

**City Council Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
October 15, 2024 ~ 5:00PM  
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER**

Deputy Mayor Mary Leith called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

**Council members present:** Deputy Mayor Mary LEITH, Pete HALLGREN, Travis RIESNER, Lance STRICKLIN, Michael PRESTEGARD, Stormie MITCHELL

**Council present via Zoom:** Mayor Igor ZAREMBA

**City staff present:** City Administrator Lori Roberts, Finance Officer Kaylee Reierson, Library Director Tiki Levinson, City Clerk Pat White

**Public present:** 19 people were present at the beginning of the meeting. It was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio. Only one person requested attendance via Zoom, but it was too late (6:15pm) to join.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the October 15, 2024 agenda; Stricklin seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

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

Leith called for amendments to the September 17, October 1, and October 8 draft minutes.

White reported corrections to the September 17 minutes: *Watson Replat* on page one (305 acres was changed to 3.05 acres) and *Landfill Scale House Boiler* on page two (glycol lines from the landfill shop were broken, not cut).

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the September 17, October 1, and October 8 minutes as amended; Stricklin seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

**ELECT MAYOR**

[City Code §1.25.020 - The Mayor is elected by and from the Council for a term equal in length to a Council member's term. The Mayor shall take office upon election by the Council on the third Tuesday in October.

Alaska Statutes §44.62.310(a) - All meetings of the governmental body of a public entity of the state are open to the public except as otherwise provided by this section ... may be by teleconferencing ... This section does not apply to any votes required to be taken to organize a governmental body described in this subsection.]

Leith reported Roberts would cast proxy votes in Igor Zaremba's (physical) absence. She called for nominations while Roberts distributed ballots.

Mitchell nominated Mike Prestegard. Hallgren nominated Igor Zaremba.

Roberts collected ballots, which were counted by the Finance Officer and City Clerk and then handed to the Deputy Mayor who presided over the meeting.

Leith announced that Igor Zaremba received five votes and Mike Prestegard received two. Zaremba would serve through the end of his term, October 2025.

**ELECT DEPUTY MAYOR**

[City Code §1.10.050(a) - The Council shall annually elect a Deputy Mayor on the third Tuesday in October to preside at Council meetings in the absence of the Mayor.]

Leith called for nominations while Roberts distributed ballots.

Riesner nominated Lance Stricklin. Stricklin nominated Travis Riesner. Zaremba nominated Mary Leith.

Reierson collected ballots and counted them with the City Clerk, who handed them to Leith.

Leith announced that Lance Stricklin received two votes, Travis Riesner received one, and she received four. (Leith would serve as Deputy Mayor through October 2025.)

**REORGANIZE COUNCIL INTERESTS / REPORTING**

Leith called for input to reorganize Council interests.

Discussion followed regarding dividing reports: Mary Leith - *Schools* and *Library*, Stormie Mitchell - *Cemetery* and *Health & Safety*, Micheal Prestegard - *Public Works* and *Airport*, Igor Zaremba - *Personnel* and *Landfill*, Lance Stricklin - *Emergency Services*, Pete Hallgren - *At Large*, and Travis Riesner - *Parks & Recreation* and *Emergency Preparedness*.

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

## REQUEST TO SPEAK

### **Elijah Koppers / Koppers Communications – Security for City Facilities**

[On September 3, Koppers Communications was awarded \$46,631.51 to install security in seven City facilities.]

Elijah Koppers introduced himself and expressed appreciation for entrusting him with improvements to community properties. He has been a resident in the Delta area for 15 years and in business for 10, providing essential services that were lacking. He offers networking, Wi-Fi, cameras, and security with scaleable, cost-effective solutions. As owner, designer, installer, and sole provider of tech support, he has no overhead and is able to underbid outside competitors. The previous City Administrator, Ken Greenleaf, inquired about his services in 2023.

### **Chris Phelan – Boy Scout Project – Park Pavilion**

[The Delta Paper - September 13, 1989, "Two years ago a model of a picnic pavilion was designed by Raymond S. Dinger. In August, the dream became a reality when members of the local Kiwanis Club built the picnic pavilion at the City Park."]

