

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
June 3, 2025 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Igor Zarembo called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

Council members present: Mayor Igor ZAREMBA, Deputy Mayor Mary LEITH,
Michael PRESTEGARD, Pete HALLGREN, Lance STRICKLIN

Council excused: Travis RIESNER

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

Public present: Approximately 20 people (including 8 on Zoom) were present at the beginning of the meeting.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Zarembo reported *Intent to Award Cemetery Survey Bid* would be added to *New Business* and *Delta Industrial Services (DIS) Proposal to Build 6th Street* would be removed from *Unfinished Business*.

Motion: Leith moved to approve the June 3, 2025 agenda as amended; Stricklin seconded.

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

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Discussion was held regarding weather index signs (Stricklin's report on page three).

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve the minutes from May 20, 2025 as presented; Stricklin seconded.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dusty Wright asked the Council to:

- Request Kinross reduce speed of ore trucks in passing lanes, so traffic can get around them.
- Find a better solution than parking trucks in the ditch line at Delta Industrial and Delta Petro Wash, creating crowded and unsafe conditions for traffic on the Richardson Highway.
- Unite the community, generate revenue, and resolve the EMS dilemma. Wright said he feels the same as the "anti-tax and anti-EMS folks; we cannot afford EMS," waiting on the State assessment is a waste of time, and "it is preposterous to fund EMS off donations." Referring to a "lull in the social media debacle" and the "one-sided conversation from the gasoline throwers," he questioned what the Council is doing to fix the divide within the community, specifically meeting with Delta Community Corporation, Deltana's governing body. Discussion followed regarding outreach and the need for every local resident to be involved in resolving the crisis facing the community (inside the City boundaries and the surrounding area).

Award Cemetery Survey Bid (moved from *New Business* on page 2)

Roberts reported six bids were received. Delta Surveys Association was the lowest at \$22,000. Other bids ranged between \$32,000 and \$52,625.

Discussion followed regarding removal of the berm, screening to utilize topsoil, and 320 new gravesites in the new expansion.

Motion: Leith moved to award the cemetery survey to Delta Surveys for \$22,000.00; Hallgren seconded.

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

APPOINT NEW COUNCIL MEMBER / OATH OF OFFICE

Zarembo read aloud one letter of interest that was received to fill the Council vacancy. He asked for a motion to appoint Michael Phelan to Seat B, to serve until the next regular election in October 2025.

Motion: Leith moved to appoint Michael Phelan to City Council Seat B; Stricklin seconded.

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

White administered the Oath of Office and Michael Phelan took his seat at the Council table.

REQUEST TO SPEAK**Salcha-Delta SWCD – Request Permission to Treat Invasive Plant Infestations on City Roadsides**

Summer Nay distributed *Selected Invasive Plants of Alaska* booklets and reported her affiliation with the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District's Invasive Plant Program. She explained continued effort to control growth of noxious and invasive plant species north of the Department of Transportation (DOT), east of DOT (Diehl's Road), and rights-of-ways near Rest Haven Cemetery (Jack Warren Road, Tanana Loop Extension, and Mil-Tan Road).

Discussion followed regarding Milestone herbicide (EPA registration #62719-519) safe once dried (two hours), treatments scheduled between June and September 2025, advertising 30 days prior, and contacting Nay with questions (email: summer.nay@salchadeltaswcd.org or phone: 907-616-0302).

Motion: Stricklin moved to permit Salcha-Delta SWCD to apply herbicides on City properties as specified; Leith seconded.

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

Deltana Youth Soccer Association

Steve Hilton, Deltana Youth Soccer Association President, reported recreational soccer started in Delta in 2013. The United States will host the FIFA World Cup next year (second time in history), but it will not be in Delta. High School preseason starts June 17 and statewide competitions, July 8. Youth soccer begins in August. Last year 250 youths, aged two to 14, registered. There were over 40 volunteers (coaches, referees, field preppers) and 500 people in the park on Tuesdays (practices) and Thursdays (games). Almost 1,000 hotdogs were served. Registration fees (\$40/player) fund the soccer program. Hilton thanked the Council for supporting youth soccer by maintaining the soccer fields and providing opportunities for kids.

