

**City Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 1, 2020 ~ 5:00PM**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER**

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

**Council members physically present:** Deputy Mayor Freda DEGNAN,  
Lou HEINBOCKEL, Michael PRESTEGARD

**Council present via phone:** Pete HALLGREN, Alan LEVINSON

**Council excused:** Charles LESTER

**Staff physically present:** City Administrator Mary LEITH, Administrative Assistant Flower COLE

**Staff present via phone:** Finance Officer Stephanie ERICKSON, Library Director Tiki LEVINSON,  
City Clerk Pat WHITE

Eight members from the community were physically present at different parts of the meeting, three called in, and Michael Prestegard monitored equipment while the meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Heinbockel moved to approve the December 1, 2020 agenda as presented; Levinson seconded.

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

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

**Motion:** Heinbockel moved to approve the November 17, 2020 minutes as presented; Levinson seconded.

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

**COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE** - none

**REQUEST TO SPEAK** - none

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Resignation – Mayor JW Musgrove**

Degnan read JW Musgrove's letter of resignation, dated November 19.

Heinbockel said there have been few mayors in the City's history who have dedicated as much time and effort as Musgrove.

**Motion:** Heinbockel moved to accept JW Musgrove's resignation with regret from both positions as Council member and Mayor; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren said Musgrove served the longest continuous tenure since appointment in August 2006. While mayor himself, Hallgren had the pleasure of working directly with Musgrove as Mayor Pro tem for two years. His resignation is a huge loss to the community. Hallgren expressed appreciation for his service and wished him well.

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

See *At Large Report* (page three) for additional information in filling the mayor's vacancy.

**Sherry Decker – Request to Purchase a Portion of Granite Avenue**

[Per City Code of Ordinances §4.70.040(a), no platted street may be vacated except upon petition of the municipality or owners of the majority of the front feet of the land fronting the part of the street sought to be vacated. On September 1, 2009, the City Council voted to grant a revocable license to Helen Orcutt, previous owner of Stanford Apartments, enabling her to construct a new drain field without having to vacate a portion of the platted right of way for Granite Avenue (Resolution 2010-02). On January 8, 2019, the Council extended that revocable license to Gordon, Sherry, Jacob, and Shelly Decker, aka Decker Estates (Resolution 2019-03).]

Sherry Decker, new owner of Stanford Apartments, asked to purchase the section of Granite Avenue where the leach field was installed.

Discussion followed regarding Decker providing a plat, contacting Sebastian Saarloos to identify all neighboring property owners to ensure their access is not affected, selling possibly from the centerline of Granite Avenue or the edge of the easement, and bringing back discussion on December 15. See *Additional Reports* (page three) for additional input.

**APPOINT DEPUTY MAYOR**

Heinbockel said he would serve as Deputy Mayor until the end of his Council term, October 2021, but he will not run thereafter.

Degnan called for nominations for a new Deputy Mayor with none being offered.

Motion: Hallgren nominated Lou Heinbockel to serve as Deputy Mayor until the next regular election in October 2021; Degnan seconded.

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

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****Status of 2009 Ambulance**

Erickson reported more information is expected by the December 15 Council meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS****City Purchases over \$1,000**

CK# 221007 to Kel's Septic - \$4,900.00 to service City facilities

CK# 221008 to Cook & Haugeberg - \$5,470.00 for FY20 Audit, payment #2

CK# 221009 to Delta Transport Services - \$4,795.09 for heating fuel

CK# 221010 to Buffalo Fuel - \$1,258.20 for heating fuel

CK# 221011 to Guess & Rudd - \$2,550.00 for legal services (abandoned vehicles, Andreassen easement, COVID grant)

Motion: Heinbockel moved to approve checks #221007 through 221011 as presented; Levinson seconded.

Discussion followed regarding fuel usage and attorney advice in drafting an ordinance to establish a standard procedure to remove abandoned vehicles off City streets.

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

**2021 Holiday Schedule**

Leith reported City facilities are typically closed the day after Thanksgiving. Landfill employees opted to be open on both the Friday and Saturday following Thanksgiving. She asked for that one change to the draft schedule.

Motion: Hallgren moved to adopt the 2021 Holiday Schedule as amended; Heinbockel seconded.

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

**Christmas Gifts Cards**

Motion: Heinbockel moved to increase gift certificates for employees and volunteers to \$75; Hallgren seconded.

