

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



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

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

Council member excused: Igor ZAREMBA

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

Public present: Five members from the community were present at the start of the meeting, plus two via Zoom.
The meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Dove moved to approve the September 5, 2023 agenda; Riesner seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Musgrove reported some minor edits were made to the August 15 draft minutes.

Motion: Hallgren moved to adopt the August 15, 2023 minutes; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Sherman Stebbins distributed a one-page proposal “for the people of the Delta Junction area to pay for ambulance services.” He referenced the borough feasibility study (2005/2007), in which the charter specified a fuel tax. His proposal would charge a one or two-cent fuel tax for every gallon of fuel sold, whether it is at the pumps, located inside the City limits (diesel fuel or gasoline), or delivered (heating fuel). Propane could also be included. A fuel tax would keep the power to raise revenue in the hands of the people. Stebbins opposed an EMS work group and felt the City Administrator should present a minimum of four different solutions to pay for ambulance services. The level and its cost need to be determined by the City Council.

Tony White referenced the meeting at the Community Center (September 28, 2022) and agreed with finding a way to fund ambulance services that are sustainable. This community can no longer depend on volunteers or Basic Life Support (BLS) services. White said he does not support borough formation, but he believes area residents need to take some responsibility. The City provides emergency services for the entire area, but the overwhelming volume of ambulance calls come from outside the City boundaries. It would be even more lopsided if the two clinics were not located inside the City limits where many patients are picked up. Rural Deltana must have representation in the decision making.

See more discussion on page two (*Community Formation of EMS Advisory Panel*).

Sebastian Saarloos thanked the Council for use of the soccer fields at the park. He reported 258 kids between two and 17 participated in soccer this year. There were over 20 teams, dozens of volunteers, and 500+ attendees at the end-of-the-year barbeque. He asked if they could repair and reseed damaged areas this fall to prepare for next year. Musgrove asked Saarloos to submit a proposal for the work that needs done.

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

Municipal Election - Notice of Vacancies

2023 Election Schedule

White reported the candidate filing period will close at 5:00pm, Friday, September 8. Two seats will be on the October 3 ballot.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS**Final Plat - Sipes Homestead Subdivision**

Sebastian Saarloos reported he represents the Estate of John W. Sipes, Jr., whose subdivision lies on the southern edge of the City border, north of Riverview Subdivision where Sandra Street and Rebecca Lane are located. Road names (Mae Jean Lane, Irene Lane, and Willa Mae Lane) for the 25-foot public access easements were added since the preliminary plat was approved on August 15, 2023. Sipes Homestead Road runs through the 20 lots between the Richardson Highway and Larry Spengler Road. It is unlikely that any of the lots will be for sale anytime soon.

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the final plat for the Sipes Homestead Subdivision; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance (Prestegard, Dove, Rawson, Hallgren, Riesner, Musgrove).

Community Formation of EMS Advisory Panel

Greenleaf reported time and money are running out and “it is up to the community to come up with options, not the City Administrator.” He suggested a suitable venue or forum that gives everyone a voice. He suggested hiring a facilitator to navigate through the layered and complicated challenges. Agnew Beck Consulting Firm charges \$15,000 for one year. They shape decisions, manage meetings, mine data, and present solutions.

Musgrove referred to the September 28, 2022 public meeting and said the local community, inside the City limits and outside the City limits, are happy with the current level of service, but do not know how to pay for it. He said, “it would behoove us to get outside help” to avoid decisions that would affect residents outside the City limits.

Discussion followed regarding forming a committee (advisory panel), Rawson volunteering to represent the City Council, using leftover (American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to pay for ambulance services on a month-to-month basis, possibly dipping into City savings if necessary, and changing direction to find a path to support EMS in Delta Junction and the Interior.

Rawson estimated she would pay close to \$400/month in property taxes for her home in Delta Junction, based on annual tax rates in California or the Fairbanks North Star Borough. She agreed with a fuel tax but questioned if a few pennies on a gallon would be enough to fund an ambulance service.

Stebbins said the City could save a lot of money if each Council member came up with a viable solution that would be reviewed by the City’s attorney.

Motion: Hallgren moved to authorize the City Administrator to advertise Request for Proposals for at least two professional consulting services and to make a recommendation at the September 19 meeting; Riesner seconded.

Riesner said he opposed taxation without representation and that \$15,000 is a small price to ensure that every person in the community has a voice. He supported Stebbins’ suggestion to interface with others within the community, i.e., Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) and Fort Greely, and for Council members to offer input.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance (Dove, Hallgren, Prestegard, Riesner, Rawson, Musgrove).

