

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
July 21, 2020 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:03pm in the large conference room.

Council members physically present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE,

Deputy Mayor Freda DEGNAN (until 7:31pm), Lou HEINBOCKEL, Pete HALLGREN, Alan LEVINSON

Council present via phone: Charles LESTER

Council member excused: Audrey BROWN

Staff physically present: City Administrator Mary LEITH, Library Dir. Tiki LEVINSON, City Clerk Pat WHITE

Staff attending via phone: Finance Officer Stephanie ERICKSON (until 6:42pm), Admin. Asst. Flower COLE

One person from the community was physically present, two people attended by phone, and the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Heinbockel moved to amend the agenda by changing the order of *New Business*; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve the July 21, 2020 agenda as amended; Heinbockel seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Levinson moved to approve the July 7, 2020 minutes; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE - none

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE - none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Ambulance Repair Reimbursement

Musgrove reported Medic II (2011 ambulance) was totaled (November 9, 2019) and insurance reimbursement (approximately \$28,000) must be used on ambulance-related services. If not, it must be returned to the State of Alaska as unspent grant funds. Musgrove said an invoice for ambulance repairs is being reviewed and revised.

Tony White, Delta Medical Transport (DMT), said DMT is not responsible for repairs over normal wear and tear, i.e. tires, oil changes, air filters. Replacing a front end is major repair and not uncommon for older ambulances.

Discussion followed regarding ambulance maintenance costing more than what is brought in from leasing Medic I (2009 ambulance) to DMT (\$500/month), Medic I's current odometer reading (81,831), minor ambulance repairs done in Delta Junction, pending injector repairs with H&H Service in Fairbanks, and whether the City should continue to support the service or have a backup ambulance should DMT terminate their business.

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 220750 to City of Fairbanks - \$32,480.00 for FY21 dispatch

CK# 220751 to Airport Equipment Rentals - \$1,178.75 to rent boom lift for fire station (roof) and park repairs (canopy)

CK# 220752 to ACS - \$1,559.57 for July phone and Internet

CK# 220753 to Aetna - \$7,533.13 for July group health insurance

CK# 220754 to GVEA - \$2,449.73 for June electricity

CK# 220755 to Wells Fargo - \$14,960.49 for credit card charges

Motion: Heinbockel moved to approve checks #220750 through 220755 as presented; Degnan seconded.

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

Review \$1 Convenience Fee on Credit/Debit Card

Musgrove explained the \$1 convenience fee added to credit/debit card transactions, but not donations. He asked for input, whether to eliminate the \$1 convenience fee.

Erickson reported there was \$8,000 in credit card expenses in FY20 with \$4,000 recovered from convenience fees.

Discussion followed regarding credit/debit card machines at City Hall, the library, and the landfill scale house, businesses typically factoring in usage fees or offering a cash price, the majority of landfill tipping fees paid by credit cards, and not changing the City policy of charging the \$1 convenience fee (established March 3, 2015).

COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Grant Program

Musgrove referenced draft packets about the COVID grant program and reported the City will establish a committee to review applications for the \$459,281 economic recovery funds before distributing them to local organizations. Funds not used by the end of the calendar year will be returned to the federal government.

Erickson reported Alaska Municipal League, Foraker Group, and the City of Kenai played parts in creating the COVID recovery program packets for municipalities across Alaska. She explained the draft packet for Delta.

Information will remain confidential, although recipients and amounts become public when grants are awarded.

Hallgren expressed concerns about potential liability and the City being audited. Federal guidance about distributing funds is very opaque. He asked about a hold-harmless agreement and standards for the review committee because they will be reviewing applications in secret and making deliberations in secret.

Discussion followed regarding edits and clarifications in the draft packet, discussing concerns with City Attorney Mike McLaughlin, Fairbanks already awarding grants, Heinbockel volunteering to serve on the review committee, and advertising for local businesses to apply for relief funds and for volunteers to sit on the review committee.

Musgrove explained the pandemic pay policy (established April 7, 2020 and extended on April 21, 2020) that expired June 30, 2020. He reported recent circumstances when library staff were tested.

Motion: Levinson moved to extend the pandemic pay policy to the end of Fiscal Year 2021; Degnan seconded.

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

Employee Insurance Options

Musgrove reported insuring some or all City employees has been a topic in the past. Two current employees have no interest in receiving medical benefits.

Erickson reported Aetna is the City's health insurance carrier. All full-time employees are covered and no one can opt out. Under Premera Blue Cross employees can opt out. Removing two employees would reduce the City's premium by about \$1,700 each month. Aetna requires a resolution plus a 90-day cancellation notice should the City terminate its policy.

