastian Saarloos reported a client who owns property between Salcha Avenue and Healy Street wants to replat six quarter-acre lots into three half-acre lots. City policy (adopted April 17, 2007) restricts lot sizes in new subdivisions to one acre. Saarloos said he needed the Council’s opinion before his client submits a preliminary plat application and pays \$300 for a title report and \$200 for platting fees.

Discussion followed regarding documenting locations of wells and septic systems on the plat, including those on neighboring lots.

Musgrove called for additional comments/objections with none being offered.

CORRESPONDENCE

Musgrove reported he received notice of an Environmental Assessment about development at Eielson Air Force Base for sewage dump stations, repair of the Garrison Slough Trestle Bridge, temporary lodging facilities, visiting quarters, parking lots, a Joint Range Operations Center, a deaerator system, a cryogenics facility, canine isolation kennel, etc. The notice is available at City Hall for anyone interested.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Final Plat Approval - Hayes Circle Replat (Preliminary plat approved January 8, 2019)

Sebastian Saarloos reported the Hayes Circle project has taken almost two years to finish. Two lots increased in size on the west side of Hayes, the right-of-way shrunk, easement was added to the eastern lots, ownership and addresses were altered/updated, and Yukon Title mailed Wells Fargo's consent (not approval) yesterday.

Levinson moved to approve the final plat of Hayes Circle contingent on Ordinance 2019-03 passing; Degnan seconded.

Discussion followed regarding Heinbockel recusing himself from voting because of being a Hayes Circle property owner and no point in recording the final plat unless the accompanying ordinance (bottom of page) is adopted.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with four voting in favor (Hallgren, Degnan, Levinson, Musgrove) and one abstaining (Heinbockel).

NEW BUSINESS

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 220070 to Aetna in the amount of \$14,255.57 for May group health insurance

CK# 220071 to Airport Equipment Rentals in the amount of \$7,762.88 for dozer, loader, and compactor used at airport subdivision and chop saw to cut asphalt near outhouses at City Park

CK# 220072 to Delta Transport Services in the amount of \$4,746.60 for heating and equipment fuel

CK# 220073 to Delta Concrete in the amount of \$7,470.00 for two trucks with drivers to help build roads at airport subdivision

CK# 220074 to Graphic North in the amount of \$1,418.81 to print and mail DJVFD request for donation letter

CK# 220075 to Airport Equipment Rentals in the amount of \$4,933.88 for dozer and compactor used at the airport subdivision and chop saw used to cut asphalt near outhouses at City Park

Levinson moved to approve checks #220070 through 220075, excluding 220071; Heinbockel seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Levinson, Heinbockel, Degnan, Hallgren, Musgrove).

Second Reading, Public Hearing, and Adoption of Ordinance 2019-03, An Ordinance Waiving Easement Requirements, Authorizing Vacation of Certain Road Rights of Way, Accepting Replat of Lots 20-27, Block 6 and Hayes Circle Right of Way, North Addition to Delta Junction Townsite, Fairbanks Recording District Plat 63-7859, Within Section 14, Township 10 South, Range 10 East, Fairbanks Meridian, Alaska, and Authorizing the City Clerk to Sign the Replat (Introduced February 5, 2019)

Heinbockel moved to hold the second reading and public hearing of Ordinance 2019-03; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with four in favor (Degnan, Hallgren, Levinson, Musgrove) and one abstaining (Heinbockel).

Musgrove called for public comments with none being offered.

Levinson moved to close the public hearing portion of Ordinance 2019-03; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with four in favor (Levinson, Degnan, Hallgren, Musgrove) and one abstaining (Heinbockel).

Degnan moved to adopt Ordinance 2019-03; Levinson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with four in favor (Hallgren, Levinson, Degnan, Musgrove) and one abstaining (Heinbockel).

Award 2019 Lawn Maintenance Contract

Leith reported William Pugh was the only bidder this year. His bid reflects changes to the specs (haul grass clippings off the premises, provide an additional/separate quote to mow ballfields on the east end of the park, and reduce the annual increase from 2% to 1.5% should the lawn contract be extended two additional years). Heinbockel moved to award the lawn contract to William Pugh, aka Bill's Small Tractor Service, in the amount of \$15,400.00 plus \$100.00 each time a ballfield needs mowed; Degnan seconded. Heinbockel said he is pleased with Pugh's work and grateful for his efforts to maintain the park and cemetery. Motion passed on a roll call vote with five in attendance (Heinbockel, Degnan, Levinson, Hallgren, Musgrove).

REPORTS

Mayor - JW Musgrove reported Dennis Burke, Landfill Equipment Operator, is creating a backstop to collect wind-blown trash.

Discussion followed regarding debris that is visible in trees at Meadows Road.

City Administrator – Mary Leith reported:

- Derek Mills, returning summer hire, starts back on May 13. He and a couple other summer hires will clean litter at the landfill.
- Forestry is joining the BLM and military to organize a local Incident Command. They will host public meetings at City Hall or the Community Center.

Discussion followed regarding the existing prescribed burn that went out of control and the same area known to have burned several times in the past.

