

**City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
July 18, 2023 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Council members present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Deputy Mayor Emily DOVE, Mike PRESTEGARD, Travis RIESNER, Pete HALLGREN, Igor ZAREMBA, Pamela RAWSON

City employees present: City Administrator Ken Greenleaf, Administrative Assistant Flower Cole, Library Director Tiki Levinson, City Clerk Pat White

City employee attending via Zoom: Contract Finance Stephanie Groppe (connected at 5:17pm)

Public present: Six members from the community were present, including one on Zoom.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Musgrove asked to add discussion about *Tender 162 to New Business*.

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve the July 18, 2023 agenda as amended; Riesner seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call.

[Clerk Note: Tender 162 was not discussed but moved to *New Business* on August 1, 2023.]

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the July 5, 2023 minutes as presented; Zarembo seconded.

Hallgren, reported he lived for many years in the maritime community of Sitka. He referenced Greenleaf's report (*Dispose of Fire Engine*, second topic on page 2 of the July 5 draft minutes) and said he was surprised over North Pole hosting "a ceremony on July 29 to hand off Engine 24 to Delta and push their new truck into the bay."

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Musgrove reported:

- Five Loaves Pantry will hold a Barbeque / Open House at 1085 Alaska Highway on August 5, 12:00-3:00.
- Gardens of Delta Corporation emailed a request earlier today. He invited Vanessa Heath to speak.

Vanessa Heath, former president of Five Loaves Pantry, reported her family is starting a new venture, Gardens of Delta Corporation, a non-profit that utilizes aquaponics to grow fresh fruit, vegetables, and fish year-round. She stepped down as president of Five Loaves because of difficulty in sustaining donations and ability to distribute food boxes. Because of 15 years' experience in horticulture, Heath felt she could do more by growing food to supplement Five Loaves and Caring Hearts, who prepares meals for locals. They plan to start building in a couple weeks but need \$45,000 to start the business. Once the growing cycle begins, they won't need more funding.

Musgrove asked Heath to provide a brief business plan for the August 1 Council meeting.

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

Liquor License Renewals

Big Delta Brewing Company - Restaurant / Eating Place and Brewpub

Motion: Hallgren moved to show no opposition to Big Delta Brewery Company renewing their liquor licenses for the restaurant/eating place (license #5997) and brewpub (license #5959); Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Repair or Sell Volvo L220

Greenleaf referenced an email from Construction Machinery's service technician and reported that analytics were not done nor were they included in the quote (\$49,560) to repair the Volvo L220 loader. Transmission and hydraulic fluids in the engine are not uncommon with Volvos.

Hallgren referred to discussion during the previous meeting (July 5, 2023) about replacing the Volvo with a compactor. He recalled the flooring of the landfill maintenance building was designed with a steel pad to accommodate a compactor.

Greenleaf suggested waiting to repair or sell the loader until September when the status of the grant application is known. The grant would cover \$170,000 for a compactor plus \$30,000 in shipping.

Discussion followed regarding Pogo / Northern Star donating the L220 loader in February 2019, cost of a new loader (\$700,000), and getting more repair quotes.

NEW BUSINESS

Repair Park Fence

Musgrove reported it appears a vehicle backed into the park fence (behind the library on or before July 13).

Greenleaf suggested contracting with Denali Fenceworks due to the extent of damages. They quoted \$1,500 to replace parts.

Discussion followed regarding recent repairs to the same section (from heavy snow loads), surveillance cameras, whether vehicle insurance could pay for damages, \$10,000 to \$15,000 in park repairs in the past year and a half, and \$300 to \$400 to recreate a piece of plastic for the playground apparatus that had a bullet hole through it.

Motion: Zaremba moved to hire Denali Fenceworks to repair the park fence, not to exceed \$1,800; Dove seconded. **Motion passed** unanimously on a roll call.

Resolution 2023-03, Establishing a Use Agreement with Hats of Wisdom for Utilization of Storage Area within the Community Center

Musgrove reported *Resolution 2023-03* (changed to 2024-01) would be postponed to the August 1, 2023 meeting.

