

**City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
July 2, 2024 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Igor Zaremba called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Council members present: Mayor Igor Zaremba, Deputy Mayor Mary Leith, Pete Hallgren, Pamela Rawson (until 5:57pm), Michael Prestegard

Council excused: Travis Riesner

City staff present: City Administrator Lori Roberts (until 6:53pm), Finance Officer Kaylee Reierson, Administrative Assistant Flower Cole, Library Director Tiki Levinson, City Clerk Pat White

Public present: Five people were present at the beginning of the meeting and it was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM Radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Zaremba reported *New Business*: ACS - Fiber Installation on South Clearwater and Nistler Roads would be moved to *Request to Speak* (bottom of page).

Motion: Leith moved to approve the July 2, 2024 agenda as amended; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Leith moved to approve the June 18, 2024 minutes as presented; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren said he appreciated detailed explanations of how surplus funds were allocated.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

FILL SEAT E VACANCY

White reported there were no letters of interest received to fill the Council vacancy. Of the ten other write-ins in the 2021 election, the next highest vote getter was Lance Stricklin who received six. He is willing to fill the vacancy per City Code §1.10.060 “until a successor is elected” (Municipal Election on October 1, 2024) “and has qualified” (election results are certified on October 8).

Motion: Hallgren moved to appoint Lance Stricklin to Seat E; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five voting (Prestegard, Leith, Hallgren, Rawson, Zaremba).

OATH OF OFFICE

White administered the Oath of Office and Lance Stricklin took his seat at the Council table.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

ACS - Fiber Installation on South Clearwater and Nistler Roads (moved from *New Business*)

Iwo Olewniczak, Manager of Alaska Communications’ Outside Engineering Department, asked for a permit to install a fiber footprint throughout Delta Junction for the purpose of improving their services and Internet.

Russell Tolentino, Network Engineer III, reported plans to install fiber in the rights-of-way on the west side of South Clearwater and north side of Nistler Road by boring holes under driveways and roads.

Zaremba explained the school crosswalk project, which is a couple hundred feet from ACS’s engineered plans for their project. He asked if they could drill for a two-inch pipe under Nistler Road to install the crosswalk lighting.

Discussion followed regarding giving ACS a tax deduction receipt for donating their service, ACS providing detailed locations of their fiber optic footprint, and accommodations for ATV traffic (up to six feet from roads).

Roberts shared a draft of an encroachment permit and right-of-way code that has never been processed (ordinance requires two meetings). She asked that ACS request permission from the State of Alaska for the portion of Nistler Road starting at the fairgrounds.

Motion: Leith moved to authorize Alaska Communications to install fiber optic in the City rights-of-way along South Clearwater and Nistler Road; Rawson seconded.

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

Lisa Conrad - Introduce Kinross Chef

Lisa Conrad, Kinross Community Relations Coordinator, introduced Anton Volkov, Contracts Administrator for Kinross Manh Choh, and Jeremy Pare, Chef for Arctic Catering. Anton originated from Russia before moving to Alaska seven years ago. Jeremy is from Las Vegas. Conrad reported 211 people attended their barbecue that was hosted by the Delta Lions on June 25th.

Discussion followed regarding Kinross serving 145 meals twice a day, Kinross purchasing locally grown food (meat, eggs, flour) from Delta, local trash and septic haulers servicing Kinross, and Kinross currently looking for a camp manager who is based in Alaska.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Summer Nay, Invasive Plant Program Coordinator with the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), reported they used herbicide to treat plant infestations in the rights-of-way near Rest Haven Cemetery and Mil-Tan since 2018. The invasive weeds threaten agriculture and natural resources. Nay asked for permission to spray herbicides, including follow-up treatments, near the cemetery, along Mil-Tan, and in an area off Diehl Street north of the Department of Transportation. The pull-off area was sprayed in July 2023 but requires follow-up. The SWCD proposes applying Milestone herbicide between July and August. Public notices are posted at all points of entry before applications and left up to three hours afterwards, even though the treated areas are safe once dry. The SWCD does not spray when wind conditions exceed 7mph, below the 10mph standard, so there is no concern about the wind carrying herbicide downwind. They are extremely cautious about their surroundings. They monitor the weather, work in two-hour windows, and do not spray when rain is forecast.