City Clerk – Pat White reported Jeff Krigbaum from the U.S. Census Bureau will attend the May 21 Council meeting to discuss the 2020 Census. They hope to establish a Complete Count Committee (CCC) in each community to recruit team coordinators and field workers and they are looking for office space for 8-12 weeks, possibly July through August.

Finance – Stephanie Erickson distributed a rough draft of the FY20 budget and reported:

- The FY18 audit is expected to be done next week.
- The City has owed \$27,600 to its Permanent Fund since at least 2008 for what is thought to be airport land sales. Erickson asked whether to pay it from the FY19 budget or to budget for it in FY20.

Discussion followed regarding the Permanent Fund successfully moved from Morgan Stanley, Alaska Permanent Capital Management (APCM) rewriting the City Code pertaining to the Permanent Fund (§1.37), and presenting a FY19 budget reconciliation in August.

LEPC – Stephanie Erickson reported:

- The next LEPC meeting is scheduled for May 13.
- Volunteers will pick up 27 more signs tomorrow. LEPC plans to solicit funding from Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) and the City to continue the House Identification Project.

Erickson excused herself at 7:09pm.

Emergency Preparedness – Audrey Brown – no report

Public Health – Freda Degnan reported a recent article in the April 29, 2019 Fairbanks Daily News-Miner explained the importance of protecting public health services in communities across Alaska.

Library – Freda Degnan reported:

- Nearly 300 people attended the Library Open House and Basket of Books Silent Auction on April 27. There were 101 items to bid on, nearly 50 raffle items, and two Barnes and Noble gift cards (door prizes). Four new people became lifetime members of the Delta Library Association (\$250 each). Proceeds at this time appear to be around \$10,000.
- The library received its E-rate Funding Commitment, Internet connection to the library (\$9,218) and managed broadband service through ACS (\$210). The library receives a 70% discount on Internet connections and services, based on the number of students in the school district who receive free or reduced lunch. Without E-rate funding, the cost for the Internet connection would be \$13,468/year instead of \$3,950; and managed broadband service would be \$300/year instead of \$90. This is the third year of a multi-year contract, which ends

June 30, 2020. The library Internet contract will go out to bid next spring and will most likely include a higher speed connection to accommodate newer software and more demand. The library currently divides a 15-megabyte connection between the public and library staff.

- Elementary School field trips begin next week. Thirteen classes, totaling 275 students, will visit the library on five different days and each class includes several sets of parents, assorted siblings, and classroom aides. Joyce McCombs and Shona Hilton will present information about library services and the Summer Reading program. The public is asked to use caution on the roads around the library during the next couple of weeks when students are walking through the neighborhood.

Schools – Freda Degnan reported:

- National Day of Prayer was held at the Community Center on May 2.
- This year’s High School graduation ceremony is on May 16 and the last day of school is May 22.

Airport – Alan Levinson reported:

- Airplane activity has increased at the airport, although airport subdivision development is on hold due to weight restrictions and waiting on the ground to dry out.
- A Delta area pilot won a Super Cub at a trade show in Anchorage. Raffle proceeds from the annual Alaska Airmen Association event are used to promote aviation throughout Alaska.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel reported everything is thawed out and sewage is slowly draining.

Discussion followed regarding conditions of septic pits, early green up, melting permafrost, power outages dropping 24% because of newly-brushed electrical lines, and need to clean up downed trees on Nistler Road.

Park / Recreation – Lou Heinbockel reported:

- Grass would be green had the ground been thatched a month ago. He was disappointed the Fire Department was unable to burn the ballfields at the park.

Leith said both coordinating schedules and weather played roles in not burning the ballfields.

- An Alyeska auction will be held on June 15. Heinbockel questioned whether a used pickup truck could be purchased for the Fire Department’s command vehicle (requested June 5, 2018).

Discussion followed regarding a small rig to remove snow.

Cemetery – Mary Leith reported one grave is being dug for a weekend burial and more gravesites will be prepared while the excavator is rented.

At Large – Pete Hallgren reported the Northern Star Resources (NSR) Pogo Mine Community Advisory Board will review application for sponsorship on June 4. NSR Pogo contributes \$150,000 toward community requests each calendar year and \$150,000 toward government expenses. Applications are available at City Hall and must be submitted at least a week prior to the June 4 meeting.

Additional Reports – JW Musgrove reported he wanted to publicly acknowledge Library Director Joyce McCombs for the quality of the library in relation to the size of our community and available resources. He noted the library’s designation as a 5-star library, not just once in a great while, but for seven consecutive years. He also expressed appreciation for Michael Prestegard, a retired electrician and local pilot, for volunteering to tune audio equipment while Council meetings are broadcast over the Delta High School radio. Musgrove thanked Deputy Mayor Freda Degnan for signing checks in his absence.

Heinbockel reported Liz Leng (91) passed away in Anchorage on April 9. Liz served on the City Council between May 1977 and October 1982, as Mayor Pro tem (1977-1978) and Mayor (1978-1981). She and her family homesteaded in Delta, she retired as a teacher, and she also ran for the State Legislature.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

McCombs said she was touched that Heinbockel approved her retirement “with regret” (April 16, 2019).

ADJOURNMENT

Degnan moved to adjourn at 7:42pm; Heinbockel seconded.