Ambulance 181 Repair

Greenleaf reported Ambulance 181 (2009 Ford F450) is experiencing the same problems Ambulance 186 (2012) had with exhaust and manifold issues, which appears to be common with all F450s built within that window.

Tony White reported the odometer reading on Ambulance 181 was 136,509 miles.

Hallgren reported under the current contract, Delta Medical Transport (DMT) pays for minor upkeep (oil changes, tires) and \$500/month to lease City-owned ambulances. The City is responsible for major repairs. He questioned repairing Ambulance 181 to keep as backup and whether renting ambulances should be mentioned in the RFP.

Greenleaf asked that the City provide some sort of EMS rig, so that a backup is available should a catastrophic event occur. This community can no longer rely on Fort Greely. The backup must be dependable. The repair quote (\$11,433.65 from Chena Car Care) does not include other numerous issues that keep resurfacing.

Musgrove suggested ambulance availability be negotiated with the contracted ambulance provider.

Tony White said the City ambulances are not reliable. He recently purchased two new Type II ambulances for under \$300,000. Ford has the ambulance market cornered. Type III ambulances run \$180,000 to \$250,000.

Prestegard said the ambulance contractor should provide their own vehicles. The City should support the contract, not the ambulances. The City should not provide a standby ambulance either.

Musgrove asked for discussion sometime in the future as to whether a standby ambulance would be justified.

Motion: Hallgren moved to surplus both ambulances, 181 (2009 model) and 186 (2012); Dove seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance (Rawson, Riesner, Dove, Hallgren, Prestegard, Musgrove).

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #22727 to Airport Equipment Rentals - \$6,420.51 for one-month rent of dozer for Cell 2 project at landfill

CK #22728 to Alliance CPAs LLC - \$12,016.35 for FY22 and FY23 audits

CK #22729 to Arctic Fire & Safety - \$3,410.04 for straw wattle for Cell 2

CK #22730 to Buffalo Center Service - \$1,037.46 for fuel for City vehicles

CK #22731 to Construction Machinery - \$5,956.06 to replace teeth on rented excavator used on Cell 2 (\$4,726.06) and inspect L220F loader (\$1,230.00)

CK #22732 to Delta Building Supply - \$1,604.33 maintenance and repairs of City facilities

CK #22733 to Delta Eastside Truck & Auto – \$3,241.64 for repairs to brush truck (\$2,000.15) and Kenworth dump truck (\$1,241.49)

CK #22734 to Delta Rental Services - \$40,278.20 to rent Volvo rock truck (33,805.00) and Komatsu Excavator (\$6,473.20) on Cell 2

CK #22735 to Delta Transport Services - \$9,839.48 for equipment fuel on Cell 2

CK #22736 to Guess & Rudd - \$1,410.00 for legal services regarding the Senior Center, Hats of Wisdom use agreement for Community Center and insurance coverage, and amendments to the City Election Code

CK #22737 to Heritage Rock & Services - \$2,700.00 to transport Volvo rock truck to North Pole and CAT rock truck from NC Machinery to the landfill for Cell 2

CK #22738 to Numbers Count, LLC - \$4,680.00 for accounting services (8-14-23 / 8-31-23)

CK #22739 to Tenderfoot Gold, LLC - \$25,000.00 to rent Hitachi 450 excavator for one month - Cell 2

Motion: Dove moved to approve checks # 22727 through 22739; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance (Prestegard, Hallgren, Riesner, Rawson, Dove, Musgrove).

REPORTS

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported he attended the Kinross/Manh Choh Groundbreaking Ceremony in Tok on September 2. Governor Dunleavy, Tetlin Chief Michael Sam, and other dignitaries were in attendance.

Finance – no report

Library – Emily Dove reported:

- The Library Association will host their annual Fall Fundraiser September 8/9 at the Community Center. There will be some house plants and hundreds of books and movies.
- Children’s programs are again being offered for the youngest library patrons. They were cancelled last week due to illness and will resume next week with berry-themed activities.
- Printing, scanning, faxing, and email services have been in high gear.
- All required reports have been submitted to the State Library. Funding from Public Library Assistance and OWL grants are expected within the next few weeks.

