

**City Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**September 2, 2025 ~ 5:00PM**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



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

Mayor Igor Zarembo called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

**Council members present:** Mayor Igor ZAREMBA, Deputy Mayor Mary LEITH,  
Travis RIESNER, Michael PRESTEGARD, Pete HALLGREN, Michael PHELAN

**Council present via zoom:** Lance STRICKLIN

**City staff present:** City Administrator Lori Roberts, Finance Officer Kaylee Reiersen,  
Street Operator David Rusher

**Public present:** Three people attended the first part of the meeting and four more attended via zoom.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: Phelan moved to approve the September 2, 2025 agenda as presented; Leith seconded.

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

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

Prestegard asked to revise the August 19, 2025 draft minutes to include Justin Whitehead's request for Council to "vote no" on adopting Ordinance 2026-03 (Public Comments – page 2), which was his sole point in speaking.

Motion: Hallgren moved to approve August 19, 2025 minutes as amended; Leith seconded.

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

Stricklin excused himself from voting because he had just joined the meeting.

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

**REQUEST TO SPEAK - none**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Notice of Vacancies (Seats B, D, G – Three-year terms)**

Zarembo reported seats B, D, and G would be on the upcoming municipal election ballot.

Roberts read the upcoming election advertisement, "Any person is eligible to serve on the City Council if they are a qualified voter and a resident of the City of Delta Junction for a period of not less than one year prior to filing a nominating petition. Candidate packets are available at City Hall ... They must be filed with the City Clerk no earlier than August 28 and no later than the close of business on September 12. Nominating Petitions must contain the signatures of at least ten registered voters qualified to vote in the City election."

**2025 Municipal Election Schedule**

Discussion addressed the election schedule correlating with the Title II rewrite (approved August 19, 2025), ballot counting (8:00pm, October 7 and 4:00pm, October 10), certifying election results (October 14), and swearing in newly elected officials, electing a mayor, and electing a deputy mayor once the deadline ends to contest the election (October 21).

**Last Day to Register to Vote**

Roberts reported City Hall is open through September 5 to scan/email voter registration applications. Sunday, September 7 is the last day to register to vote in the October 7 election.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Landfill Gas Wells**

Roberts reported she expects to receive three quotes to drill the landfill gas wells.

Discussion followed regarding the cost expected to be between \$22,000 and \$100,000 for all three 40-foot wells and why the wells were not drilled when Cell 2 was dug.

Phelan explained the standard monitoring well and how it functions.

**Adoption of Ordinance 2026-03, Conditional Use Permit for Hess Property (moved from August 19)**

Motion: Hallgren moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-03; Phelan seconded.

Hallgren moved to open the public hearing; Riesner seconded. Motion carried.

Zaremba called for public comments.

Justin Whitehead asked the Council not to issue a *Conditional Use Permit* (CUP) and to maintain the City's integrity pertaining to the zoned residential area. He encouraged building anywhere else, but not multi-family housing on single lots in the residential area.

Leith moved to close the public hearing; Hallgren seconded. Motion carried.

Roberts reported City Attorney Pam Weiss' opinion was that a *Conditional Use Permit* was not necessary. She stated that City Code 4.20.020 describes permitted building as family dwellings and single dwellings. The most reasonable interpretation is that a single building may stand alone or have two entirely separate units (duplex). It does not limit the number of residential buildings that may be constructed on a single parcel. It uses "buildings" in reference to residential use, concluding that more than one building could be built on a single parcel. The construction meets the requirement of residential use if the buildings are single dwellings (one building with complete living facilities) or family dwellings (one building with two separate units that contain complete living facilities). A CUP would modify residential zoning to neighborhoods with commercial or light industrial businesses. Bogdan Koval's intent is to build residences.

Discussion followed regarding rentals requiring a State-issued license to be considered a business, Jilene Prestegard's statement (September 1 letter) expressing concern about overcrowding and water contamination, septic size determined by number of bedrooms, not square footage of lots, and engineered plans enforced by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Hallgren reported Title IV needs to address inability to enforce inspection requirements and building permits, specifically whether initial lots are grandfathered in against the one-acre rule (Residential Subdivision Policy – April 17, 2007). Referring to the two lots on Hess Avenue, he suggested joining them so neither parcel can be sold without the other. He agreed with City Attorney Pam Weiss that a CUP was not necessary. He asked that a letter be issued to Koval explaining Council's decision (no issues with construction and septic separation on the adjoining lot).

Motion failed to adopt Ordinance 2026-03 on a roll call with six opposed (Riesner, Stricklin, Phelan, Hallgren, Leith, Zaremba) and one abstaining (Prestegard).

