

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
February 20, 2024 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:20pm.

Council members present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Deputy Mayor Igor ZAREMBA, Pamela RAWSON, Travis RIESNER

Council attending via Zoom: Emily DOVE

Council excused: Pete HALLGREN, Mike PRESTEGARD

City staff present: City Administrator Ken Greenleaf, Library Director Tiki Levinson, Finance Officer Kaylee Reiersen, City Clerk Pat White

Public present: At least 20 people attended the meeting, including five on Zoom.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the February 20, 2024 agenda; Rawson seconded

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Zarembo asked to edit his comment during *Milepost Sign* discussion (page one of February 6 draft minutes) to read, "... aluminum material is durable and reason why fuel businesses use it *as facia on* roofing."

Motion: Zarembo moved to approve the February 6, 2024 minutes as amended; Reisner seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Sherman Stebbins referenced *New Business: Demand for Investigation and Public Hearing* (page two) and questioned whether he would be allowed to speak on the matter.

Musgrove reported today's Council meeting is not a public hearing. The Council will hold an Executive Session to discuss Stebbins' February 15, 2024 letter and there may or may not be discussion afterwards.

Stebbins said he served on the Council (2009-2015) and carried the City Code of Ordinances to every meeting. He referred to his letter and said the City Council must follow ordinances when dealing with public money. He requested a public hearing so the Council would have an opportunity to provide answers about spending.

Stormie Mitchell said it bothers her that there is so much confusion, animosity, and rumors. She asked members of the Council to represent the local government whether they are in or out of meetings.

Amber White reported the silent majority appreciates the City Council because they care about our community.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

Manh Choh Status (see February 20, 2024 handout)

Brenna Schaake, External Affairs, reported Kinross Alaska operates the Manh Choh Mine in Tetlin, Fort Knox Mine in Fairbanks, and Gil satellite mine at Fort Knox. She explained a timeline starting in 2008 when exploration started, through 2024 when they started transporting ore for the expected 4 to 5 years of mine life.

Shane Parrow, Operations Director at Manh Choh, reported concerns from the public translated into adding brakes to every axle to improve stopping distances by 30%. Cameras are in multiple places on the trucks as well as inside the cabs to monitor drivers' performance. Technology is available to identify road hazards ten miles in front of them. Seventy drivers have been hired to date, all with experience driving in northern climates. Parrow explained additional training required before drivers are allowed to transport ore. Hauling it from Manh Choh stockpiles to Fort Knox is in full operation. Trucks are weighed before they travel, and they are highly regulated by both Kinross and the Department of Transportation (DOT). Other scales are located near Tok and Fox. Parrow reported they have had zero safety incidents or environmental issues. They did have a differential problem, but the truck was recovered within two hours, which was a testament to their Emergency Response Plan. He described multiple levels of environmental training and refresher courses that employees participate in.

Doug Ferguson, Senior HR Generalist, reported a new gateway program about mining was set up in Tok. It is exposure to learn about careers in mining and tour the Manh Choh and Fort Knox mines. The last two weeks of the 10-week program will be spent at the Mine Training Center in Delta. Ferguson said a Career Fair will be held at

the Tundra Building in Tok on February 29 at 2:00pm. More jobs will be available as they move from the construction phase to operations. More information is available on their website (ManhChoh.com).

Discussion followed regarding Kinross doing as many as 60 round trips per day once their operations are in full swing, seeing only a few if everyone is moving with the traffic, and stopping operations in the event of an incident or road closure.

Lisa Conrad, Community Relations, reported they have been busy with community investments, donating to the Library (\$1,000 on Dec. 11, 2023), Skating Association (\$18,000 on Dec. 19, 2023), Fire Department (\$47,000 on Jan. 2, 2024), and the milepost marker reconstruction (\$5,000 on Feb. 12, 2024). Another fun fact that she learned was that hockey players from Tok High School play with Delta's High School.