Health & Safety – Emily Dove reported:

- Pogo Mine employees received Naloxone training from the Public Health Nurse last week.
- The Delta Public Health Center (PHC) distributed educational materials and many free giveaways at the Farmers Market throughout the summer.
- The State of Alaska Epidemiology released a bulletin about recommendations for this year’s influenza vaccines. The Delta PHC will advertise availability once flu vaccines arrive.
- The Public Health Nurse will be at the annual Health Fair at the Elementary School Saturday, September 30. Anyone interested in obtaining affordable blood screenings can register online (Alaskahealthfair.org).
- Public Health services are not free. Fees are assessed, but no one is refused service due to inability to pay. Contact the Delta PHC (895-4292) for more information.

Schools – Pamela Rawson reported:

- Milt Hooten is looking forward to the crosswalk between schools (discussed August 1 and August 15).
- Seventh graders are attending a science camp at Harding Lake this week.
- Delta-Greely High School is looking for a hockey coach.

Emergency Services – Pamela Rawson reported Delta Medical Transport had 46 ambulance calls in August. The Delta Junction Fire Department responded to four fire calls, most of them during extreme wind conditions.

Emergency Preparedness – Travis Riesner reported a recent fire, caused by a tree falling on power lines, was 500 feet from his house. He cautioned homeowners to get furnaces serviced, make sure bird nests were not built in stovepipes, and to remove trees that could cause damage to buildings or vehicles if they were to fall.

Park & Recreation – Travis Riesner read a tribute recognizing Todd Zachgo for 40 years of supporting hockey programs in Delta Junction and influencing generations. He coached from the bench in the 80s and 90s before the indoor rink was built and was an integral part in multiple state championships at both youth and High School levels. He wore Carhartts and bunny boots, but never any skates. He stopped coaching in the early 2000s but volunteered by operating and maintaining the Zamboni, continually improving, and upgrading the rinks, coaching kids, mentoring coaches, raising operating funds, taking out trash, laying lines, making ice, and turning out the lights when the last skater left the building. Zachgo will be inducted into the Alaska State Hockey Association Hall of Fame at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage on September 16.

Landfill – Pete Hallgren referenced a photo of the landfill taken by Igor Zaremba and reported the Cell 2 project is about 90% finished. He was amazed at how professional and clean it was.

Musgrove reported Tenderfoot Gold employees were responsible for improving the “upstairs” also.

Riesner asked about heating the scale house.

Musgrove suggested a small Toyo stove heater, which would cost about \$2,500.

Airport – Mike Prestegard reported he issued an email on June 15 listing improvements for the airport, i.e., replace the mower deck and tractor. He surveyed local pilots and identified 14 upgrades. A runup area, with grass and vegetation, could have prevented a recent incident that resulted in damage to the prop and belly of a fuselage.

Musgrove reported he would meet with government representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) at 1:00pm, September 6 to discuss grant funding.

At Large – no report

City Administrator / Public Works – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- Delta Surveys will conduct a final survey once the Cell 2 project is complete.

Hallgren asked for a report or guesstimate of Cell 2’s lifespan.

- M2C1 inspected the landfill last week per Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) requirements. A company will need to spray an adhesive to hold dirt in place before grass seed can be planted in the spring.
- Katmai will research status of the three grant applications. The City has not received notice of any yet.
- Tony White accepted the City Fire Chief position that was vacated by Erin Trainor last week.
- Engine 24 is scheduled for pick up from North Pole in the next three weeks and Tender 162 will be delivered to Gakona thereafter.
- The last phone interview to fill the finance position is scheduled tomorrow. Interviews will be conducted this week to fill the heavy equipment operator and maintenance positions.
- The annual landfill inspection (July 18, 2023) resulted in a 96.1% rating.
- Public Works is preparing for winter. Grader edges were ordered today. Sand will be delivered on September 11. Most City facilities will be winterized this week. The Visitor Center is scheduled for September 9.
- He will meet with a Department of Transportation (DOT) committee on September 6 to discuss grant funding for emergency services.

Cemetery / City Clerk – Pat White reported:

- Two burials were scheduled recently. Winter graves will be prepared this month.
- The Alaska Municipal League annual conference will be December 4-8. Newly Elected Officials training is December 4 with all-day virtual training on November 29.

Discussion followed regarding resolutions that will be part of the AML conference.

Additional Reports – Mike Prestegard suggested all Council members get business cards and City emails, particularly because of increased Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS - none

ADJOURNMENT – 7:11pm

_____	CITY	_____
JW Musgrove, Mayor	SEAL	Pat White, City Clerk
Approved: September 19, 2023		