

**City Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**February 6, 2024 ~ 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 Igor ZAREMBA, Mike PRESTEGARD, Pamela RAWSON, Travis RIESNER

**Council attending via Zoom:** Pete HALLGREN

**Council excused:** Emily DOVE

**City staff present:** City Administrator Ken Greenleaf, Administrative Assistant Flower Cole, Library Director Tiki Levinson, Finance Officer Kaylee Reiersen, City Clerk Pat White

**City staff attending via Zoom:** Contract Finance Stephanie Groppe

**Public present:** Eleven people attended the meeting at various times, including two on Zoom.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Musgrove reported Division of Natural Resources – *Application to Extend Permit to Use Pogo Mine Road* would be added to *Correspondence*.

**Motion:** Riesner moved to approve the February 6, 2024 agenda as amended; Rawson seconded

**Motion passed** on a roll call with six in attendance.

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

**Motion:** Riesner moved to approve the January 16, 2024 minutes as presented; Zarembo seconded.

**Motion passed** on a roll call with six in attendance.

**COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - none**

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

**Wanda Sorensen – Milepost Sign Update**

Wanda Sorensen, referencing a joint letter signed by Stephen Sorensen, Delta Farm Bureau, and Emily Dove, Delta Junction City Council, asked for authorization to distribute it to individuals and businesses to solicit donations to rebuild the milepost marker located in front of the Visitor Center. She described involvement from Phil Kaspari, the Farm Bureau, Gary Hall, and High School students who are enrolled in Partners for Progress. The Farm Bureau fronted \$2,500 to purchase material and start construction. Stephen Sorensen, Gary Hall, and his students drew the design. They will weld the structural frame, which will be inspected by a business in Fairbanks. Stephen Sorensen reported the sign is designed to be an exact replica of the existing milepost maker. He displayed a portion of the metal frame, a core panel with “Mile 1422 – End of the Alaska Highway” already printed on it. The interior core is sandwiched between aluminum panels and estimated to last five to ten years. The panels can be easily unscrewed and replaced for \$1,000 - \$2,000. Stephen Sorensen estimated completion around the first of May and the total cost of the project to be \$10,000.

Zarembo said aluminum material is durable and reason why fuel businesses use it as fascia on roofing.

Musgrove questioned how Delta Junction’s milepost sign compares to Dawson Creek’s sign.

**Motion:** Reisner moved to authorize the Alaska Farm Bureau, Delta Junction Chapter to solicit funding from the public to rebuild the milepost marker; Zarembo seconded.

Hallgren said the City would oversee the project and issue tax-deductible donation letters.

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

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Division of Natural Resources – Application to Extend Use of Pogo Mine Road for 3rd Party Trapping**

Musgrove reported DNR received a Land Use Permit Reissuance application from Jack Windsor to continue usage of the Pogo Mine Road for another five years. Written public comments can be submitted (Division of Mining, Land and Water, 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, 99709) no later than 5:00pm, February 19, 2024. Address questions to Jaclyn Cheek (phone: 907-451-2733, fax: 907-451-2751, or email: Jacyln.cheek@alaska.gov). Discussion followed regarding the City issuing a letter of non-objection.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****Disburse Remaining Healthy and Equitable Communities (HEC) Grant Funds**

[The City was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Division of Public Health in June 2023 to distribute between two local organizations that provide public services. To date, three-quarters of the grant (\$18,750) has been spent.]

Musgrove asked to issue the remaining HEC grant funds.

Motion: Riesner moved to disburse \$3,125.00 to both Hats of Wisdom and Five Loaves Pantry; Rawson seconded.

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

**NEW BUSINESS****Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD) Request for Insurance Support**

Musgrove reported RDVFD Board of Directors President Dave Neuburger requested the City pay to insure their fire response vehicles in exchange for leasing *each* one (two fire engines, two water pumpers, and one rescue truck) for \$1.00/day for 30-day periods.

Greenleaf said leasing a tender from RDVFD would increase the City's water capabilities by another 3,000 gallons. The City currently pays \$16,200 in annual premiums (\$26,000 budgeted in June 2023) to insure fire vehicles, firefighters, radios, and the fire station. The insurance company is unable to provide a quote for RDVFD's one tender until they receive previous coverage that shows the vehicle's value. It is being researched. Discussion followed regarding the City's current \$6,000-gallon response capability plus Fort Greely's 6,000, inability to access Deltana fire stations until issues are resolved, guestimates of monthly premiums based on the City's '87 tender (\$432/year), all RDVFD firefighters covered by DJVFD workers comp, cross-training, inspecting the tender and its tires before putting it into service, drafting the Memorandum of Agreement to include not paying for routine maintenance and deducting lease costs from the \$15,000 that was budgeted for RDVFD.

Hallgren said, "We need to do all we can to provide fire service to Rural Deltana, which represents three-quarters of our community." He questioned how long it will take to resolve the situation, if long-term should be considered.

Greenleaf said they expect to get insurance coverage within the next couple of weeks, but there are lots of layers and a lot of unknowns.

Fire Chief Tony White said with RDVFD out of service, the only water available is from the City. One more water tender is critical.

Motion: Zaremba moved to insure Rural Deltana's fire tender, not to exceed \$700/year; Rawson seconded.

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

Sherman Stebbins reported DJVFD has \$18,000. He asked the Council to pull "\$50,000 from savings or from PILT that is meant to serve the greater area of the Interior instead of nitpicking or insuring one vehicle."

Acting Fire Chief Joshua Olson reported they have outstanding bills, monies in savings, and they will apply for Community Assistance funding.

Stormie Mitchell said no money should exchange hands without a full financial disclosure from RDVFD.