Temporary Amendment to MOA-29

Greenleaf reported he attends weekly meetings with the 11th Airborne G-3. They are what was the U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK). The 11th Airborne is drafting changes to the City's 2006 agreement with USARAK (MOA-29). They are challenged to have enough firefighters to meet the requirements of the MOA. Greenleaf said once the changes are drafted, they will be presented to the City Council.

Increase Landfill Rates

Hallgren reported Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) raised their landfill rates the first of July. Residential waste is free of charge (paid via taxes), commercial waste is \$137/ton, and regular solid waste or household garbage generated outside FNSB is \$274/ton. Delta has maintained \$160/ton (8¢ per pound) since 2015.

Discussion followed regarding tipping fee price increases (\$85/ton on July 11, 2005, \$105/ton on September 10, 2006, \$125/ton on July 1, 2007, and \$160/ton on March 16, 2015), Matanuska-Susitna Borough charging \$142/ton for both commercial and residential waste and using landfill revenue and savings from other departments to develop Cell 2 and replace aging equipment.

Hallgren reported the City does not operate the landfill to make money. He asked for a realistic 20 or 25-year plan for a self-sustaining operation that is affordable and costs less than hauling trash to Fairbanks.

Musgrove reported Cell 3 must be factored into the plan because it will need to be built in about 20 years. Cell 1 is 18 years old. Cell 2 will cost more than \$500,000 before it is finished.

New Fire Chief Position

Greenleaf reported Erin Catterson plans to step down from the Fire Chief position. He expressed appreciation for her dedication for the past two years, while working full time and raising a family. Catterson plans to continue as a volunteer firefighter as well as play an active role in the Fire Department's growth. She will stay until a new Fire Chief is in place, whether it is one day or six months from now.

Discussion followed regarding ideal candidates having 20+ years' experience in fire service, grants awarded every day through September 15, Delta's grant still pending and the Safer Grant paying wages and benefits for a Fire Chief for three years plus another three-year extension.

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #22664 to Delta Rental Services - \$23,958.45 to rent rock truck for Cell 2 project between 6-7-23 and 7-4-23 (\$22,100.00) and to replace five teeth on the excavator (\$1,858.45)

CK #22665 to Delta Transport Services - \$3,183.64 for equipment fuel for Cell 2 project

CK #22666 to Hale & Associates - \$125,002.69 for FY24 Insurance

CK #22667 to Heritage Rock & Services - \$2,000.00 to haul dozer from Airport Equipment Rentals in Fairbanks to Cell 2 project

CK #22668 to Numbers Count, LLC - \$2,400.00 for accounting services (7-10-23/7-14-23)

CK #22669 to TNT Enterprize LLC - \$4,350.00 to haul excavator from Komatsu dealer in Fairbanks to Cell 2 project

Motion: Dove moved to approve checks 22664 through 22669 as presented; Riesner and Hallgren seconded.

Discussion followed regarding a rock truck breaking down, but not paying for equipment that was not actively moving dirt (CK #22664) and volunteer firefighters covered by insurance while responding to tone-outs (22666).

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call.

REPORTS

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported:

- Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA = 7.9% per CPI-W) was added to employee paychecks, which required massive calculations for every step or grade increase.

- Advocates for Safe Alaska Highways (ASAH) hosted a public meeting at the Community Center on July 13 about escalating concerns over the Kinross / Manh Choh ore transport project between Tetlin to Fairbanks. Hallgren reported it appears the ore transport plan is lawful but there are questions about whether the rules and regulations are being viewed favorably toward the Kinross project. Public concerns about safety and the World War II bridges are not baseless. Delta is halfway between the mine in Tetlin and the processing plant in Fairbanks, the worst position to gain anything from the project. He said, “The best we can do for our locality is to make sure concerns are not thrown out.” A local advisory board would be beneficial. Hallgren pointed out that Musgrove’s (March 3, 2023) inquiries about the ore transportation plan received feedback from Kinross, but nothing from the Alaska Department of Transportation.

Finance – Stephanie Groppe reported:

- Alliance CPAs will conduct field work for the FY23 audit on July 25/26.
- A *Budget versus Actual* report, through June 30, 2023, shows a \$260,960.39 surplus for FY23.

