

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
June 7, 2022 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Council members present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Deputy Mayor Mike PRESTEGARD,

Lou HEINBOCKEL, Emily DOVE, Pete HALLGREN, Alan LEVINSON (arrived at approximately 5:20pm)

Council attended via phone: Erin CATTERSON

Staff present: City Administrator Ken Greenleaf, Administrative Assistant Flower Cole

Library Director Tiki Levinson, City Clerk Pat White

Six community members were physically present at the beginning of the meeting and four attended by phone.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Musgrove reported a request from Delta Trails Association was added to *Correspondence* and Check# 222060 was added to *New Business, City Purchases over \$1,000*.

Motion: Heinbockel moved to adopt the June 7, 2022 agenda as amended; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Heinbockel moved to approve the May 19, 2022 minutes as presented; Dove seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Steve Hilton, Deltana Soccer Association President, reported the six-week soccer season starts with the High School on June 14. Practices are on Tuesdays and matches on Thursdays. There were 70 participants in 2013, 150 in 2017, and 220 in 2021. Ten of last year's graduates started eight years ago. The biggest age group, ages 2-4, has 30 to 40 participants each year. The 10-11 age group has utilized one of the ballfields for the past four years. Since 2020, the High School practices and competes with the Middle School on the High School fields. The Soccer Association fertilizes and mows the fields and the Fire Department is called upon during dry seasons. Mowed grass in Delta is a premium and Hilton expressed appreciation for the soccer fields.

Sebastian Saarloos, reported the as-built of Rest Haven Cemetery shows four sections. Delta Surveys platted and recorded Blocks 1-4 in 1982, Blocks 5-8 in 1997, and Blocks 9-12 in 2014. The Pioneers section was not recorded. Saarloos recommended clearing five acres north of the existing cemetery on Tanana Loop Extension, leaving a 50-foot buffer between it and the neighboring property, and planting it in grass before surveying (160 or 320 plots) the following year. It would cost approximately \$16,000 to survey 160 plots, which would include flagging lines to assist the contractor in clearing. Of the 40.067 acres of land, the existing cemetery consists of approximately nine acres. Once land is cleared to the north, the rest of the acreage lies toward the east.

Discussion followed regarding costs not yet known for clearing and planting, no urgency in preparing more gravesites (90 plots still available and an average of 14/year sold over the past six years), clearing two feet in depth to ensure roots are removed, burning or burying the overburden, adding a parking lot near the north entrance, and budgeting enough to pay for landscaping other than choke cherry trees, which are now considered invasive.

Heinbockel suggested opening the five acres to the public to cut firewood for the next two winters.

[Issa Spatrisano, Alaska State Refugee Coordinator, Catholic Social Services (CSS), Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS), issued an email on May 26 stating, "On May 21, 2022 Congress passed a benefit package for Ukraine which included making Ukrainians paroled into the U.S. between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023 eligible for refugee benefits and mainstream services. This law does not make Ukrainians eligible for the Reception and Placement program. This means that CSS RAIS will not be resettling any Ukrainian clients but instead will be serving individuals who arrive to our state independent of our agency, most likely through the Uniting for Ukraine (<https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine>) program. We are aware of some cases in DJ who have already arrived and in the coming weeks CSS staff will be coming to DJ to enroll them in refugee services.]

Musgrove reported the war in Ukraine has created some displacement and the Biden administration wants to accept at least 100,000 refugees into the United States. Some Ukrainians are expected to move to Delta because of

the Ukrainian population that is already established here. Issa Spatrisano is aware of 11 eligible cases in Delta Junction and expects more. Sponsors must show financial ability to foster immigrants for their two-year “parole.” Spatrisano will be in Delta on June 14 and will meet with the local government about serving refugees.

Musgrove reported an order for 31 House Identification Project (HIP) signs was placed on June 6 with Arctic Signs & Graphics, a division of Arctic Fire & Safety. The price increased from \$30 to \$38 plus \$4 for refrigerator magnets. On August 17, 2021, the Council voted to use \$10,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funds to purchase HIP signs. There is still \$6,684.11 remaining. Most residents pay for their signs.

Musgrove reported an administrative change was made to the policy about renting City facilities on May 18. City Hall conference rooms will no longer be leased outside of City Hall business hours (8:00-5:00) nor weekends and only to established, longstanding groups, i.e. Fish & Game Advisory Board or the Restoration Advisory Board. Reasoning is to ensure old records that are stored in the large conference room remain secure.

