

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
September 15, 2020 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:00pm in the large conference room.

Council members physically present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Pete HALLGREN,
Deputy Mayor Freda DEGNAN, Alan LEVINSON

Council member present via phone: Audrey BROWN (until 7:03pm)

Council members excused: Charles LESTER, Lou HEINBOCKEL

Staff physically present: City Administrator Mary LEITH, City Clerk Pat WHITE

Staff present via phone: Finance Officer Stephanie ERICKSON, Administrative Assistant Flower COLE,
Library Director Tiki LEVINSON

Six or seven members from the community and two or three representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers attended in person, one community member attended by phone, and Mike Prestegard monitored equipment while the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Brown moved to approve the September 15, 2020 agenda; Degnan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Brown moved to approve the September 1, 2020 minutes; Levinson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Pete Hallgren reported two popular and well respected community members passed away in the last week, Myron Hosier (9-12-50 / 9-9-20) and Bruce Grossmann (9-9-52 / 9-12-20). Grossmann served on the City Council from October 1994 to October 1997. He was known throughout the community as a person of substance, friendliness, and compassion. The Delta-Clearwater Seniors will sponsor a heartwarming celebration of life at the gazebo near the Sullivan Roadhouse on September 19. Hallgren concluded by saying, "Bruce Grossmann, rest in peace!"

REQUEST TO SPEAK

[The last public update about decommissioning the deactivated SM-1A Nuclear Plant was at the August 6, 2019 Council meeting.]

Brenda Barber, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Program Manager, reported COVID travel restrictions delayed their public update that was scheduled in April and COVID precautions did not permit distributing handouts, so information would be posted online (<https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/SM-1A/>). Barber reported they are in the middle of the project and conforming to a multitude of regulatory and compliance requirements. Because decommissioning the nuclear plant requires federal oversight, USACE is required to follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and provide an environmental and socioeconomic assessment to ensure no long-term impacts are left; to safely remove, transport, and dispose of all materials and equipment, structures, and residual contamination associated with the SM-1A, release the site for unrestricted use, and terminate the SM-1A decommissioning permit that was issued by the US Army Nuclear and Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Agency. The proposed plan is to complete the SM-1A project within 60 years of its final shutdown (2033). USACE will host public (or virtual) meetings and provide a 30-day comment period in February/March 2021. Residents are welcome to submit input prior to the comment period.

Discussion followed regarding alternatives to shutting down the nuclear plant, scoping invitations sent to over 100 regulatory agencies, listing the SM-1A site with National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), preserving historic cultural artifacts, abandoning three wells, disposing of construction and debris at landfills in Alaska and shipping radioactive waste to disposal facilities in the Lower 48, using GPS tracking, protective measures to reduce radiation exposure, reverting the property back to Doyon once the project is complete, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee and Restoration Advisory Board interested in the SM-1A project.

Delta Skating Association President Todd Zachgo – Rink Upgrade Proposal

Todd Zachgo, Delta Skating Association (DSA) President, referenced his September 9, 2020 packet of upgrades inside the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena. He reported volunteers are ready to construct the 28' x 38' artificial ice in the southeast portion of the building. Delta skaters typically do not get ice until late November, so it is not uncommon for DSA to burn through \$5,000 by paying \$450/hour for ice time in Fairbanks. Framing for the practice rink would cost \$1,700. Protective netting (\$5,000) and extra knee braces have yet to be ordered. Discussion followed regarding adequate placement of knee braces, FY21 budget for the ice arena, how COVID affected hockey programs, whether DSA would qualify for COVID relief or Northern Star Pogo funds, \$86,000+ estimated for upgrades, whether licensed contractors must oversee projects, and waiting on M2C1's engineer estimate and a structural engineer's approval before submitting plans to the Fire Marshal.

Musgrove asked Zachgo to break DSA's proposed upgrades into smaller sections, to work within the FY21 budget, and request more funding during the FY22 budget cycle, which will start around March.

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve spending up to \$7,000.00 from the FY21 budget to build the synthetic ice rink in the southeast corner of the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena; Degnan seconded.