Library – Emily Dove reported:

- Summer Reading has ended. The kids had a great time reading and participating in ocean-related activities. Reading throughout the summer prevents loss of reading skills, which happens when school is not in session.
- A batch of library cards has been ordered because the popular key tags with a photo of the library, taken by Sebastian Saarloos, are nearly gone.
- The interlibrary loan policy allows patrons to borrow books from other libraries nationwide. Due to the recent increase in postage rates, Library Director Tiki Levinson is drafting a new interlibrary loan policy, which will be presented to the Council for review.

Health & Safety – Emily Dove reported:

- Delta Public Health has received reports that Naloxone kits are successful in reversing opioid overdoses. Some people are not seeking medical follow-up. Too much opioid slows breathing or stops it. Visit health.alaska.gov to understand opioid overdose symptoms and how Naloxone helps reverse it. Free Naloxone kits and training are available at the Public Health Center. Free kits can be ordered online (iknowmine.org) along with substance use materials, self-test kits, etc.

- Applications for Farmers Market coupons for seniors are available at Caring Hearts (907-803-7022) and the library (895-4102).

Schools – Travis Reisner reported:

- There will be increased traffic on Nistler for a few weeks because of summer school.
- Subsistence hunting permits were issued from the Career Advancement Center in mid-July.

Emergency Services – Pamela Rawson reported Delta Medical Transport had 37 transports in June and 17 so far in July. The Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department responded to four fires and one motor vehicle accident.

Emergency Preparedness – no report

Park & Recreation – Igor Zarembo reported the park is busy as long as it is not raining.

Landfill – Igor Zarembo reported half of Cell 2 has been built. They are making lots of headway.

Musgrove reported he, Hallgren, Greenleaf visited the old landfill on Tanana Loop Extension. He will draft a long-term plan to clean it up.

Hallgren reported there is no evidence that the old landfill existed. It turned into a hilly forest. The building and its roof appear to be structurally sound. The property could be of use.

Greenleaf reported there are 80 acres, of which 70-80% is useable. The State of Alaska is looking to dispose of construction material from surface structures near Tok and Dot Lake that were built in the 1940 and 1950's. The old landfill would be ideal, and it would be a way to raise revenue. It could also accommodate demolition material, aka pipes, concrete, etc. from other projects.

See *City Administrator Report* for more landfill discussion.

Airport – Mike Prestegard reported the airstrip will need to be mowed soon. He asked to level some berms to enable safe mowing.

Public Works – no report

At Large – See *Mayor* and *Landfill* reports

City Administrator – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- Landfill Assistant Colin Carr has left for college. Summer Hire, Krystie Stevenson, filled that vacancy.
- An extra permit and pilot car were needed to transport a 45-ton rock truck from North Pole to the landfill.

The larger truck replaced the 30-ton truck that broke down.

• Cole Cummins, a rep from Alaska Public Entity Insurance (APEI), visited the park today. More pea gravel is needed to meet the minimum depth. It will be delivered tomorrow. The 50-gallon drums that hold up the volleyball poles must be replaced. The structural composition of the Kiwanis pavilion poles will be inspected.

They need support or taken down before the pavilion becomes a liability.

- The annual landfill inspection is scheduled for July 19. A new inspector will be present.
- Preliminary documents for the new permit cycle will be mailed to Bristol Engineering next week.
- The Public Works crew is replacing traffic and street signs.

Cemetery – no report

City Clerk – Pat White reported:

• The 2023 Municipal Election is scheduled on October 3. Two seats will be on the ballot: Seat C, currently held by Michael Prestegard, and Seat F, currently held by Pete Hallgren. Candidate packets will be available in early August. The candidate filing period is August 24 through 5:00pm, September 8.

• The REAA #15 School Board Election is on October 3. Three seats are on the ballot. Their filing period ends August 4, 2023. Declaration of Candidacy forms are available at City Hall, any Division of Elections (DOE) office, or on their website (www.elections.alaska.gov). Early voting in the REAA School Board Election is available at City Hall on September 19, 21, 26, and 28. Absentee voting (by mail) is available through the DOE.

• The Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public meeting, July 25, 5:00-7:00pm, at the Community Center, about cleanup of Sears Creek Station contamination, which is located 20-30 miles east of Delta Junction.

Additional Reports – none

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS – none

ADJOURNMENT – 7:02pm

JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: August 1, 2023