

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
September 16, 2025 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Mayor Igor Zarembo called the meeting to order at about 5:03pm.

Council members present: Mayor Igor ZAREMBA, Deputy Mayor Mary LEITH,
Michael PHELAN, Michael PRESTEGARD

Council present via zoom: Lance STRICKLIN

Council excused: Pete HALLGREN, Travis RIESNER

City staff present: Administrator Lori Roberts, Library Youth Services Shona Hilton, City Clerk Pat White

Staff present via zoom: Street Equipment Operator David Rusher

Public present: Eight people were present plus one resident and one speaker on zoom. The meeting was broadcast over KDHS 95.5 FM radio.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Zarembo reported *Approval of Election Officials* would be added to *Correspondence*.

Roberts requested *Intro to Ordinance 2026-04* be removed from *New Business*.

Motion: Leith moved to approve the September 16, 2025 agenda as amended; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Phelan moved to approve the minutes from September 2, 2025 as presented; Stricklin seconded.

Phelan asked to correct True North Transport to TNT Enterprises (*Public Works Report* on page 4).

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

Motion: Leith moved to approve the minutes from September 8, 2025 as presented; Stricklin seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Rena Case introduced herself as a candidate running for Seat G. She has lived in Delta Junction since 1989. All four of her children graduated from Delta High School. She has been employed with First Student for over 20 years in different capacities (bus monitor, instructor, driver). She hopes to serve on the Council for the betterment of the community.

LTC Alissa Clark expressed appreciation for those that attended the 9/11 community event last Thursday. She welcomed the community's involvement in Fort Greely's Veterans Day event on November 11.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

Altman, Rogers & Company - FY24 Audit

Grant Todd, Audit Partner with Altman, Rogers and Company, reported the FY24 audit was much smoother than FY23. 2022 employees were replaced by new employees (finance and administrator) in 2024. Todd briefed Council on the *Basic Financial Statements, Required Supplementary Information, Supplementary Information, and Compliance Section (With Independent Auditor's Report Thereon)*, dated July 28, 2025:

- There were issues with credit card and payroll transactions in both FY23 and FY24, but no errors in incoming cash transactions or disbursements in revenue and expenditure.
- In 2024, the federal government determined that funding from Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) was not subject to federal single audit requirements. That will hold in 2025, unless the City generates more than \$750,000 in federal revenue.
- The City has a healthy reserve fund balance.
- Findings and delays from FY22 and FY23 were disclosed and corrected.
- The FY24 audit received an unmodified opinion, a clean audit report.

Roberts reported corrective action was taken because tickets/receipts were not being turned in by employees. Charge accounts were established, requiring employee signatures and prior authorization.

Zarembo reported credit cards are no longer used and those using them are no longer employed.

Todd reported he was looking forward to working with Roberts and Reiersen on the FY25 audit.

CORRESPONDENCE

Notice of Election

[Three seats are on the 2025 ballot. Seat G is the only one with a contest. Michael Phelan is running unopposed for Seat B, Igor Zaremba is running unopposed for Seat D, and Stormie Mitchell and Rena Case will compete for Seat G. All three seats are three-year terms, ending in 2028.]

White reported the upcoming election lands on the same day as the next Council meeting, always the first Tuesday of October. Voter turnout is typically 7% or 8%, but it might be more because of two candidates running for Seat G. She encouraged people to vote early if unable to vote at the polls on October 7.

2025 Ballot Sample

White reported candidates were asked to review the ballot. All responded except Stormie, but her name is exactly what she listed on her candidacy form.

2025 Municipal Election Schedule

White reported:

- Early voting is available at City Hall, M-F, 8:00am-5:00pm, through October 6 (October 7 for special needs voters).
- The State-run REAA (School Board) Election is on October 7, 8:00am-8:00pm, at the Community Center. Early voting is available at City Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays, September 23, 25, 30, and October 2, 12:00pm-4:00pm.

Zaremba reported he will miss the October 21 Council meeting when the Council elects the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. He would be grateful to be re-elected as Mayor.

Approval of Election Officials

White reported City Code 2.15.010 requires Council to appoint two Election Poll Officials to oversee the election table at the Community Center, October 7, 7:30am-8:30pm, three ballot counters designated as the Election Board to count ballots after the polls close at 8:00pm, and three ballot counters to serve as the Canvass Board, October 10, 4:00pm, at City Hall.