Musgrove reported some proceeds were used to install power and roads after Airport II lots were sold (2021). The City has not yet qualified for rebates from lot owners hooking up to electricity. Musgrove asked to use \$15,000 to improve airport subdivision roads.

See additional discussion under *Ordinance 2022-04* (pages 3/4).

Heinbockel said net proceeds are to be deposited in the City’s Permanent Fund (City Code §1.45). He would not support investing more proceeds on airport roads, but he would support using general funds.

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

\$25,000 Request, dated May 22, 2022, from Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD)

Heinbockel reported the community has depended on volunteers for over 50 years. He asked to honor the request from RDVFD Fire Chief Michael Paschall, but not commit to a line item in the annual budget because future funding is uncertain.

Discussion followed regarding three of ten active firefighters are Deltana residents and tabling the conversation (*Ordinance 2022-04* on pages 3/4).

Noxious Weed Smackdown and BBQ – June 23, 4:30-6:30, at Sullivan Roadhouse

Summer Nay, Salcha-Delta Soil & Water Conservation District Invasive Plant Program Coordinator, reported her purpose is to educate the public about noxious weeds. The Alaska Flour Company will host an event behind the Sullivan Roadhouse, in which attendees will make weed pulling exciting. Nay encouraged people to bring their own work gloves and join a BBQ afterwards.

Delta Junction Trails Association (DJTA) – Request Support Work Plan near the River Walk Park

[April 19, 2022 Council minutes: DJTA was awarded a Brownfield Assessment, which included a plan to mitigate the dump site that is on DNR land, adjacent to the River Walk Park. Due to solid waste regulatory restrictions, cleanup cannot be done at this time. Stakeholders agreed to fence off the two acres to ensure it will not be disturbed. Funding for the fence is part of the assessment. All DNR land is open, but because of potential exposure to risks, the local government must request the dump site be blocked from public use. The State will require a Land Management Agreement to lease and manage the River Walk Park in the near future.]

Mindy Eggleston reported the work plan that was presented to the Council on April 19 was approved by both the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A letter supporting DJTA’s plan to fence off the old dump site is needed before DNR can start the decision process, which will include a 30-day public hearing.

Motion: Dove moved to issue a letter supporting Delta Junction Trails Association’s work plan, so the Department of Natural Resources can move forward with the Environmental Covenant; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call with seven in attendance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

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

CK# 222049 - \$1,269.72 to Alaska Rubber & Rigging Supply for Fire Department hose fittings (paid by Forestry grant)

CK# 222050 - \$3,302.84 to Buffalo Center Service for equipment fuel

CK# 222051 - \$1,005.00 to Cache Accounting (Krista Meeks) for May bookkeeping

CK# 222052 - \$3,428.83 to Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED), Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) for unused Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds

CK# 222053 - \$25,000.00 to Delta Medical Transport for amended FY22 contract, payment 5 of 5

CK# 222054 - \$1,200.00 to JC's Towing & Recovery to transport 2012 ambulance to Seekins in Fairbanks

CK# 222055 - \$1,539.51 to Mary Thea Levinson for per diem and travel to Grant Symposium (\$1,266.51) and reimbursement for artwork for Mary Leith's retirement (\$273.00)

CK# 222056 - \$2,069.51 to NC Machinery for Skidsteer work

CK# 222057 - \$5,000.00 to Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department for annual donation (FY22 fiscal year)

CK# 222058 - \$1,740.00 to Numbers Count (Stephanie Erickson) for accounting services, May 16/27

CK# 222059 - \$14,876.81 to Wells Fargo for miscellaneous credit card charges (\$9,899.00 - landfill loader tires, \$1,606 - March electricity at Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena, \$450.56 - Erin Catterson's hotel accommodations at Grant Symposium, \$712.59 - library, \$398 - Council snacks, \$356.99 - City Hall supplies, \$88.70 - postage, \$1,364.97 - sandbags)

CK# 222060 - \$4,715.29 to Eastside Truck & Auto to diagnose and disassemble fuel system on ambulance (\$2,261.32) and repair Caterpillar (\$2,453.97)

Motion: Levinson moved to approve checks 222049 through 222060 as presented; Heinbockel seconded.

Greenleaf reported 95% of the finance department has transitioned, but AML Shared Services is still available.

Musgrove reported \$3,428.83 in CARES funds would be returned because it was not encumbered by December 31.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call with seven in attendance.

Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2022-04, An Ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska Providing for a Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023

Motion: Hallgren moved to introduce Ordinance 2022-04, hold the first reading, and set the public hearing, second reading, and potential adoption date for June 21, 2022; Levinson seconded.