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **New Employee Wage**

Roberts proposed creating a Public Works Director position from the Equipment Operator (street maintenance). Additional responsibilities would include oversight and supervision of the landfill operation and Public Works.

David Rusher explained his experience in law enforcement, sharing the workload (multiple "hats"), and the need to improve and avoid unnecessary wear and tear on equipment.

Discussion followed regarding moving the full-time Equipment Operator to salary instead of hourly, adding responsibilities, inability to compete with wages at the school district, State, and government levels, and attracting and retaining experienced employees.

Reierson reported the highest rate at salary for the Equipment Operator would be Grade 1, Step 5 (\$33.22/hour). Hourly would be between \$22 (Grade 6, Step 1) and \$28.84 (Grade 6, Step 5).

Motion: Leith moved to establish the Street Equipment Operator pay as \$28.84/hour; Riesner seconded.

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

Discussion followed regarding drafting a job description for Director of Public Works and changing wages from hourly to salary during a special meeting on September 8.

### **Purchases Over \$1,000**

CK #23694 - \$24,324.43 to Aetna for September group health insurance

CK #23695 - \$16,599.46 to Altman & Rogers for final FY24 audit billing

CK #23696 - \$1,300.00 to Delta Junction Trails Association (FY26 donation approved May 6, 2025)

CK #23697 - \$85,404.17 to Delta Medical Transport for September EMS contract (\$16,500 from RAES)

CK #23698 - \$8,140.00 to Delta Surveys Associates for supplies purchased for the cemetery expansion

CK #23699 - \$4,546.25 to Glass Doctor to repair window in Fire Department and back door at City Hall

CK #23700 - \$2,625.00 to Guess & Rudd for July 2025 legal services

CK #23701 - \$8,020.00 to Hale & Associates to renew airport insurance and bonding for Finance Officer

CK #23702 - \$9,768.00 to Daniel Skywatcher to operate brush truck on Forestry fires

**Motion:** Leith moved to approve checks 23694 through 23702; Hallgren seconded.

Discussion followed regarding inspecting window repairs (ck #23699).

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

## REPORTS

**Mayor / Personnel** – Igor Zaremba expressed concern regarding recent deaths, particularly teenagers and young adults. He cautioned to look for signs and find help for someone who might be struggling.

**Roberts** encouraged parent involvement in their kids' Wi-Fi usage. A sight called the Blue Whale Challenge ends in suicide.

**Zaremba** reported new hires at the landfill appear to be performing well. The Street Operator will build the shoulders back and prepare the roads for winter. He said he was grateful for the employees showing up.

**Administrator** – Lori Roberts reported:

- She fielded complaints about heavy traffic on the Richardson Highway, while slowing down to turn onto Jack Warren Road. She cautioned drivers to be patient while DOT finishes the summer construction season.
- Team Greely partnered with the Delta-Greely School District to host a Tribute Walk on September 11 to honor emergency responders and others who died on September 9, 2001. Participants will walk the equivalence of 110 stories, the height of the World Trade Center. The event will be held at the High School track.
- In 2009, Bill and Marcia Ward developed Ward Farm on Triple H Road off the Alaska Highway. Bill Ward fortified Triple H Road and improved Ward Farm Road as their primary access. Then Wind Farm established residency and used Ward Farm Road to access their property. Ward continued to maintain both Triple H and Ward Farm roads. Someone started shooting Ward Farm Road signs, throwing them in the ditch, and replacing them with Windy Way signs. Ward stopped upgrading Triple H and Ward Farm roads and built Ward Farm Lane. Vandalism continued with the Triple H sign on the Alaska Highway. The State DOT got involved, forcing the vandal to stop. Recently the attacks started again. Windy Way replaced Ward Farm. Roberts reported the GIS mapping program lists Windy Way as Windy Farm Road. Discussion followed regarding Deltana Community Corporation (DCC) being responsible for all street signs outside the City's boundaries and coordinating with DCC to prevent duplicating street names.
- She received a message from the Department of Labor stating the City of Delta Junction is not responsible to pay Tenderfoot Gold any additional money (Davis-Bacon wages for Cell 2 project discussed on June 4, 2024).
- The Fire Department was awarded a grant for extrication gear (Jaws of Life), to arrive in October. Roberts also wrote a grant for SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) but does not yet know the status.

**Finance** – Kaylee Reiersen reported:

- Altman, Rogers and Company will present the FY24 audit on September 16.
- Work on the FY25 audit will begin the last week of October.