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

CK #22968 to Aetna - \$13,693.60 for employee group health insurance

CK #22969 to Alaska Communications - \$1,716.55 for January phones and Internet

CK #22970 to Alliance CPAs LLC - \$4,606.76 for audit service

CK #22971 to Arctic Fire & Safety - \$1,722.79 to service fire extinguishers

CK #22973 to Five Loaves Pantry - \$3,125.00 from HEC grant funding

CK #22974 to GVEA - \$9,073.38 for January electricity

CK #22975 to Hats of Wisdom - \$3,125.00 from HEC grant funding

CK #22976 to Numbers Count LLC - \$3,990.00 for accounting services (1-12-24 / 1-31-24)

CK #22977 to Vitus - \$13,862.75 for January heating fuel

CK #22978 to Deltas Eastside Truck & Auto - \$1,718.79 to repair fire truck

Motion: Prestegard moved to approve checks #22968 through 22978, excluding 22972; Riesner seconded.

Discussion followed regarding using over half of what was budgeted for heating fuel so far in FY24.

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

**REPORTS****Mayor** – no report**Finance** – no report**Library** – Tiki Levinson reported:

- 353 different Wi-Fi users participated in 788 Internet sessions at the library during January.
- Microcom will replace ACS as Internet provider at the library. There will be initial costs to switch equipment to Starlink. Changes should be made by June. Service will be better and monthly costs will be reduced.
- The library was exceptionally busy for a Monday yesterday, undoubtedly due to cold weather closures on Friday and Saturday. Staff provided a variety of services, i.e., computer assistance, notary, fax, copying, book selection, comfortable study and play areas, and conversation for those who had been cooped up too long.
- Paper PFD applications are available at the library.
- The library will partner with the Delta Homeschool on February 16 for a workshop about owls. It will feature owl stories, owl pellet dissection, and games. Library resources will be shared with the students also.
- Three children have completed the *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program* in the past month. Another one finished *1,000 More Books* also. Both programs are wonderful foundations for literacy development.
- Children's programs were well attended today. Everyone sang, listened to stories, and socialized.

**Health & Safety** – no report**Schools** – no report**Emergency Services** – Pamela Rawson reported:

- There were 22 ambulance runs in January.
- Fire Chief Tony White submitted an invoice for \$2,351.61 in fire apparatus from LNCurtis. The costs will be covered by remaining funds from Kinross Manh Choh (\$47,000 donated to DJVFD on January 2, 2024).

**Emergency Preparedness** – Travis Riesner reported the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection is offering basic firefighter training ([dnr.dof.training@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.dof.training@alaska.gov)). There has been a shortage of firefighters for several years, but the (Red Card) training is an opportunity to see a lot of Alaska.**Park & Recreation** – Igor Zarembo reported the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena is picking up momentum after the cold spell.**Landfill** – Igor Zarembo reported:

- Hydraulic fluids, more suitable for colder temperatures, were added to the landfill dozer.
- Cell 1 is still in use. Cell 2 has not been used yet.

Greenleaf reported Cell 2 use is pending receipt of the new three-year landfill permit. It is to include Bristol Engineering plans to monitor methane, the new Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requirement. That cost, \$120,000 to \$150,000, will be part of the upcoming budget discussion.

**Airport** – Mike Prestegard reported the main runway is clear and serviceable.**At Large** – no report**City Administrator / Public Works** – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- He is working with the Delta Junction Trails Association (DJTA) on lots that the Liewer Community Trail occupies. Ron Liewer wants to deed the lots to the City of Delta Junction with verbiage that they are maintained as part of DJTA, but they can never be sold or developed.
- He is working on advertising the bid for the jib crane in the Public Works building.
- The fuel bid opening is scheduled for March 1 at 4:00pm.
- Katmai Solutions was hired (January 2023) to assist in Alaska assessment processes, including research to pay for ambulance services (Supplemental Emergency Medical Transport Plan). It proved not viable. Katmai completed four of seven prime documents that must be current to qualify as grant applicants, i.e., hazards, wildfires, firefighting equipment, infrastructure development, planning. They are six and seven hundred-page documents. Greenleaf said he would present a list of Katmai accomplishments at the February 20 meeting.
- The deadline to file an application for the seasonal rink manager closes on March 16.
- The Public Works crew replaced stop signs and, now that the cold spell is over, they are clearing roads.

- 8,000 to 10,000 soldiers will be in the Delta area for military exercises for the next three weeks. The landfill will open on Mondays to accommodate commercial haulers who expect to deliver 150 roll-offs each week.
- The landfill was open on Mondays for the past two weeks to accommodate the public because of landfill closures (not operating heavy equipment when temperatures drop to -30° or colder).

**Cemetery** – no report

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported:

- Portraits of Council members from 2021 and 2023 were framed to hang in the Council chambers. A March 2022 aerial photo of Delta Junction, taken by photographer Mike Kingston and pilot Jesse Cummings, was hung in City Hall next to the aerial photo that was taken by Mike Kingston in November 1972. There is a 50-year span between photos. The 1972 photo was taken 11 years before Jesse Cummings was born.

- A customer reported he received his (routine) passport exactly two weeks from the day he applied. [The passport agency reported there were 800,000 applications in process, but now is the best time to apply.]

**Additional Reports** – Michael Prestegard asked Council members to start planning for budget meetings. Discussion followed regarding starting the budget cycle at the end of March.

**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS** – see comments after *Rural Deltana (RDVFD) Request for Insurance Support* discussion to lease one RDVFD vehicle (page 2).

**ADJOURNMENT** – 6:30pm

\_\_\_\_\_  
JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY  
SEAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: February 20, 2024