Motion: Stricklin moved to authorize use of the Milestone herbicide as presented; Leith seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six voting (Prestegard, Hallgren, Rawson, Leith, Stricklin, Zaremba).

Yevgeniy Chenkov, referencing the cemetery expansion, said he would volunteer to clear the property and stack the logs for the public to access. He could begin as soon as next week.

Zaremba said only one person has cut firewood in the past two weeks. Chenkov's generous offer is an example of how tight our community is. He said all businesses who donate time will be given tax deduction receipts upon submitting itemized details.

Chenkov said he is licensed, insured, and bonded.

Discussion followed regarding scheduling timeslots for woodcutters, seniors, and veterans and planting grass seed before winter or letting the ground settle for a couple years first.

Roberts said the area will be monitored to ensure people are not cutting without scheduling and/or signing the waiver (presented on June 18, 2024).

Zaremba reported he had a very large dip in the middle of his property and would appreciate filling it with stump debris. It would be less expensive to haul it to his property than to Forestry's burn site near the airport.

CORRESPONDENCE - none**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****Girls Softball Association – Request for \$1,500**

Zaremba read Amy Cummings' letter and said he supported softball because it kept kids active and out of trouble.

Leith said the request was carried over from the June 18 meeting because FY25 funding was not available until July 1. She said Cummings would appreciate \$1,000, if not \$1,500.

Motion: Rawson moved to donate \$1,000.00 to the Delta Girls Softball Association; Leith seconded.

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

Summit Church – Request for Funding

Motion: Zaremba moved to donate \$400.00 to Summit Church to pay for bouncy houses at their July 13 event. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Discussion followed regarding church-hosted events having access to funding, hosting fundraisers, City Council establishing a limit, and stretching the funds that are allocated each year for *Community Donations*.

Hallgren asked to find a way around "first come, first served."

Rawson was excused at 5:57pm.

Resolution 2024-02 - Pioneer Park Operation and Use Agreement

Leith reported the Pioneer Park use agreement includes the City taking ownership of the Pioneer Pavilion, which was necessary to add it to the City's insurance policy. Occasional event insurance will be required such as the \$200 for the Pioneer's Solstice Stampede on June 20/21, which the Pioneers paid. She explained amenities that the Pioneers built (well, pavilion, restrooms) during their 25-year lease (expired October 2021), expecting to eventually own Pioneer Park. The City was deeded the property (recorded May 25, 2021) to forever remain in public use. If not, the title would revert to the State of Alaska. The Pioneers, Igloos #35 and #19, will maintain and operate Pioneer Park under the use agreement through April 30, 2054.

Roberts said the Pioneers will pay for all maintenance (annual water testing, draining water lines in the fall, etc.) except when extensive damages are covered by insurance.

Motion: Leith moved to adopt Resolution 2024-02 as presented; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Prestegard, Leith, Hallgren, Stricklin, Zaremba).

Leith reported a new sign was erected at the Pioneer Park during the Solstice Stampede ceremony.

NEW BUSINESS**Add Rural Deltana Fire Truck to Insurance**

Roberts reported:

- Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD) firefighters were added to the City's insurance policy (February 2024) because they had not been covered for about ten years. Rural Deltana can cover their two fire stations but not their firefighters because of the lapse in coverage. (RD firefighters are covered on City equipment, but the City must insure RD equipment. The City-insured equipment can be stored in RD fire stations.)

- Tender 101 and Engine 161 are currently out of service. RDVFD will register their engine and lease it and a tender to the City for \$1/year, if the City agrees to insure both. It would cost \$3,925 to insure both vehicles for one year. Roberts asked to lease RDVFD's engine and tender for a three-year period, which is minimal to reestablish and qualify for insurance coverage. RDVFD could break the agreement once they recover from this hardship. She said insurance companies no longer insure volunteer services unless they've been grandfathered in. Zaremba reported both fire departments fight the same fires, side by side, and Rural Deltana cannot get back on their feet without having insurance.

Motion: Stricklin moved to pay \$3,925.00 to purchase insurance for Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department's 2004 fire engine and 2011 water tender; Hallgren and Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Hallgren, Stricklin, Prestegard, Leith, Zaremba).

Roberts reported that she and the local fire chiefs researched leasing equipment to Forestry during the fire season.

Nistler Crosswalk Signage

Roberts reported she researched State regulations regarding crosswalk signs and is working with Arctic Signs. The School Superintendent issued a letter granting right-of-way easement to start the crosswalk.

Zaremba reported the goal is to install the crosswalk and flashing lights before the 2024-2025 school year starts.

He will meet with M2C1 Engineer Stephen Hammond on July 8. Heritage will donate gravel. Joel Wiggins, Denali Fenceworks, will do necessary fence work. University Redi-Mix will donate concrete. Chris Morley will install electrical wiring. Bollards may be built on both sides of the crosswalk, to keep four-wheelers out. Zaremba said he left a written message with the Department of Transportation about culvert requirements.

Roberts reported \$10,000 was allocated in the FY25 budget for the crosswalk. Local businesses are donating their time and materials, but there will be costs associated with signage and culverts.

REPORTS

City Administrator / Public Works / Park / Cemetery / EMS Services / Landfill – Lori Roberts reported:

- The first quote to renovate the lift station and pour ramps to the Public Works doors was \$21,800. City employees did part of the work to reduce the cost to \$17,000, the rest of the grant funds.

Zaremba reported 160 feet of two-inch steel pipe was removed from the old well and capped because it was an OSHA liability. New gutters, snow stops, a hydraulic press, and tire machines were installed and the deteriorated ramps in front of the overhead doors were paved. Work was expedited due to grant expiration date of June 30. The

final report will be submitted by July 30. Zaremba called for opposition to spending the rest of the Public Works grant with none being offered.

See additional discussion in the July 16, 2024 minutes (*Approval of Minutes From Previous Meeting* – page one).

- She, Zaremba, Stephen Hammond and Michael Phelan will meet on July 8 to determine whether the Kiwanis Pavilion can be repaired or if it must be torn down and rebuilt.
- The well at the park was repaired. It needed a new pressure tank and pump.
- From now on, City personnel will perform all winterization on City buildings, including the Visitor Center and Little League concession building. Everything will be dated.
- The 298-foot waterline at the cemetery was dug up because the PVC pipe was broken in multiple places. David Dawe is replacing it with an underground rubber hose. In the process, it was discovered that a new valve was needed in the pump house and the leaking well pump needs to be replaced. Roberts explained the mess that will be addressed after the waterline is replaced.
- She and Delta Skating Association President BJ Sloan are organizing volunteers to upgrade the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena. A date has yet to be established. Upgrades will include repairing septic pipes.
- Pogo may send a mechanic to repair the landfill loader.
- Ambulance services are funded through December, but hopefully it will be resolved by September. An occupational head fee was suggested. Not a tax, but a source of funding, it would be based on the number of employees in companies that are contracted to work on the missile field. The recent increase in landfill tipping fees (8¢ to 12¢) went into effect yesterday. Three cents for every pound of refuse will help fund medical services.
- She is working with insurance adjusters regarding water damage at City Hall after the June 12 rainstorm.
- She is getting quotes to install security cameras in City buildings.
- A quote for \$13,500 was received to install a boiler in the landfill scale house. It will be more economical than installing a Toyo stove or relying on electric heaters for a source of heat.
- Water coolers and stands were purchased for the scale house and the landfill shop.

New Grizzly for Landfill

Roberts reported the 20-year-old grizzly needs to be replaced. It is used to screen cover material for the landfill and topsoil for the cemetery. Rock Tough in Redmond, Oregon is the only company that will deliver to Alaska.

Zaremba said the Grizzly is needed for daily cover; to sift gravel through a screen with an 8-inch opening.

Motion: Leith moved to authorize purchase of a new grizzly, not to exceed \$29,990.00; Stricklin seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Hallgren, Stricklin, Leith, Prestegard, Zaremba).

Roberts was excused at 6:53pm.

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #23132 to Andrei Sictorschi - \$3,000.00 deposit to remove old and install new well pump at park

CK #23133 to Andrei Sictorschi - \$7,500.00 balance to replace well pump at park (\$6,000) and remove pump at fire station (\$4,500)

CK #23140 to Aetna - \$15,652.76 for July health insurance

CK #23141 to Airport Equipment Rentals - \$2,316.01 to repair grader

CK #23142 to AK Farmers Coop - \$1,228.50 for lawn fertilizer used at the City Park and Rest Haven Cemetery

CK #23143 to Wells Fargo - \$5,007.16 for May credit card charges

CK #23144 to Hale & Associates - \$119,081.59 for FY25 insurance premiums

Motion: Prestegard moved to approve checks #23132, 23133, and 23140 through 23144; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Leith, Prestegard, Stricklin, Hallgren, Zaremba).

REPORTS - continued from pages 3+4

Mayor / Landfill – Igor Zaremba reported Landfill Operator Tenali Hicks is leaving an area in Cell 1 open should the ramps that access Cell 2 get slippery. Otherwise, Cell 2 is getting a lot of volume.

Finance – Kaylee Reiersen reported:

- Donations to a municipality are tax deductible, contrary to what was said during discussion on June 18.
- She updated landfill rates at the scale house today. It was hectic. She did not anticipate it being so busy.
- The Public Works grant was spent in its entirety. More payments will show on the July 16 agenda.
- FY24 budget numbers will be finalized by the July 16 meeting.

- Representatives of City savings accounts will present the status of investments at the August 6 meeting.
- She applied for the FY25 Community Assistance Program (CAP) through the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development. \$75,000 was estimated for FY24, but \$87,701.71 was received.

Library – Mary Leith reported:

- The library has been busy issuing new library cards, summer reading challenges, traveling visitors, etc.
- Kudos to Michael Phalen for stopping the new drinking fountain / bottle filler from soaking the carpet.
- Summer readers are competing in the READO challenge for one of three bicycles, courtesy of the Alaska Communities Grant.

• Building and launching a soda bottle rocket is planned next week with Library Aide Andrea McCarrick. A pajama party is also planned with Library Director Tiki Levinson.

Levinson reported:

• Chargers and electrical cords attached to air quality monitors, owned by DEC and UAF, have been stolen at least ten times. A small security camera was set up and the culprit was identified. Library staff are working with the Alaska State Troopers.

• Girl Scout Abbigail Skywatcher plans to upgrade the library sign as a community project. Boy Scouts from Troop 2065 will assist in the project.

Health & Safety / Emergency Preparedness – Igor Zaremba advised people to allow extra time for travel to Fairbanks because of four road construction areas. He totaled his camper due to road conditions south of Delta.

Schools – no reports

Airport – Mike Prestegard reported:

• The blue cones that mark the taxiway become a hazard when they tip over in tall grass and are no longer visible.

Zaremba said they can be used at the landfill to guide traffic.

- Grader work is needed to remove large rocks that hinder use of lawn mowers and the brush hog.
- Fill dirt is needed on the ski strip and hopefully it can be done by winter.
- He drafted a letter soliciting input from local pilots about airport improvements.

At Large – no report

City Clerk – Pat White reported a local resident requested public participation at Council meetings via zoom. Discussion followed regarding ensuring the system cannot be hacked again (zoom bombed on April 2, 2024).

Additional Reports – none

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Zaremba called for additional public and Council comments with none being offered.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:18pm

_____	CITY	_____
Igor Zaremba, Mayor	SEAL	Pat White, City Clerk
		Approved: July 16, 2024