**Library** – Mary Leith reported:

- The Dragon Party, the finale of summer reading, was a big success! Fifty-nine people attended. There were dragon themed snacks, games, and drawings for the big prizes.
- The library has been rearranged over the past two weeks. Nearly every book was moved to a new location due to the addition of two new shelving units.
- The Library Association will host the annual book, DVD, and plant sale at the Community Center on Sept. 5/6.
- Library staff hosted a kids' bicycle race on Saturday, August 30. Over 35 people attended, and 16 children raced in five different heats.
- The toddler programs have started up again for the fall season. Attendance has grown at each gathering.
- Public Works employee, Daniel, is staining the posts on the exterior of the library.
- Aden McCarrick is refurbishing the Delta Community Library sign as his Eagle Scout project. Special thanks to Kinross and the Bethke family for financial support.

**Schools** – Mary Leith reported:

- School testing results will be posted on the State educational website starting September 5. The website compares Delta to other schools in Alaska.
- The new pavement at the Junior High School entrance cost \$200,000.

**Zaremba** expressed appreciation for DOT who painted the school crosswalk on Nistler Road.

Discussion followed regarding sharing ownership and responsibility of Nistler Road with DOT and the poor condition of the first mile from the Richardson Highway.

**Cemetery** – Michael Phelan reported the berms left from clearing the new section of Rest Haven Cemetery have been pushed back. With the newly hired Street Operator, the stumps and wood can be separated. He offered to be part of the project.

Roberts reported eight graves will be prepared before winter.

**Public Works** – Michael Phelan reported there was a delay in transporting the loader to Fairbanks for repairs (approved August 19). TNT Enterprises will haul it for \$1,400 or \$1,500. Construction Machinery reported the problem with the loader could be any one of six pumps. They recommended replacing all of them instead of troubleshooting. There may be a problem with the brake system and potential issues with the transmission. Phelan said it would be beneficial to get a rock bucket at some point.

**Airport** – Mike Prestegard reported airport activity is busy.

Roberts reported the portable outhouse would be removed the last week of September. She reported on behalf of Alan Levinson, Airport Manager:

- Some material from the north tie-down row would be used to grade the expansion area, keeping it at the same level as the taxiway.
- The pilots are constructing a taxiway from the northeast corner of the tie-down area to the ski strip.
- This year's goals (discing, grading, rolling, and seeding) for the crosswind ski strip were met.
- Clearing of trees on the north approach will continue when equipment is available.
- Volunteers are willing to donate time and equipment to develop the French drain. Gravel can be extracted for airport use in the future, and the overburden can be used to reclaim the area as needed to maintain a safe and viable airport environment.
- It was decided to place the Conex that was purchased to store airport maintenance equipment in the area that is currently used for auto parking. It is close to electricity and accessible to tie-down users.

**Emergency Services** – Lance Stricklin reported:

- The Fire Department responded to six calls in the past two weeks.
- Thirty large hay bales on an 18-wheeler caught fire on the Alaska Highway. All fire departments, including Fort Greely and Forestry, responded.
- Delta Medical Transport (DMT) responds to daily tone outs, if not multiple times each day.
- Aaron Reinert, Safe Tech Solutions, presented their EMS findings to the public on August 23 in the small gym at the Delta School. Fifty people were in the audience.

Roberts reported public meetings will be scheduled to move forward with resolving the ambulance crisis.

Leith asked if Rural Delta Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD) is insuring their vehicles and firefighters.

Roberts reported Hale & Associates, City insurance, wants a signed contract to continue paying RDVFD premiums.

**At Large** – Pete Hallgren reported:

- John Sloan was re-elected to a three-year term to represent District 6 on the GVEA Board. Hallgren, the only applicant for a seat on the GVEA Advisory Council, was reappointed to a second three-year term.
- Golden Valley, like other electric co-ops throughout the country, is having trouble since President Trump stopped funding renewable energy projects, i.e., wind and solar.

**Emergency Preparedness** – Travis Riesner encouraged people to clean chimneys, service boilers, and clean gutters before winter hits. He warned people to watch for increased ATV traffic because of bird hunting.

**Park & Recreation** – Lori Roberts reported staff are preparing to winterize the park.

Zaremba reported plans to repair asphalt cracks in the outdoor rink before the Skating Association builds ice.

**Additional Reports** – Lori Roberts reported Partners for Progress has a new wood shop and High School students plan to restore the Welcome-to-Delta sign (that has been in the Public Works for several years).

**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS** - none

**ADJOURNMENT** – 7:40pm

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Igor Zaremba, Mayor

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SEAL

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Pat White, City Clerk