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

CORRESPONDENCE**Snowmobile Storage**

Sergeant Jason Pugh, Alaska State Troopers, reported their two snow machines are in cold storage, but their response time to search and rescue calls would improve if they were stored in a heated facility.

Discussion followed regarding room at the fire station next to the Fire Department's machines, negotiating an agreement to address liability in the event of a catastrophe, i.e. fire, and not charging a fee.

Motion: Degnan moved to authorize the Alaska State Troopers to store two snow machines on a trailer at the fire station during the winter months as discussed; Hallgren seconded.

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

2020 Municipal Election Ballot

White reported:

- Michael Prestegard will run unopposed for Seat C. Incumbent Peter S. Hallgren will run against Erin N. Catterson for Seat F. Ballots will be counted once the polls close at 8:00pm on October 6 and recounted by the Canvass Board at 9:00am on October 7, as long as there are no outstanding ballots.
- Early voting is available at City Hall. Voters can request a by-mail ballot through 5:00pm, September 25, vote in person through 5:00pm, October 5, or vote through a personal representative through 8:00pm, October 6.
- Election results will be certified on October 20. Newly-elected officials will be sworn into office, but their regular term of office will not begin until the first Monday (October 26) following certification of the election (City Code §1.10.030). Residing Council members serve "until their successors are elected and have qualified."

2020 Municipal Election Notice

White reported the upcoming City Council election on October 6, 2020 has been advertised.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS**Delta Dozen**

[The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, Land, and Water proposed a state land auction to sell 11 lots (discussed at September 1, 2020 Council meeting). Their new plan (September 3 email) combines the 11 lots in Block 29 into nominal one-acre parcels. Lot 6, Block 2 will be sold through a public outcry auction.]

Leith reported the City does not qualify for more municipal entitlement land, but could qualify for Block 29 lots through a Public and Charitable Use Sale if there was a clear plan/intent to use it as a park or community area.

Hallgren said a park is not needed because of proximity to Pioneer Park. Deeds could be restricted, i.e. combine lots and restrict them from being divided, but replatting would be simplest. He asked to waive City platting fees.

Motion: Levinson moved to draft a letter to encourage DNR to replat 11 lots into one-acre lots as best they can, waiving all City platting fees; Hallgren seconded.

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

NEW BUSINESS**Windy City - Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land, and Water**

[Kaitlyn Fuqua from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, Land, and Water asked if the City would manage a green belt, a linear strip of land along the Windy City Subdivision (September 4 email).] Leith reported DNR plans to subdivide 7.5 acres into 3 to 4 lots. The public comment period ended on September 14. The only written response was from Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District, which expressed concern that the area serves as a windbreak from the Delta River corridor. DNR proposed retaining the land as a green belt along one or several of the boundaries or possibly adding a building setback or buffer to prohibit major clearing and removal of trees.

Discussion followed regarding bringing the topic back on October 6, to include a diagram showing how Windy City Subdivision relates to the proposed railroad bridge. See additional discussion (*At Large Report* – page 4).

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 220835 to Aetna - \$11,933.11 for group health insurance

CK# 220836 to Buffalo Center Service - \$1,048.99 for vehicle fuel

CK# 220837 to Wells Fargo - \$1,442.79 for miscellaneous credit card purchases

CK# 220838 to Follet School Solutions - \$1,059.30 for annual library management software

Motion: Levinson moved to approve checks #220835 through 220838 as presented; Degnan seconded.

Discussion followed regarding COVID relief funds paying for keyboard covers at the library and disposable masks, pens, and disinfectant wipes for the upcoming election (CK# 220837).

Motion passed on a roll call with four in attendance (Levinson, Degnan, Hallgren, Musgrove). Brown was briefly lost from the teleconference and opted to not vote once she reconnected to the meeting.

REPORTS

LEPC – Audrey Brown reported a LEPC meeting was held on September 14.

Emergency Preparedness – no report

Public Health – Audrey Brown reported the Alaska Health Fair will be in Delta on October 3. Appointments must be made online and customers are encouraged to arrive well hydrated.

Brown was excused at 7:03pm.