CORRESPONDENCE

White reported the Alaska Republican Party Presidential Preference Poll (Republican's primary election) will be held at the Community Center on March 5, 3:00-8:00pm. Look for more information in the local newspaper.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Katmai Solutions One-Year Report

Greenleaf reported Katmai Solutions, a company in Kenai, was hired (January 2023) during the initial search for ambulance services. They specialize in emergency management, i.e., identifying grant funding and building emergency services. He read a list of accomplishments in exchange for what Katmai was paid (\$4,800 x 2):

- State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant to purchase 25 portable and three mobile radios for the Fire Department - \$97,952.65, fulfilled grant requirements to develop and prepare quarterly activity progress, complete Alaska Assessment survey, and assist with State/Federal procurement processes
- Helped shape donation letter to acquire the North Pole Fire Engine – market value \$250,000 (\$500K new)
- Prepared and submitted Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) application for 2023
- Developed an Interoperable Communications Plan
- Completed Supplemental Emergency Medical Transport (SEMT) analysis and report
- Assisted with joint grant with Forestry – The wildland fire management grant is divided between Delta and Tok, to include building fire breaks because of being in a high-risk area.

Greenleaf said updating emergency preparedness documents are 50% complete. He intends to ask for additional funding to stay in compliance with Part 2 of the Alaska Assessment (\$1,200) and the Integrated Preparedness Plan (\$4,800). Both documents open doors for other management of fire assets. It will take six to eight months.

Tony White reported Gakona's capabilities increased tenfold after the State of Alaska donated two water trucks and Delta Junction donated a tender (August 2023).

NEW BUSINESS

Demand for Investigation and Public Hearing

Musgrove asked the Council to excuse themselves from the meeting to go into an Executive Session in the administrator's office to discuss the agenda topic and implications of Sherman Stebbins' letter, dated February 15.

Motion: Reisner moved for the Council to go into an Executive Session; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Riesner, Rawson, Dove, Zaremba, Musgrove).

Council members Pamela Rawson, Igor Zaremba, Travis Riesner, Emily Dove (attending via cell phone), and JW Musgrove exited the Council Chambers at 6:01pm and returned at 6:47pm.

Motion: Riesner moved to exit the Executive Session and reconvene the Council meeting; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Dove, Riesner, Zaremba, Rawson, Musgrove).

Musgrove, referencing the request for an investigation, reported the Council will attempt to come to a conclusion in the next two weeks.

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #22990 to Airport Equipment Rentals - \$1,527.84 to rent scissor lift and purchase two Nylatron slide guides for grader

CK #22991 to Alaska Communications - \$1,792.57 for February phone and Internet

CK #22992 to Bristol Engineering Services - \$3,482.50 for landfill permit renewal

CK #22993 to Guess & Rudd - \$1,230.00 for January legal services

CK #22994 to Numbers Count LLC - \$1,960.00 for accounting services

CK #22995 to Vitus - \$10,671.61 for February heating fuel

CK #22996 to Wells Fargo - \$28,981.15 for December and January credit card charges

Motion: Zaremba moved to approve checks #22990 through 22996; Riesner seconded.

Reierson reported check #22996 covered two months' worth of credit card charges (12-2-23 / 2-3-24). Referencing a memo she wrote on February 15, she said there were issues with miscommunications and errors on the account. She assured the Council that issues were resolved, and payments will be made on time.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Zaremba, Dove, Rawson, Riesner, Musgrove).

REPORTS

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported:

- Last November, the Pioneers requested help in reducing insurance premiums on infrastructure at the Pioneer Park. The City cannot insure what they do not own or lease on a long-term basis. The topic will be brought back to the Council on March 19.

[Note: The City purchased the property from the State of Alaska (paid \$32,265, half of the appraised value on August 17, 2021). The 25-year lease expired (October 2021) before the City received patent (November 2021).

Pioneers Igloo #19 and #35 own a 40-foot Connex and improvements (well, septic, enclosed structure with a kitchen, restrooms, and extended roof built during the 25-year lease).]

- David Neuburger, President, Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD) Board of Directors, said they will not request the \$15,000 that was allocated to them during the FY24 budget cycle because of their present situation (stopped fire services on January 11, 2024). Neuburger knows he has until June 30 to request the funding.

- The City leased a tender for a month from RDVFD, reinstated vehicle registration, and insured it. All expenses to make it roadworthy will be deducted from the \$15,000 donation. Additionally, the City also purchased workers' compensation insurance for Rural Deltana firefighters.

- Stephanie Groppe is producing a network map of the City's computer system, so it can be improved upon.

Finance – Kaylee Reierson reported about \$6,000 has been donated to date from contributions to rebuild the milepost marker at the Visitor Center. It includes \$5,000 from Kinross.

Library – Emily Dove reported:

- The library partnered with Delta Homeschool to host an owl workshop on February 16. The 37 participants learned about owls, dissected owl pellets, and made owl-shaped brownies with Alaska Flour Company products.

- Dino Day (dinosaur-themed activities, stories, and games) is scheduled for February 24, 1:00-3:30pm.

- Read Across America, the library's annual Dr. Seuss celebration, is scheduled for March 1, 1:30-3:00pm. It will include activities, stories, and games with a Dr. Seuss theme.

- Library programs are more comfortable thanks to Kinross / Manh Choh who donated funds for two new tables in the children's area. The high-quality tables replace smaller ones and offer more space for participants and their families. Levinson said, "Feedback has been positive, and we are grateful for this gift to our community."

Musgrove reported he attended a meeting with Lockheed Martin on February 19. They are interested in the library's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs. He suggested adding A for art.

Health & Safety – Emily Dove reported there are ongoing outbreaks of syphilis and HIV in Interior Alaska. She recommended going online to the State Epidemiology (epi.alaska.gov) for more information.

Schools – no report

Emergency Services – Pam Rawson reported Delta Medical Transport had 20 ambulance runs so far this month. There have been no fire calls.

Emergency Preparedness – Travis Riesner asked people to be mindful of the military's presence as they conduct training exercises and said, "they are here for us." He offered condolences to the families of the deceased who were involved in the February 11 vehicle tragedy. Riesner advised people to drive with their lights on and not depend on taillights during snowy conditions. Maintain visibility. Wear seat belts. Watch for moose.

Park & Recreation – Igor Zaremba reported the outdoor rink is busy. Because of warm temperatures, a small area needs the ice rebuilt. He advised dressing warmly and keeping an eye on young children to prevent frostbite.

Airport – JW Musgrove reported the City grader operator has done an excellent job in opening airport subdivision roads in preparation for melting snow and runoff.

At Large – no report

City Administrator / Public Works / Landfill – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- Roads are in good condition, anticipating forecasted snow. The road crew cleared brush last week and concentrated on recovering shoulders this week. They performed maintenance on the sander today.
- David Dawe (maintenance) completed 48 work orders in the past three to four weeks, i.e., replacing lights, maintenance on the library’s HVAC system, heating systems.
- Part of the septic system at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena froze from someone stuffing bagged dog poop in the cleanout pipes. They interfered with the septic flow that eventually backed up and froze pipes inside the ice arena. A lot of seals were replaced but could have easily required a backhoe to dig up frozen pipe. Scheduled hockey activities and tournaments were not halted during the expensive, three-day ordeal.
- He is waiting on three applications from people who have committed to sit on the EMS Advisory Board. There are currently three alternates. Agnew::Beck expects to start the process within the next two weeks.
- The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) issued the Delta Junction Class II Landfill Permit on February 15, 2024. Bristol Engineering was a major contributor to the success of the project. It took 7 ½ months and 44 changes, including adding six new recycle programs (electronics, batteries, etc.), utilizing the newly prepared Cell 2, and plans to install the DEC-required methane sensors (two instead of the projected four). The new permit expires December 31, 2028.
- The landfill was recently shut down due to extreme cold temperatures, followed by strong southern winds. Because the wind will continue to be a challenge, he will apply for a grant that was not successful last year, to build an inside road that will divert windblown garbage from collecting on the landfill fence. Windblown garbage is a repeat violation that the landfill operation cannot get away from.
- Cash or personal check are the only options to pay at the landfill scale house for another week. Because of military presence, poor bandwidth creates no Internet connectivity for credit/debit card machines. Customers may charge and mail payment (City of Delta Junction, POB 229, 99737) or drop it by City Hall.
- The company that built the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) that are in City facilities will no longer support that outdated version. Staff are in the process of getting quotes to replace five AEDs that are expected to cost \$1,000-\$2,000 each.
- There were no applicants for the rink manager position, so it will be readvertised.

Cemetery – no report

City Clerk – no report

Additional Reports – no report

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

There was a brief discussion about whether Kinross would operate while experiencing an earthquake. Sherman Stebbins encouraged Council members and the City Attorney to read the City Code of Ordinances pertaining to ethics. He read §1.27.020(p), Aiding a Violation, “It is a violation of this chapter for a Council Member, City Clerk, or other designated Municipal Employee to knowingly aid another City Council Member, City Clerk or other designated Municipal Employee in the violation of this chapter” and said even if a person does not recognize an ethics violation, they can be held accountable as well as the person who committed the violation. He read City Code §1.41.835, Criminal Penalties, and explained that if Council or staff see something, they have a responsibility to say something.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:18pm

JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: March , 2024