

**City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
March 19, 2024 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:07pm.

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

Council attending via Zoom: Pete HALLGREN

City staff present: City Administrator Kendall Greenleaf, Finance Officer Kaylee Reiersen, Library Director Tiki Levinson, Scale House Operator Reta Russell-Houghton, City Clerk Pat White

Public present: 25 people attended the meeting, including eight from the Zoom.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Zarembo moved to approve the March 19, 2024 agenda; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Prestegard moved to approve the March 5, 2024 minutes as presented; Riesner seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in attendance.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Tony White, Fire Chief, reported the Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD) responded to two back-to-back structure fires, one after midnight last night on the Richardson Highway and one at 6:15am on Jack Warren Road. They were called back to the first fire around 8:00am due to concern about its location in a heavily wooded residential area. Firefighters spent most of the day at the Jack Warren fire because of suspicions about its origin. Both residences were unoccupied and there were no injuries. White thanked the Fort Greely Fire Department for their support. Sixteen personnel (eight from Delta and eight from Fort Greely) were on both fires with five apparatus (an engine and tender from Fort Greely, Rural Deltana's tender, and an engine and tender from DJVFD). The firefighters used 26 air packs and bottles. Casey Edwards from JC's Towing and Recovery was instrumental in recovering the City's stranded engine due to a blown tire after the second fire.

Hallgren reported there has been discussion in the past week on the Alaska Municipal Attorneys website about new Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. The 600 pages of regulations could be problematic for small communities and volunteer fire departments.

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Land Sales Near Delta Junction Public Scoping Meeting - Community Center, March 20, 6:00-8:00pm

Dan Jenkins, Natural Resource Specialist 2, encouraged attendance at the public meeting, in which they hope to get input from locals about land use near Clearwater Lake and the Trophy Lodge on the Alaska Highway.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – SM-1A Dismantling and Decommissioning Public Outreach Meeting - Community Center, March 25, 6:00-8:00pm

Musgrove reminded the public about the nuclear plant meeting at the Community Activity Center on base (March 21), the Delta Junction Community Center (March 25), and the Clarion Hotel in Fairbanks (March 26).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Demand for Investigation and Public Hearing

Musgrove called for a motion to discuss the demand for an investigation and public hearing with the City attorney.

Motion: Zarembo moved to go into Executive Session; Riesner seconded.

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

Pamela Rawson, Mike Prestegard, Travis Riesner, Igor Zaremba, Pete Hallgren (telephonically), JW Musgrove, City Attorney Mike McLaughlin (telephonically), and Pat White exited the Council Chambers at 5:23pm. They returned from the City Administrator's office at 5:52pm.

Motion: Prestegard moved to reconvene the regular Council meeting; Zaremba seconded.

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

Motion: Musgrove moved that the City Council, sitting as the Ethics Committee, determines there is no finding of probable cause to further investigate matters as ethics violations, dismissing Sherman Stebbins' complaint, outlined in his February 15, 2024 demand for an investigation and public hearing; Prestegard seconded.

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

Musgrove read the City's response, dated March 19, 2024, signed it, and presented it to Sherman Stebbins.

Memorandum of Agreement with Pioneers of Alaska

Troxell Hebert reported the Pioneers of Alaska leased the Pioneer Park from the State of Alaska while they waited for the property to be transferred to them. Because of changes over 30 years in how land transferred, the City ended up owning the property (patent received November 2021). The Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo #35 and Auxiliary #19, are working with the City on an operating agreement to continue use of the land as a public park.

Musgrove reported the City purchased the property from the State of Alaska for half of the appraised value (\$32,265 in August 2021) after paying for the appraisal (\$3,500 in May 2021) and survey (\$3,200 in July 2020). Insuring what was built by the Pioneers on the property while leasing it (well, septic, enclosed structure with a kitchen, restrooms, and extended roof) has proven to be inadequate. The project is moving forward.

Ambulance Service Community Advisory Committee (AS-CAC)

Musgrove read names of areawide community members who committed to serve on the ambulance advisory panel: John Sloan, Dr. Sean Richardson, Joe Rice, Pamela Goode, Pamela Rawson, Sherry Decker, Lauren Morton, Dean Jazzzo, and Cody White. James Squyres would serve as an alternate.

Greenleaf reported each volunteer went through an application process and there is room for six or seven more alternates. He asked for approval of the advisory panel, either as a group or individually.

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the Ambulance Advisory Committee as presented; Zaremba seconded.