NEW BUSINESS continued

Backhoe Bid Specs

Musgrove reported money was set aside for equipment when a used backhoe was requested during the FY21 budget cycle. Referring to a draft of the bid specs, he asked for input before the October 6 Council meeting.

Andreassen Access to North Taxiway

Musgrove, referencing a draft resolution and access agreement, reported the City Council gave Ray Andreassen permission to clear land along the airport easement (1998) and access easement was discussed (2018/2020) to compensate him for his efforts in early development of the airport roads. Andreassen would be given an access easement to cross the 50-foot green belt and 30-foot utility easement between his property and North Taxiway. Musgrove asked for feedback before the October 6 meeting, particularly regarding a permanent easement, not a temporary one.

Discussion followed regarding establishing the boundary crossing policy (February 2, 2016), boundary crossing fees built into Airport II Subdivision covenants (2020), but not Airport I (2002), Andreassen “subject to a boundary crossing permit fee as established by the City Council” (#6 of access easement), transferring the access easement to successor owners (#5), and whether to restrict the agreement to aviation-related activity.

REPORTS continued

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported an employee was given work restrictions from a medical provider, so the City will hire interim employees to fill in gaps, i.e. cemetery work and adding gravel to airport subdivision roads.

City Administrator – see *Public Works* and *Cemetery* reports

City Clerk – Pat White reported the October 6 School Board election will be at the Community Center, 8:00am-8:00pm. The November 3 General Election will also be at the Community Center, 7:00am-8:00pm. Early in-person voting will be available at the Presbyterian-Faith Lutheran Church annex two weeks before each election.

Finance – Stephanie Erickson reported:

- COVID relief fund applications are due by 4:00pm, Friday, September 18. To date, 14 have been received.
- The Fire Department received a \$13,000 grant. More information will be known by mid-October.

Library – Tiki Levinson reported:

- Baby Laptime (children under 3) meets on Tuesdays. Story Hour (3-5 year olds) meets twice on Wednesdays. The Alaska National Guard will film the 11:15am session and share it on Facebook Live.
- Boeing granted \$3,750 to the library, a bit more than the usual \$3,000 that they give each year.
- The library is hosting Fall Reading Challenge: Book Bingo for kids. One for adults will start after hunting season.

Schools – no report

Airport – Alan Levinson reported the airport is busy and the overflow parking area across from the tie-down area will be rented for one week.

Musgrove reported North Taxiway was moved closer to the middle of the right-of-way because it was too close to power poles, making it difficult for airplanes to pass. A sand berm on the corner was removed and trees in the right-of-way will be removed.

Leith reported she has heard nothing from GVEA since she submitted application for power poles in Airport II.

Public Works – Mary Leith reported she has not yet received the report about the (August 14) landfill inspection.

Park / Recreation – JW Musgrove reported:

- Many trees were downed during a recent windstorm (September 6/7) and a dugout was destroyed after it was hit by a dumpster.
- A backflow preventer for the Zamboni room at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena will be replaced.
- Furnace maintenance is being scheduled for City facilities.

Cemetery – Mary Leith reported a small section of fence was repaired today and winter graves will be dug.

At Large – Pete Hallgren referenced the public meeting at the library on September 9 about the Alaska to Alberta (A2A) Railway and reported both the presentation and the public turnout were good. He recalled details about a railroad that was proposed 20 years ago and he explained multiple points that were discussed about the current proposed railroad, i.e. A2A leasing the right-of-way between Delta Junction and the Canadian border, constructing overpasses to avoid two-mile long trains traveling at 10mph, eight to ten trains per day, concern about disrupting first responders and other commuters, contacting landowners who would be affected by the proposed railroad, etc.

Tiki Levinson reported a new supply of comment cards and more copies of the meeting's PowerPoint are available at the library if the public is interested.

[The recorded meeting was posted on the City's website and A2A's (<https://a2arail.com/delta-junction/>).]

Additional Reports – no reports

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS - none

ADJOURNMENT – 7:58pm

Mayor JW Musgrove

Pat White, City Clerk

CITY
SEAL

Approved: October 6, 2020