Motion: Heinbockel moved to amend the draft budget to donate \$25,000 to RDVFD; Levinson seconded.

Musgrove reported the \$25,000 would replace the \$5,000 that is already in the FY23 draft budget.

Hallgren reported the community benefits from the Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD), but he disagreed with the accusation of shorting Deltana (Michael Paschall's letter, dated May 22) because the City has donated to Rural Deltana for many years, while paying 9-1-1 dispatch for the entire area (\$51,390 for FY23). Discussion followed regarding PILT distribution, \$200,000 needed for radios, both fire departments actively soliciting donations from area residents, Tender #162 needing \$10,000 in repairs and Tender #161 needing new tires, whether Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) contributes toward RDVFD (see *Additional Public Comments* on page 5), increasing crack sealing from \$30,000 to \$52,000, and whether it can be accomplished in the latter part of this year.

Musgrove suggested using funds from the FY22 surplus and the current FY23 budget to start a sinking fund (savings account) for the Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD).

Motion failed on a roll call to donate \$25,000 to RDVFD with six opposed (Catterson, Dove, Prestegard, Levinson, Hallgren, Musgrove) and one in favor (Heinbockel).

Motion: Heinbockel moved to add \$15,000 to the FY23 budget for airport subdivision roads; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren asked to reallocate \$15,000 from the FY22 surplus. Heinbockel agreed.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call to spend \$15,000 from the FY22 surplus on airport roads (Prestegard, Catterson, Hallgren, Dove, Heinbockel, Levinson, Musgrove).

Musgrove called for other amendments or changes to the current FY23 draft budget.

Larry Martin, Delta Skating Association President, asked for another \$10,000 for upgrades at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena. He reported McKenna Brothers Paving Corp's latest quote, dated May 31, 2022, is \$69,920 and includes current fuel pricing. McKenna will provide prep work and all the labor, which is equivalent to \$20,000.

Musgrove asked Martin to communicate with Councilman Mike Prestegard who oversees *Park & Rec* and to discuss using FY22 surplus for rink upgrades at the June 21 meeting.

Catterson moved to increase DJVFD Equipment Repair/Maintenance from \$25,000 to \$35,000 in the FY23 draft budget; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren suggested tabling discussion to June 21 when available funding will be known. Catterson agreed.

Hallgren asked about employee step increases and cost of living adjustments.

Musgrove reported the cost of living is around 4.9% and step increases depend on favorable employee evaluations on their date of hire.

Musgrove asked for budget suggestions before the FY23 budget is finalized (agenda posted on June 17, 2022).

Motion passed on a roll call with six in favor (Hallgren, Prestegard, Dove, Levinson, Catterson, Musgrove) and one opposed (Heinbockel) to introduce Ordinance 2022-04, hold the first reading, and set the date for the second reading, public hearing, and possible adoption on June 21.

Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2022-05, An Ordinance Extending the Franchise Agreement with Delta Medical Transport, LLC for Emergency Medical Services

Motion: Prestegard moved to introduce Ordinance 2022-05, hold the first reading, and set the public hearing, second reading, and potential adoption date for June 21, 2022; Hallgren seconded.

Musgrove recommended removing section 6a (page 5 of 8 in the latest draft contract) and replacing it with “technically tardy” verbiage, “If this Contract expires without a new medical transport provider being contracted by the City or the City itself becoming a medical transport provider, this Contract shall continue on a month to month basis terminable on thirty (30) days’ notice by either party.” Tony and Amber White, Delta Medical Transport owners, agreed to the revision.

Hallgren reported the one-year contract cannot be extended without going out for Request for Proposal next spring. The massive increase (\$50,000/year to \$552,000) would not be affordable if it were not for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Once it is gone in two years, there is no way to generate that kind of income. The Council must be proactive and not wait ten months to find a way to provide ambulance services to the local community. Discussion followed regarding requiring RFP responders to disclose private business information and ambulance services across Alaska with comparable populations having million-dollar operations.

Heinbockel disagreed with comparing Delta Junction to Skagway because they have a tax base and receive a million visitors each year. He expressed concern with following the Code of Ordinances to solicit competitive bids.

Greenleaf reported Tony and Amber White did not withhold information. Additional costs were mandated by the federal government. They were not meeting industry standards by the Department of Labor on what they were paying their employees and they were almost shut down because of it.

Motion: Hallgren moved to replace paragraph 6 of the draft contract as discussed; Levinson seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call (Dove, Hallgren, Heinbockel, Levinson, Catterson, Prestegard, Musgrove) to revise the contract draft.