REPORTS

Finance – Stephanie Erickson reported:

- The application deadline for the Community Assistance Program (CAP) was extended to November 15. As of June 30, the CAP supports paying base amounts (\$75,000 for cities). Payments will be recalculated after November 15 to determine whether more funds can be distributed. \$75,171 was budgeted for FY21.

- An end-of-FY20 budget, dated July 15, 2020, shows landfill revenue was \$431,385, more than what was budgeted (\$250,000) and Federal PILT was \$1,104,188, also more than what was budgeted (\$1,030,579).

LEPC – Stephanie Erickson reported 260 House Identification Project (HIP) signs have been installed to date. RDVFD firefighters have logged 447 man-hours and driven over 2,500 miles. [Note: LEPC started the HIP in mid-July 2017.]

Erickson was excused at 6:42pm.

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported:

- The landfill equipment operator went full-time on July 1. The maintenance position did also on July 9.

- Some streets in the airport subdivision were put in by local residents. They need maintenance. Ray Andreassen wants compensation for putting in rights-of-way and gravel between his clinic and the runway.

[Note: Council authorized clearing land along the easement by the airport (May 26, 1998 minutes), Andreassen cut trees for a taxiway to his hangar (March 16, 1999), Andreassen asked to be compensated (June 6, 2006 and March 6, 2018), and Council voted to “pursue issuance of a revocable license for Ray Andreassen to access North Taxiway through the 50-foot windbreak and 35-foot Golden Valley right-of-way” (March 6, 2018). The actual GVEA ROW is 30 feet (August 4, 2020).] Musgrove said survey work is needed as well as drafting a document to grant Andreassen an easement.

City Administrator – Mary Leith reported:

- The sanitary water survey was conducted for the library, Visitor Center, and Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena.
- She and City Attorney Mike McLaughlin will meet with U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK) military personnel on July 23 to discuss the USARAK-MOA-029, dated May 16, 2006.

Discussion followed regarding history around drafting the agreement to protect the community from fires.

City Clerk – Pat White reported:

- The Delta Junction Municipal Election will be held on October 6. Candidate filing is August 27 through September 11. Any outstanding by-mail ballots must be received no later than ten days after the election (October 16), so election results would not be certified until October 20, instead of the “second Tuesday of the month” per City Code 2.30.030(a). That and other City Code revisions will be put off until after the 2020 election.
- Early voting in the Primary Election (two weeks prior) will be available at the Delta Presbyterian-Faith Lutheran Church annex (1760 Richardson Highway) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, August 3 through August 17, 10:00am-4:00pm. [July 30, 2020 Note: Early voting changed to August 4, 6, 11, and 13, 1:00-6:00pm.]

Emergency Preparedness – no report

Public Health – no report

Library – Freda Degnan reported the library is currently open at 50% capacity, it has faster Wi-Fi, and new children’s books and E-readers, courtesy of a State grant, can be checked out by library patrons.

Schools – no report

Airport – Alan Levinson reported seven airport lots were sold at the outcry auction on July 17. The remaining three were immediately sold over the counter.

Discussion followed regarding using Block 3 revenue to develop the rest of the airport subdivision (Block 4).

Degnan excused herself at 7:31pm.

Public Works – Charles Lester reported he and the mayor are drafting a plan for road maintenance.

Park / Recreation – no report

Cemetery – no report

At Large – no report

Additional Reports – Lou Heinbockel reported significant flooding has occurred on Spengler Road. He asked to offer concrete blocks (surplus Alyeska river weights), located at the old landfill (west of the Richardson Highway across from Forestry) and any number of boulders from the landfill.

Motion: Heinbockel moved to donate concrete blocks and boulders to the State of Alaska to help mitigate flooding on Spengler Road; Hallgren and Lester seconded.

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

Heinbockel asked to contact Alaska Mental Health Trust to remove the City Park from their maps.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

The following statement was read into the record by Councilman Charles Lester, “Members of the Council and my fellow Alaskans: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I wanted to make a brief statement in response to allegations that have been made against me and that have been reported in the media regarding some Twitter posts that were attributed to me. First, let me say that I denounce any anti-racial, anti-gender, anti-sexual orientation choice, or anti-religious freedoms. Second, I am not a racist and I resent the fact that it was even suggested, and that I have been categorically and inaccurately labeled as such. Finally, the statements attributed to me on Twitter were done with an account that is not mine or under my control. Once I found out about the statements, I hired legal counsel who quickly went about shutting down the account. I appreciate the fact that those who know me are standing with me during this horrendous attack on my character. For those of you that don’t know me, I ask that you give me a chance, the benefit of the doubt, and I would happily speak with anyone who has any doubt about me, my character, or my ability to serve my constituents to the best of my abilities and free of any prejudices or biases.”

ADJOURNMENT – 7:44pm

Mayor JW Musgrove

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: August 4, 2020