Discussion followed regarding recent vandalism, covering graffiti and repairing damages, and locking the soccer-leased dumpster to discourage unauthorized use.

CORRESPONDENCE - none**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****Gutters for Community Center and City Hall**

Roberts reported Alaska Build bid \$5,925 to replace gutters at City Hall. Well Hung Gutters bid \$6,516 but expects City personnel to remove the old gutters and prep for new. Otherwise, their bid would be \$9,672. Alaska Build bid \$4,730 to replace gutters at the Community Center. Well Hung Gutters bid \$4,377. Both Community Center bids included removing the gutters and prepping.

Discussion followed regarding snow stops that are not necessary at City Hall, a possible add-on to upgrade snow stops at the Community Center and avoiding installation that requires punching holes through the roof.

Motion: Stricklin moved to award contracts to install seamless gutters at the Community Center to Well Hung, in the amount of \$4,377.00, and at City Hall to Alaska Build, in the amount of \$5,925.00; Prestegard seconded.

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

Cemetery Berm Removal

Discussion was held regarding opening the area for woodcutters, both individuals and commercial, requiring them to sign a hold harmless waiver at City Hall, and costs (fuel and employee time) to remove the berm.

Motion: Hallgren moved to permit the public, individuals and commercial woodcutters, to salvage firewood from the cemetery berm; Stricklin seconded.

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

NEW BUSINESS**Purchases over \$1,000.00**

CK #23585 - \$3,411.15 to Airport Equipment Rentals for excavation to clean up cemetery berm

CK #23586 - \$30,158.76 to Altman, Rogers, & Company for final FY23 audit bill

CK #23587 - \$3,783.37 to Arctic Fire & Safety to repair D6 dozer and conduct annual fire extinguisher service

CK #23588 - \$1,591.00 to Carmen Jackson CPA LLC for May 2025 FY24 audit prep

CK #23589 - \$14,813.00 to Conex Depot for five 20-foot Conex containers (approved May 6, 2025)

CK #23590 - \$15,700.00 to Custom Steel for airport renovations (approved May 6, 2025)

CK #23591 - \$85,404.17 to Delta Medical Transport for June 2025 EMS contract (includes \$15,000 received from RAES)

CK #23592 - \$3,397.97 to Guess & Rudd for April 2025 legal services

CK #23593 - \$2,900.00 to Prestige Homes by Design to repair boiler pumps at the library

CK #23594 - \$1,367.74 to Vitus for May equipment and heating fuel

Motion: Leith moved to approve checks 23585 through 23594; Stricklin seconded.

Discussion followed regarding attempts to get Alliance to reimburse the City for not providing new auditors, Altman Rogers, with documents needed for the FY23 audit.

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

Resolution 2025-03, Renewing Records Retention Standards

Roberts reported the updated records disposal form, adopted May 20, 2025, was attached to the resolution.

Motion: Leith moved to adopt Resolution 2025-03 as presented; Stricklin seconded.

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

REPORTS

Mayor - Igor Zaremba reported Alex, new maintenance employee, resigned (before he got started).

City Administrator - Lori Roberts reported:

- An impromptu inspection was conducted at the landfill last week by the State inspector, following an anonymous complaint about trash on the Richardson Highway. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) deemed it not associated with the landfill. The next DEC inspection is scheduled for July 9.

- She received an email from the neighbor on Hess Avenue who was concerned about adequate well and sewer separation (began October 15, 2024). The Hess property owner resumed construction of three structures on two lots but had not filed the required paperwork (*Conditional Use Permit*) and fees.

Prestegard reported City Code 4.20.020(b) restricts construction to single-family or duplex (no more than two family dwellings). Three foundations were built, not one, and they are too close to the property line.

Discussion followed regarding multiple attempts to contact Bogdan Koval, issuing a cease-and-desist order upon contact with the City Attorney, and bringing the topic back on June 17.

- Three separate coliform and nitrate samples were needed at the Visitor Center because of replacing the pump. The water is turned off until test results are satisfactory.

Discussion followed regarding tearing down the barn-colored storage shed in the triangle near the Visitor Center after the contents are discarded during Recycle Day (August 22+23).

- The City will build the concrete foundation for the Kiwanis Pavilion and Christopher Phelan will focus on rebuilding the structure and roof for his Eagle Scout Project.

Zaremba reported that Universal Ready Mix will donate the concrete.

- It was decided on May 20 to schedule a work session to review Title I in its entirety (89 pages). Copies were placed in City Council boxes.

- The week of December 15 was scheduled to address Stormie Mitchell's litigation against the City.

- As a cost savings, City staff will let their notary certificates lapse, and all notary services will be referred to the library (three notaries available).

- \$70,000 in grant funds were received from the Rasmuson Foundation to renovate the Community Center. The City contributed \$30,000 and \$55,000 more is needed. Roberts applied for a grant through the Mental Health Trust and is in the process of requesting funds from Kinross.

Discussion followed regarding organizing a one mile or 5K fundraiser in July or August and advertising the same theme for multiple events with all proceeds allocated toward Community Center renovations.

Roberts reported sheetrock, insulation, and metal screws are needed to reinforce the roof near the smokestack.

Discussion followed regarding whether raising funds to upgrade the Community Center conflicts with raising funds for EMS, using \$100,000 to replace doors and upgrade the restrooms (ADA-compliance), using FY25 funds (\$15,000) to replace gutters and repair the roof, and postponing upgrades of flooring and windows.

- City-owned vehicles can be leased to Forestry during the upcoming fire season. \$35,000 in revenue was raised in FY24. Roberts asked whether to lease vehicles or the vehicles with operators.

Discussion followed regarding leasing vehicles with trained operators.

- Job listings for landfill positions are advertised online (deltajunction.us/employment/).

Finance Officer - Kaylee Reiersen reported:

- She is working on the FY24 audit this week with Altman, Rogers, and Company.

Discussion followed regarding setting up a budget work session on June 10, introducing the ordinance on June 17, and holding a special meeting on June 24 to adopt the FY26 budget.

- Insurance coverage costs approximately \$145,000 annually, which includes \$10,000 to \$15,000 for Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD) firefighters and fire vehicles.

Discussion followed regarding whether to continue paying RDVFD's insurance and discussing it during the budget work session.

Library - Mary Leith reported:

- There are 35 participants, 4th to 8th grade, who signed up for summer reading programs.
- The summer reading challenge launched on June 1st. Reading, chores, music practice, and exercise are the main activities to earn chances in 15 prize drawings.
- The interlibrary loan service at the library was discontinued in May because of canceled federal grant funding. It will impact the Delta Library; locals use the loan service more than other libraries in Alaska.
- Over 200 people visited the library today. There were license plates from Michigan, British Columbia, Yukon, and France in the parking lot at the same time yesterday.

Airport - Mike Prestegard reported Friends of D66 are resurfacing the ski strip (as discussed on May 6).

Emergency Services - Lance Stricklin reported:

- Lori Roberts drafted a grant application for extrication equipment, aka Jaws of Life.
- The local area has been fortunate because of no fire activity so far this summer. Stricklin encouraged residents to establish defensible space by clearing deadfall at least 30 feet from homes. Because of the recent onslaught of fires in California, insurance companies are not issuing new policies anywhere across the country unless structures are cleared of trees or shrubs. He recommended cleaning gutters also.

At Large - Pete Hallgren reported, "It's nice to be home."

Phelan agreed with taking on *Health & Safety* and *Cemetery* reporting.

Leith reported she attended the ribbon cutting ceremony on May 24 to commemorate the newly rebuilt milepost marker at the Visitor Center. She noticed a sign acknowledging the Chamber of Commerce and asked to remove it because they are no longer active (since 2019).

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel

Motion: Stricklin moved to enter an executive session to discuss City personnel; Leith seconded.

Motion passed without objection.

Igor Zarembo, Mary Leith, Michael Prestegard, Lance Stricklin, Pete Hallgren, Michael Phelan, and Lori Roberts exited to the City Administrator's office at 7:30pm.

Motion: Hallgren moved to reconvene the regular City Council meeting at 8:15pm; Stricklin seconded.

Motion passed without objection.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:15pm

Igor Zarembo, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: June 17, 2025

Recorded meetings available at City Hall upon request.