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

Award Fuel Contract

Greenleaf reported four bids were received. One was non-responsive. There were no protests (Intent to Award letter issued March 11). Vitus Energy LLC was the best option (lowest bidder for heating oil - \$3.4067 per gallon, Diesel #1 and #2 - \$3.4067/gallon, 87 Octane unleaded gasoline - \$3.5694/gallon, and equipment Diesel - \$3.4067/gallon). Buffalo Center Service / Madhouse was the lowest bidder for non-deliverable fuel, however, because they will have new owners within the month, that portion of the fuel contract will not be awarded. In the interim City employees will use credit cards to purchase fuel at the pumps.

Discussion followed regarding pump sales for the pickup, Skid steer, and road grader, rejecting bids that red-lined bid specs, consequences if/when buildings run out fuel, and readvertising fuel at the pumps in early April.

Motion: Zaremba moved to award the 2024 fuel contract to Vitus Energy LLC as presented; Rawson seconded.

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

Request for Additional Funding for Katmai Solutions

Greenleaf reported \$9,600 was paid to Katmai in 2023. In return, the community received \$98,000 in grant funds to purchase emergency radios, a fire truck that is valued at over \$300,000, and four of seven Alaska assessment requirements. The next goal is to complete the Alaska Assessment Part 2 and the Integrated Preparedness Plan. Both are gateways to qualify for State grants, primarily for fire and EMS.

Reierson reported \$7,000 is remaining in the FY24 Fire Department's budget under *Professional Services*.

Musgrove reported \$2,000 was spent yesterday on two new tires for the fire truck (Fire Dept's *Equipment* budget).

Motion: Riesner moved to approve additional funding to Katmai Solutions, \$1,200.00 for Alaska Assessment Part 2 and \$4,800.00 for the Integrated Preparedness Plan; Rawson seconded.

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

Tony White said grant writing for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) is a “nightmare.” The \$6,000 invested in Katmai will make the Fire Department eligible for grants worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

NEW BUSINESS

Resignations – City Administrator and Equipment Operator

Greenleaf reported Henry Muth retired (May 2023), returned to help with street maintenance in the fall, and has now officially retired. Henry’s work on heavy equipment has been outstanding. Referring to his own resignation, Greenleaf said his job as City Administrator, two years come April, has been phenomenal and he has appreciated the experience. He plans to focus on his businesses and a venture with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and U.S. Department of Agriculture to promote the craft beer industry. He will continue to be involved in the community because “there is a lot yet to be done.”

Musgrove asked for Council input. The equipment operator was permanent, full-time in the past, but because there are not any big projects, the position can be advertised as part-time. He would like to generate a list of on-call operators for plowing or sanding streets.

Paul Marchuk suggested keeping Henry Muth because “these roads have never looked better ever.”

Dog Park Proposal

Stormie Mitchell referenced a map of the City Park and read her proposal to establish a dog park in the City Park. The park would be centrally located and open to the public except during professional dog training, which would be advertised on Facebook. A bank account would be needed to manage fees associated with training dogs, usage of the park, and public donations. Mitchell asked interested parties to contact her (907-405-0044) to help organize the dog park. She plans to apply for nonprofit status and to seek grant funding.

Musgrove reported research is needed about how other communities manage dog parks.

Discussion followed regarding amount of land a trainer needs, various levels of training, liability, required background checks to use the dog park at Fort Greely, a model dog park in Valdez, and getting a vet back in Delta.

Zaremba expressed concern about dogs and kids sharing the park, even with a fence between them.

Hallgren asked whether other City properties could be useful, i.e., the empty lot on Spengler Road, the cemetery, old landfill off Tanana Loop Extension, Pioneer Park, or land near the River Walk Park.

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #23018 - \$1,212.88 - ACS for March 2024 telephone & Internet

CK #23019 - \$1,500.01 - Alcan Truck & Auto for supplies (degreaser, hoses & fittings, batteries)

CK #23020 - \$7,296.17 - Arctic Fire & Safety for windsocks & AED machines

CK #23021 - \$1,819.25 - Bristol Engineering Landfill for permit renewal

CK #23022 - \$1,529.48 - Buffalo Center Service for February fuel charges

CK #23023 - \$1,284.91 - Delta Building Supply for supplies (drywall saw, pipe, fans, drill bits, hoses)

CK #23024 - \$2,418.50 - Delta Farm Bureau for reimbursement of material used in milepost marker (replaces CK #22999 that was issued incorrectly to C&R Pipe on March 5, 2024 – CK#22999 was returned and voided)

CK #23025 - \$1,555.00 - Guess & Rudd for February 2024 attorney fees

CK #23026 - \$8,940.90 - GVEA for February 2024 electricity

CK #23027 - \$2,058.64 - LN Curtis for Fire Department equipment (gripper hose system, iron strap, fire axe)

CK #23028 - \$11,670.89 - Vitus for February 2024 heating fuel

Motion: Riesner moved to approve Checks #23018 through #23028; Prestegard seconded.