Motion: Leith moved to appoint the eight election officials as presented; Prestegard seconded.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Salary Schedule

Roberts explained inconsistencies with hourly and salaried wages on the existing matrix. Fixing it would require a separate Council meeting.

Discussion followed regarding needing more information about the new equipment operator, the wage matrix based on Alaska wages and what the City currently pays, bumping employees annually upon receipt of job-related certifications and education, and postponing discussion to October 7.

New Public Works Director Position

Prestegard reported it was decided during an executive session on September 8 that a job description was needed for the proposed Public Works Director position and that it needed to be advertised.

Zaremba reported it was also decided to leave the Street Equipment Operator position at Grade 6, Step 5 (\$28.84/hour) with a two-month probation period.

Phelan suggested hiring a skilled heavy-duty mechanic instead of creating more overhead. If personnel operate responsibly in their areas, oversight is not necessary.

Discussion followed regarding the Employee Policy Plan specifying probation as six months to one year, replacing the Street Equipment Operator with a Public Works Director (street operator with oversight responsibilities) or a mechanic/operator, the proposed Director of Public Works and Landfill Operations description given to Council prior to the executive session on September 8, drafting a job description for a mechanic, the condition of toolboxes at Public Works, whether a mechanic would take better care of his own tools, and scheduling a work session (September 29).

NEW BUSINESS

Intro of Ordinance 2026-05, An Ordinance Amending Title I, Legislative, Judicial & Administrative

Roberts explained how changes were identified (new inserts underlined and in blue font, removed texts shown with red strike-through) and old sections that have brackets as required by City Code 1.30.081.

Prestegard referenced §1.10.015 edits (adding blue underlined and removing text in brackets) and asked to change “are” to “is.”

Motion: Leith moved to introduce Ordinance 2026-05, hold the first reading, and set the public hearing and adoption for October 7, 2025; Stricklin seconded.

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

Landfill Positions

Roberts reported the engineer estimated 1,509 tons in solid waste for Cell 2 in 2015. Tonnage is currently 4,073, almost three times the engineer’s estimate. He is reviewing the design for a current and more realistic cell life.

Discussion followed regarding unforeseen volume being enough to keep three pieces of equipment busy, landfill employees having to separate household waste from construction debris, temporarily closing the landfill to commercial haulers on Thursdays to allow employees to catch up and stop people from delivering trash when the scale house is unattended, and out-of-service equipment affecting the landfill operation capabilities.

Loader Purchase

Zaremba reported purchasing a loader would be less costly than leasing one.

Roberts reported the lease has been paid through October 15.

Discussion followed regarding a used 988H John Deere loader too large to fit in the landfill shop, the L220 expected to be back in service the first week of October, purchasing an excavator to move tires, boulders, and trash, using Phelan’s personal loader to empty the trash bins, possibly moving the old landfill shop to the existing landfill, and presenting purchase options for a loader and an excavator at the October 7 meeting.

City Hall Telephones

Roberts reported the phones at City Hall have been terrible for months. The phones are too old to replace broken parts. ACS wants \$16,000 to update them. For September, the City paid ACS \$386.41 for phone service at City Hall. Other phones are separated by departments. The library’s July bill was \$293.57.

Discussion followed regarding maintaining 9-1-1 calls with ACS, getting quotes for all departments, whether new phones would be hard wired (remain in service when Internet is down), a non-issue since the City switched the Internet provider to Starlink (July 2025), researching voice-over options, and discussing it on October 7.

Purchases Over \$1,000

CK #23711 - \$10,900.00 to Airport Equipment Rentals to rent L724 loader in August

CK #23712 - \$2,882.35 to Alasconnect for September Managed IT Services

CK #23713 - \$2,904.00 to Daniel Skywatcher for operating Rural Deltana truck during fire season

CK #23714 - \$1,014.69 to Delta Building Supply for August supplies (sanding / staining materials, tools, safety gear)

CK #23715 - \$1,350.00 to Duncan GIS for August mapping services

CK #23716 - \$1,200.00 to Fluent IMS for Fire Department’s annual Who’s Responding subscription

CK #23717 - \$1,042.52 to Glass Doctor to replace door hinge on City Hall entrance

CK #23718 - \$4,317.54 to GVEA for August electricity

CK #23719 - \$7,150.00 to Goldstream Engineering for sanitary surveys (drinking water program)

CK #23720 - \$1,591.98 to August equipment fuel

CK #23721 - \$24,324.43 to Aetna for October group health insurance

Motion: Stricklin moved to approve checks 23711 through 23721 as presented; Leith seconded.