Chris Phelan introduced himself and said he is a Boy Scout with Troop 2056. He explained *Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project*, a handout about choosing an Eagle Scout project that would benefit the community. He would like to repair the Kiwanis Pavilion at the Community Park to earn his coveted badge. It would take three to six weeks, starting next summer, and require replacing beams, which are no longer structurally sound, and minor repairs to the roof. He would operate a forklift with several experienced adults on site to supervise the project. Discussion followed regarding decommissioning the Kiwanis Pavilion in July because of rotted support beams, expenses (sonor tubes, concrete, lumber), and whether a concrete foundation could be added to Phelan's plans. Zaremba commended Phelan for taking on the rebuild, a City priority and one of its most difficult projects.

Prestegard praised Phelan for undertaking the pavilion as part of his scouting experience.

Motion: Stricklin moved to accept Chris Phelan's proposal to rebuild the Kiwanis Pavilion; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent after Zaremba's verbal approval.

## CORRESPONDENCE – none

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### **Phillips Scales – Final Bill**

[\$19,113.50 was paid to Phillips Scales on September 3. The new scale was calibrated by Phillips, as required annually, and certified by the State of Alaska. An additional part for \$771.85 was paid on October 3.]

Roberts reported Phillips Scales increased labor costs from \$6,500 to \$11,900, but she was able to negotiate it to \$9,300. They lacked employees on site, which required overtime pay.

Discussion followed regarding closing the landfill September 23-26 to replace the 20-year-old scale, upgrading the computer software from 2010, and George Sandlin donating the necessary dunnage to lift the landfill scale.

Motion: Stricklin moved to pay the \$9,300.00 final bill from Phillips Scales; Riesner seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with six in favor (Hallgren, Riesner, Zaremba, Prestegard, Stricklin, Leith) and one opposed (Mitchell).

### **Revisit Landfill Price Increase**

Reierson referenced a spreadsheet that compared landfill waste volumes between 2022 and 2024 and patron visits (675 in June 2023 compared to 724 in June 2024, 669 in July 2023 compared to 677 in July 2024, 749 in August 2023 compared to 641 in August 2024, and 708 in September 2023 compared to 556 in September 2024).

Discussion followed regarding three cents of the four-cent increase allocated to EMS and one cent to inflation, \$66,953 raised in three months for EMS, the last few landfill fee increases (6.25¢/lb. on July 1, 2007 to 8¢/lb. on March 16, 2015 to 12¢/lb. on July 1, 2024), and revisiting landfill prices again in January 2025.

### **Landfill Scale House Boiler – moved to November 5**

## NEW BUSINESS

### **New Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Membership**

Roberts reported she received three applications from initial members (Cody White, Sherry Decker, Joe Rice) and three new (Tony White, Yevgeniy Chenkov, Jackie Becker). Lance Stricklin was appointed to *Emergency Services* as a representative of the City Council.

Motion: Stricklin moved to approve the six Community Advisory Committee applicants; Riesner seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (Mitchell, Stricklin, Riesner, Hallgren, Prestegard, Zaremba, Leith).

### **Arctic Fire & Safety – Landfill Signs**

Roberts reported the small landfill sign will be replaced by two “Delta Junction Landfill” signs on both sides of the Richardson Highway. An “open/closed” sign will be located near the industrial area (Big Delta Brewing Company and Delta Petro Wash) to alert the public when the landfill is closed due to high winds (30mph or more) or cold temperatures (-30 degrees or more). A “Thursdays Commercial Traffic Only” sign will be located on the landfill gate. Landfill personnel will be responsible for updating the sign that notifies the public when the landfill is closed.

Motion: Stricklin moved to purchase the four signs as presented, totaling \$2,642.00; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (Prestegard, Mitchell, Hallgren, Zaremba, Stricklin, Riesner, Leith).

Stricklin asked for better signage for the Public Works building and the Fire Department.

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

CK #23292 to Airport Equipment Rentals - \$1,108.48 for grader blades

CK #23293 to AMCS - \$3,570.00 for landfill upgrades to computer software and reconfiguration

CK #23294 to Arctic Fire & Safety - \$1,339.12 for school crosswalk posts

CK #23295 to GVEA - \$4,664.86 for September electricity

CK #23296 to Independent Dispatch - \$11,500.00 to ship grizzly via barge (Seattle to Anchorage) and truck (Anchorage to landfill)

CK #23297 to University Ready Mix - \$2,462.18 for street gravel

Roberts reported a manlift was leased through April 2025 from Henry’s Hay Haulers (CK #23291 for \$995) for various projects, i.e., changing lights in the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena, Public Works, or Fire Department. The price is equal to a standard weekend rental.

Motion: Riesner moved to approve checks #23292 through 23297; Stricklin seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (Riesner, Prestegard, Stricklin, Mitchell, Hallgren, Zaremba, Leith).

## **REPORTS**

**City Administrator / Public Works / Park & Rec / Landfill / Schools** – Lori Roberts reported:

- Roads and the rink parking lot are graded.
- The Kenworth and International dump trucks are back in service.
- Sam Porter is available as backup for snow removal should the need arise.
- Equipment operators are all being cross-trained.
- David Dawe is renewing his Commercial Driver License.
- The 2024/2025 Skating MOA has been updated and is awaiting Mayor Zaremba’s signature.
- The Visitor Center has closed for the winter. End-of-the-Alaska-Highway certificates are available at City Hall. The Delta Farm Bureau reported 14,000 visitors stopped during tourist season, May through September.
  - The lease agreement for the Visitor Center expires in December. The Farm Bureau can extend it through 2027 if they are interested.
  - Tony White and Rural Deltana firefighters have reviewed the draft agreement to merge the two fire departments. She and Zaremba are still reviewing it.
    - The new grizzly, ordered in July, arrived at the landfill.
    - The nozzle on the dozer’s hydraulic hose was temporarily fixed until the part was replaced last week.
    - The State inspected boilers at City Hall, the library, and landfill last week. A drainage issue at the landfill shop will require follow-up.
  - Over 300 students participated in Delta High School’s first Alaska Association of Student Government Conference last week. The crosswalk was well used.
    - She and staff are reviewing the personnel policy, inventory of City buildings, and outdated ordinances.
    - She is presently involved in a complaint from residents on Hess Avenue who are concerned about their drinking water because three new buildings with separate foundations and septic systems are being built on a lot that is less than one acre.
      - 26 soldiers from the Bravo Company, 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion, relayed the Richardson Highway on October 4 to commemorate construction of the Alaska Highway in 1942 and their last year as Bravo Company. The soldiers started at 4:30am at Fort Wainwright and arrived at the Visitor Center at 8:30pm where they were greeted by a crowd, including military veterans, scout troops, and the Fort Greely Garrison. The Draft House hosted a dinner in their honor before they headed back to Fort Wainwright.

**Finance** – Kaylee Reiersen reported:

- She received a letter from the State that FY25 Community Assistance Program funds will be \$86,805.02.
- She is working with the auditors on finalizing the FY23 audit.
- Referencing her October 14, 2024 first-quarter budget report, she explained minor changes: receipt of PILT funds (\$1,291,981.69), \$91,981.69 more than what was budgeted, added Permanent Fund interest (\$122,705 from July, August, and September), \$102 refunded to a pilot for unnecessary tie-down fees, and the prison debt (\$50,000) was paid on August 6. She said all insurance bills are paid in the first quarter.

**Library** – Mary Leith reported the library is currently short staffed.

**Emergency Preparedness** – Travis Riesner reported new road improvements on the Richardson Highway are very slick due to the change in weather.

Hallgren reported road conditions are icier than normal.

**Emergency Services** – Lance Stricklin cautioned people to make sure chimneys are clean, to use dry wood, and to have an emergency plan in the event of a fire, including the neighbors as a safe house.

Tony White, Fire Chief, reported:

- There was a small wildland fire after the windstorm on October 12. Firefighter response was exceptional.
- Firefighters responded to six vehicle rollovers in four days due to icy road conditions.
- A traffic incident management course is planned to refamiliarize first responders with motor vehicles accidents. The course is open to firefighters and medical personnel, including Fort Greely and the State troopers.
- Travis Carter, Greely Fire Inspector, organized a fire prevention event at the elementary school last week.
- Trunk or Treat is scheduled at the elementary school on October 25. Some areas are ready for trick-or-treaters on October 31. The Fire Department and local businesses are still coordinating Halloween festivities.

**Airport** – Mike Prestegard reported a couple airplanes were moved in the tie-down area.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported General Election dates for by-mail voting, early voting, and voting at the polls (Community Center on November 5, 7:00am-8:00pm). More information is available online (elections.alaska.gov).

**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS** - none

**ADJOURNMENT** – 6:31pm

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Igor Zaremba, Mayor

CITY  
SEAL

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Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: November 5, 2024