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

REPORTS

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported:

- He has been working on City projects (fuel contract, dog park, audits, etc.).
- The Public Works assistant is no longer employed because the seasonal hire funding has been depleted.

Finance – Kaylee Reiersen reported:

- The FY22 audit is finished, and the auditors have started work on the audit for FY23.
- Approximately \$9,000 has been collected for the \$10,000 milepost marker project.

Library – Tiki Levinson reported:

- Library Lions will meet on Fridays for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) activities. First Student will deliver students from the school to the library. Thanks to the Boeing Corporation for sponsoring the Library Lions program.
- The Library Board will solicit donations from local businesses for the annual open house on May 11.
- 25 students from Gerstle River School will visit the library for a special field trip on March 28.

Health & Safety – no report

Schools – Pamela Rawson reported Elementary Principal Milt Hooten is still concerned about a crosswalk.

Emergency Services – Pamela Rawson reported there were 17 ambulance runs and two fires since March 1.

Emergency Preparedness – Travis Riesner expressed appreciation for the City and Fort Greely firefighters who responded to recent house fires. He encouraged residents to keep up with general maintenance of their homes.

Park & Recreation – Igor Zaremba congratulated Delta's 10U hockey team for winning the State Championship on March 18. It makes it worthwhile investing in the rink because there are more confident young people in Delta who will never forget taking State. Zaremba encouraged parents to motivate their children to participate in skating programs and to utilize the ice before it is gone.

Airport – Mike Prestegard reported the airport has been quiet all winter, but there are signs of increased activity.

At Large – Pete Hallgren reported Zoom users will need to upgrade their software because the Zoom desktop app will no longer support Windows 7 and Windows 8 (effective March 25, 2024).

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

- Weight restrictions are expected in the Interior soon, so moving heavy equipment will be difficult.
- The septic system at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena has design flaws and needs to be resolved. He has a dialogue with the Skating Association because of recent clogged toilets and frozen pipes that appear intentional. Kel's Septic had to be called more than once.
- Dave Dawe has been working on less important, but time-consuming work, i.e., changing lightbulbs and repairing heating vent ducts.
- The heating systems in City facilities are overbuilt, overly automated, and were remotely controlled by Siemens in Fairbanks. Replacing them will be a significant expense that will require grant funds. Interfacing with Siemens is no longer an option; however, they will be scheduled to recalibrate the furnaces. The library is currently experiencing heating issues. Addressing the aging heating systems cannot be delayed until fall.
- The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has determined that three gas monitoring wells are needed and expected to cost \$120,000 each. He is researching more cost-effective options.
- He applied for a \$75,000 planning grant through the Village Safe Water Program. Delta is not eligible because we do not have community water and sewer systems. However, DEC expanded the grant to include landfills. It would be an opportunity to drain one of the lagoons, remove trees that have grown in it, replace its liner, and pay to engineer a road inside the perimeters of the landfill. The road will access windblown debris that results in violations during the landfill inspection every year.
- The Ambulance Service Community Advisory Committee (AS-CAC), aka EMS Advisory Panel, is scheduled to meet on March 26. Flower Cole is the point of contact and Shelly Wade, Agnew::Beck, the facilitator.
- A water tender was donated to Gakona (August 2023). Greenleaf asked to consider advertising the Alyeska brush truck to a community that could benefit from it.

Cemetery – Pat White reported four burials are scheduled in the next three months.

Greenleaf reported snow was removed to create access trails and uncover graves for upcoming burials.

City Clerk – Pat White reported Council Seat A, vacated by Emily Dove on March 5, was advertised. The deadline to submit letters of interest is 5:00pm, April 1 for appointment at the April 2 Council meeting. To qualify, candidates must be registered voters living inside the City precinct for a minimum of one year prior to filing. Appointment is through the October 2024 municipal election when the three-year seat will be on the ballot.

Additional Reports – Igor Zaremba reported people are starting to plant seeds for greenhouses and gardens.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Tiki Levinson asked about the Toyo stove that was to be installed in the scale house at the landfill.

Greenleaf said it fell off the priority list and has not been done yet.

Ginger Abel asked about the status of the FY22 and FY23 audits and why they are late.

Reierson said the FY22 audit is now available to the public and she is working on the FY23.

Greenleaf said getting material to and from the auditors was the reason for delayed completion of the FY22 audit.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:26pm

JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk
Approved: April 2, 2024