Motion: Hallgren moved to extend the Council meeting by 15 minutes; Levinson seconded.

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

Motion passed on a roll call with six in favor (Dove, Prestegard, Hallgren, Catterson, Levinson, Musgrove) and one opposed (Heinbockel) to introduce Ordinance 2022-05, hold the first reading, and set the date for the second reading, public hearing, and possible adoption on June 21.

REPORTS

Mayor – see *Comments on Non-Agenda Items* (pages 1/2)

Airport – Alan Levinson reported:

- The tie-down area is the fullest it has ever been.
- He responded to a call today from the Rescue Coordination Center concerning an active ELT (emergency locator transmitter) signal. It resulted in a negative contact.

Library – Emily Dove reported:

- The summer reading program started today with 86 students.
- The Library Block Party was a huge success with over 1,000 visits on the library’s people counter. Live music was featured along with 115 baskets, a Corn Hole Tournament, but not enough hotdogs. Over \$13,000 was raised in donations from generous patrons and businesses.

Health & Safety – Emily Dove reported:

- COVID testing and vaccines are available at local clinics and the Public Health Center.

- COVID cases are increasing across the state. Information is available online at covid19.alaska.gov.
- State Health Commissioner Adam Crum will rescind Alaska's public health emergency order for COVID on July 1.

- Beginning July 16, dialing 9-8-8 will access a suicide prevention hotline. 9-1-1 will be for all other emergencies. The new number is a national effort to establish one suicide hotline across the country.

Schools – no report

Emergency Services – Erin Catterson reported DMT had 28 ambulance runs since May 4 and the City Fire Department responded to five fire calls, one wild land fire, one water rescue, five flood calls, and one motor vehicle accident.

Emergency Preparedness – no report

Park & Recreation – Mike Prestegard reported snow is gone and various outdoor sport groups are using the park.

Public Works / Landfill – see *City Administrator Report* below

Cemetery – Pat White reported Public Works employees added topsoil to sunken graves at Rest Haven Cemetery. One burial is planned for June 11.

City Administrator – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will conduct an overview next week regarding management of the landfill and the amount of surface area that is covered daily. It is not an inspection. The visit will also serve as an advisory due to statewide concerns about Avian Flu.

- He is working to reduce the number of appliances with refrigerants that are stockpiled at the landfill.
- Seekins has not provided a timeline in getting the 2012 ambulance repaired.
- He is still seeking a contractor to paint the pavilion and dugouts near the park ballfields.
- A Public Works employee (part-time summer maintenance) was hired today and will start on June 13.
- Steve Porreca may have the Welcome-to-Delta sign up in another week and a half.
- Denali Fenceworks quoted \$9,100 to repair fence damages at the Aurora/Deborah intersection plus other areas around the park. Relocating the fence near the intersection was not included in the quote.

- Community Cleanup was a success on May 28. Yellow bags almost filled two 30-yard dumpsters at the Triangle. Food was still being served to groups of people at 5:00pm. It was an absolute phenomenal turnout.

- Pogo Mine expects to experience a water shortage for the next two years. They informally approached the City about getting water from the fire station.

- DNR does not plan to auction Windy City lots this year.

City Clerk – no report

Finance – JW Musgrove reported Alliance auditors are finishing the FY21 audit.

At Large – Pete Hallgren reported the Restoration Advisory Board is scheduled to meet at City Hall on June 14.

Additional Reports – Mike Prestegard reported by-mail ballots for the Special Election to replace Congressman Don Young as United States Representative must be postmarked no later than June 11. Absentee in-person voting is available at City Hall today and June 9. [Andrea McCarrick is also scheduled to offer absentee voting (always two weeks before an election) for the State-run Primary in August, REAA in October, and the General Election in November. More information is available at www.elections.alaska.gov.]

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

James Squyres referenced the May 22 letter from Fire Chief Michael Paschall and reported DCC has given significant amounts to Rural Deltana; \$40,000 in 2011, \$55,000 in 2012, \$40,000 in 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016, \$30,000 in 2017 and 2018, \$27,084.44 in 2019, \$40,000 in 2020, \$5,000 in 2021, and \$13,000 in 2022. RDVFD started collecting Community Assistance Program revenue in 2020 (roughly \$64,000 in 2020, \$25,000 in 2021, and \$27,000 in 2022). It is not unreasonable for the City, as a fiduciary, to make inquiries. RDVFD and DMT should be eager to produce financial documents, sources of income, and how they utilize them.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:21pm

Pat White, City Clerk

CITY
SEAL

JW Musgrove, Mayor

Approved: June 21, 2022