Discussion followed regarding total number of employees, including summer hire, and volunteer firefighters/EMS (31), past history of giving \$50 gift certificates, and giving cash, so bonuses can be spent anywhere.

Motion: Heinbockel amended the motion to give cash instead of gift certificates; Hallgren seconded.

Degnan called for objection with none being offered.

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

**REPORTS**

**Mayor** – Freda Degnan reported:

- The notice to grant Ray and Karen Andreassen an access easement, approved November 3, was advertised in upcoming newspapers and posted on the City website and other places. The access easement will be recorded after the 30-day disposal period (December 16, 2020).

- A plaque was received from Alaska Municipal League, acknowledging Delta Junction government leaders for maintaining standard operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding economic crisis.

- Several Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) recipients submitted thank you letters.

**City Administrator** – no report

**City Clerk** – no report

**Finance** – Stephanie Erickson reported the Friends of NRA returned their CARES grant funds. Regarding leftover funds, Erickson reported the remaining \$50,000 will likely be spent on video conferencing at City Hall. Fairbanks gave their leftovers to the hospital and a couple clinics. The local ambulance service and the Fire Department could use funds to purchase personal protection gear.

Discussion followed regarding whether any leftovers could be given to the local school district and finalizing decisions on December 15.

**Health & Safety** – Mike Prestegard reported:

- He and Erickson are working to install an operating system for people to call into meetings using their cellphones or computers.

Discussion followed regarding the platform built for Apple, but Council preferring to use Windows, and Hallgren interested in full video capabilities.

- 92 new COVID cases were reported in the Delta area in the past week. Most were between ages 20 and 39. Discussion followed regarding anyone experiencing breathing problems going straight to the hospital and an experiment in Anchorage in which elderly patients were released within five hours of receiving a new treatment.

**Library** – Freda Degnan reported:

- The library has been closed to the public for the past two weeks and patrons are encouraged to use the library's online catalog for curbside service. Thirty-minute appointments started today. Patrons are limited; one using a computer while another browses. Face coverings and hand sanitizer are required.

Discussion followed regarding library service hours, updating what City Hall services are available, and a new doorbell installed at the library.

- Four lego-themed prizes were awarded in the second annual Lego Challenge, which had nearly 100 entries.

**Airport** – Alan Levinson reported:

- The airport is not active due to shorter days and colder weather.
- Volunteers are still packing the main runway, ski strip, parallel taxiway, and parking areas.
- Some intersections in Airport II could use clearing, but snow should be left on North Taxiway, so pilots on skis can access the runway from Airport I.
- The right-of-way for the new powerline has been cleared.

**Public Works** – Mary Leith reported:

- Employees plan to go to Fairbanks on December 2 to get a briefing on the new used backhoe.
- Henry Muth is using the Skid Steer to build a snow ridge along Mil-Tan Road, battling the normal drifting.

**Park / Recreation** – Lou Heinbockel reported he is grateful kids have opportunity to skate and that he felt it is time to reopen the schools.

**Cemetery** – no report

**At Large** – Pete Hallgren congratulated Degnan on becoming the new mayor. He questioned filling the vacancy.

White reported the (Seat B) vacancy must be filled within 30 days per Title 29 (AS 29.20.180). It can be accomplished at the December 15 Council meeting or by scheduling a special meeting before December 31.

Letters of interest will be solicited to fill the vacancy through the next election in 2021.

Hallgren reported Roy Gilbertson (4-2-40/11-20-20) passed away. (Gilbertson served as mayor from October 1998 through July 2006.) He hired Hallgren in 1999, reestablishing the City Administrator position after a 20-year hiatus, and he saw the community through some of its most difficult times. He was involved in the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC '95) of Fort Greely, the private prison controversy that pretty much divided the community, and he was instrumental in finding a new "anchor tenant" (Missile Defense).

Heinbockel reported Glenn Wright, Jerry Barger, and Liz Leng, past mayors, also passed away in the last year.

**Additional Reports** – Lou Heinbockel asked to be very cautious in selling rights-of-ways and easements of City streets. He explained recent scenarios, which were expensive and drawn-out.

## **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Amber Rand, new Public Health Nurse, introduced herself.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 6:29pm

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Mayor Freda Degnan

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Pat White, City Clerk

CITY  
SEAL

Approved: December 15, 2020