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

REPORTS

Mayor – Igor Zaremba reported:

- Michael Phelan will take over landfill reporting. He dedicated a lot of time to the landfill operation.
- David Rusher, the new Street Equipment Operator, graded Reeves and Hughes, is building shoulders back on roads, and has helped with the landfill operation. Some gravel roads have too many big rocks, so he is working with what material is on the roads.

Administrator – Lori Roberts reported City employees are installing landfill signs, servicing boilers, preparing winter graves, and winterizing the Visitor Center, cemetery, landfill, and park facilities. She is scheduling the library's air handling system to be serviced.

Phelan suggested leasing the Visitor Center to recover cost of insurance and operating expenses.

Roberts suggested maintaining a vending machine of beverages outside the Visitor Center during the summer. She also suggested installing an ice and bottle filling machine.

Discussion followed regarding an inquiry to put the City logo on t-shirts to sell at the Visitor Center and the Delta Farm Bureau splitting the proceeds with the City.

Finance – Lori Roberts reported:

- \$1,335,851.17 was received in PILT, which was \$70,000 more than what was budgeted.
- \$79,001.04 from Alaska's FY26 Community Assistance Program (CAP) has been received.
- Extrication equipment, valued at \$11,000, was recently shipped.
- Kinross donated \$10,000 toward Community Center renovations (to replace doors, upgrade restrooms to ADA-compliance, repair roof, and upgrade flooring and windows). The gutters were replaced in July, and the current goal is to upgrade the restrooms and replace flooring. Roberts reported she would contact the bidders before starting the renovations to make sure quotes are still valid. [Funding sources: \$70,000 awarded by the Rasmuson Foundation, \$10,000 budgeted from FY26, and \$20,000 from the Community Center's Alaska Municipal League Investment Pool (AMLIP) savings account. \$45,000 is needed to complete the upgrades.]
- Miles Patton was approved by his employer to attend a managerial class, which will benefit him in his position as DJVFD Fire Chief.

Library – Mary Leith reported the book, DVD, and plant sale on September 5/6 was successful.

Schools – Mary Leith reported there is no school October 8/9 because of scheduled in-service.

Health & Safety – Michael Phelan thanked Tim Webb for brushing Mil-Tan, which increased visibility.

Tim Webb reported he is unable to mow steep banks with his equipment and asked if DOT could use their mower and attachment to clear roadsides between the schools and near the ice rink.

Roberts reported the Public Works crew will be brushing in the next week.

Stricklin excused himself at 7:42pm.

Airport – Mike Prestegard reported the ski strip was packed and graded. Packing gravel is the next project.

Park & Recreation – Lori Roberts reported:

- Delta Junction Trails Association will host an event at River Walk Trail on September 27. They invite the public to participate in a StoryWalk, bonfire, scavenger hunt, prize drawings, and to dedicate a bench to honor Steve McCombs.
- The park was vandalized again last night. This time a desk was thrown from the crow's nest. Rakes were used to knock down the cameras, but only got the rakes stuck. Roberts asked anyone witnessing vandalism to contact the Alaska State Troopers, who are fully aware of the behavior.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

BJ Sloan, President, Delta Skating Association (DSA), reported the 2025-2026 Memorandum of Agreement is in draft form. He asked to support maintenance at the rink; cracked dry wall in the concession ceiling that has developed into a leak, cracks in the outdoor rink that need sealed, and resolving the key issue so volunteers, men's league, women's league, and youth teams (100+ kids) can access the rink. Sloan asked if the City would consider paying a mechanic to service the Zamboni.

Roberts reported that an employee was hired to oversee parks/recreation, will transition to oversee the ice arena, and will be trained to operate the Zamboni. Regarding access, key fobs will replace keys.

Zaremba reported the new street operator has experience with crack sealing, a potential option if DOT does not respond.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:53pm

Igor Zaremba, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk