

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



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Freda Degnan called the meeting to order at 5:02pm in the large conference room.

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

Council present via phone: Pete HALLGREN, Alan LEVINSON

Council absent: 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

Two members from the community were physically present at the start 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 15, 2020 agenda as presented; Hallgren seconded.

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

Discussion followed regarding changing to a consent agenda (combining one-line items into one process).

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve the December 1, 2020 minutes as presented; Prestegard seconded.

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

FILL SEAT B VACANCY

Degnan reported letters of interest were received from Erin Catterson and Stormie Mitchell. Both ladies introduced themselves. Erin, a lifelong resident of Delta, graduated from Delta High School in 2006, is raising a family, and is a volunteer firefighter on the City Fire Department. She ran against Pete Hallgren in the 2020 Municipal Election and lost by one vote. Stormie, part of five generations in the Delta area, explained her extensive work experience, volunteerism, and knowledge of the local area. She spent the majority of her life in Delta and Anchorage.

Motion: Heinbockel moved to nominate Erin Catterson to fill the Council vacancy, to serve until the next general election in October 2021; Hallgren seconded.

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

OATH OF OFFICE

Leith administered the Oath of Office and Erin Catterson took her seat at the Council table.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE – See discussion under *Request for CARES Funds* (bottom of page)

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

Gaming Renewal – Nenana Ice Classics

Motion: Heinbockel moved to show no opposition to Nenana Ice Classics' gaming renewal; Levinson seconded.

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

Request for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Funds

Erickson reported the remaining CARES funds (\$47,805.12) must be spent by December 31.

Discussion followed regarding \$8,000 in undedicated funds if the request from North Star Council on Aging and video conferencing at City Hall are approved, some small businesses missing out in the first two rounds of CARES distributions, liability between the grant recipient and the Federal government, and \$3,000-\$4,000 for a new library program.

Hallgren said he would not oppose giving North Star Council on Aging the same \$10,000 limit as given to others (for the Senior Companion Program van), only if enough money is left to support the zoom room, if it is approved.

Heinbockel said he would support fully funding the senior van (\$22,700) because the entire community would benefit from it, but not teleconferencing because it interferes with attendance at Council meetings.

Darlene Supplee, Executive Director, North Star Council on Aging, referred to her December 10 letter and reported wellness visits, meal deliveries, and transportation to medical providers have been provided to Delta seniors for four years through the Senior Companion Program. Prior to the COVID pandemic, personal vehicles were used to transport seniors to Fairbanks eight to ten times each month. Only gas is reimbursed. \$27,400 was raised locally to purchase an all-wheel van, but \$22,700 is still needed. North Star Council would pay for fuel and carry the title and insurance. Donations are accepted, but seniors are not charged for services.

Stormie Mitchell suggested giving vouchers for True North Transport who travel to Fairbanks every weekday.

Motion: Hallgren moved to allocate \$10,000.00 in CARES funds to North Star Council on Aging toward the purchase of the senior van; Catterson seconded.

Leith reported the van is necessary to ensure vulnerable populations have access to transportation and food during the COVID pandemic.

Motion passed on a roll call with four in favor (Prestegard, Catterson, Hallgren, Degnan) and two opposed (Heinbockel, Levinson).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Status of 2009 Ambulance

Erickson reported State Farm is still waiting on photos from the adjuster and the mechanic shop is behind schedule.

Granite Avenue

[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. Requests were received to purchase sections of Granite Avenue (platted, undeveloped street) from Adam McNabb (November 17, 2020 minutes) and Sherry Decker (December 1, 2020).]

Leith asked the Council to decide whether to give away any more of Granite Avenue.

Discussion followed regarding legal issues around McNabb's request, circumstances around Decker's request, and postponing discussion.

Revisit 2021 Holiday Schedule

White reported edits to the 2021 holiday schedule: Library and City Hall staff would take the day after Thanksgiving (Friday, November 26) as an elected day off. The library would be open on Saturday, November 27. The landfill would remain open on November 26/27. Christmas would be observed on Friday, December 24 for both City Hall and library staff. The landfill would remain open on Christmas Eve (December 24), but closed on Christmas Day (Saturday, December 25). The library would also be closed on Saturday, December 25, 2021.

Motion: Heinbockel moved to approve the amended 2021 holiday schedule; Prestegard seconded.

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

NEW BUSINESS

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK# 221062 to Delta Transport Service - \$4,936.72 for heating and equipment fuel

CK# 221063 to Becker Arena Products - \$5,679.72 for netting and artificial ice rink inside the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena

CK# 221064 to Buffalo Center Service - \$1,347.14 for equipment fuel

Motion: Levinson moved to approve checks #221062 through 221064 as presented; Catterson seconded.

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

Zoom Room and Remaining CARES Grant Funds

Motion: Prestegard moved to allocate up to \$15,000.00 for a zoom room to increase attendance and public involvement at Council meetings; Hallgren seconded.

Discussion followed regarding equipment (monitors, speakers, cameras, notebooks or tablets), cameras facing the Council and the audience, whether to rely on zoom capabilities once COVID is resolved, and improving how telephones, microphones, and the local radio work together.

Motion failed on a roll call with three in favor (Levinson, Prestegard, Hallgren) and three opposed (Heinbockel, Catterson, Degnan).

Heinbockel suggested discussing conferencing equipment during the next budget cycle.

Motion: Hallgren moved to grant any remaining CARES funds to the local school district; Heinbockel seconded. Discussion followed regarding Leith obtaining a request from the school district, about \$5,000 spent to date on City expenses, lost revenue (school district backing out of 2020-2021 skating agreement) and budgeted items not meeting CARES criteria.

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

Motion: Hallgren moved to give the library up to \$5,000.00 in CARES funds to assist patrons in accessing the library computer program during COVID lockdown; Levinson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in favor (Prestegard, Catterson, Hallgren, Levinson, Degnan) and one opposed (Heinbockel).

REPORTS

Mayor – no report

City Administrator – Mary Leith reported:

- Governor Dunleavy extended COVID mandates through January 15, 2021. Leith recommended extending current policies to the same, limiting access to City Hall and other facilities.
 - Amber Rand, the new Public Health Nurse, requested use of the Community Center to host a vaccine clinic. It would be convenient for senior citizens who occupy the Senior Lounge in the Community Center.
- Council expressed no opposition to dispensing vaccines at the Community Center.

- She will get quotes from appraisers to move forward in selling airport lots in the spring.

City Clerk – no report

Finance – Stephanie Erickson reported the FY20 audit is expected to be done the last week in December.

Health & Safety – Mike Prestegard reported 31 new COVID cases were reported in Delta, but they appear to be leveling off.

Library – Freda Degnan reported:

- The library has been closed to full inside use, except for 30-minute appointments. Sherman Stebbins installed a doorbell. Masks and hand sanitizer are required. Curbside service and routine sanitizing are practiced.
- Nearly 60 graham cracker kits were distributed for the Boeing-sponsored virtual gingerbread house contest. Contestants submit photos.
- The library staff expressed appreciation to the Council for the holiday bonuses. Although it has been a challenging year, they try to serve the community and want the Council to know that they feel appreciated.

Airport – Alan Levinson reported there is little activity at the airport, it has been polished by the wind, and an old dirt pile in the right-of-way may hinder GVEA's attempt to install the last two electric poles.

Public Works – Mary Leith reported the new used backhoe was delivered on December 11.

Park / Recreation – Lou Heinbockel reported a lot of snow has been moved around the rink facility.

Cemetery – no report

At Large – Pete Hallgren welcomed Erin Catterson to the City Council.

Additional Reports – Mary Leith reported the City's 60th anniversary will be on December 20, 2020.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Flower Cole, referring to zoom conferencing (pages 2/3), said she has participated in many meetings with different platforms. She supported zoom conferencing because of being able to put a face to a name.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:24pm

Pat White, City Clerk

CITY
SEAL

Mayor Freda Degnan

Approved: January 5, 2021