

September 3, 2002 - City Hall
Delta Junction City Council
5:00pm Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Mayor Gilbertson called meeting to order at 5:02pm. Mary Leith-Dowling, Susie Kemp, Henry Summers, Ron Beck and Mark Weller were present. Lou Heinbockel was excused.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA - APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Hallgren requested three invoices be added to Purchase Orders in New Business.

Leith-Dowling moved to approve the agenda with the add-on; Weller seconded.

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Weller requested to change wording in his Airport Report of the August 20, 2002 minutes. He requested to change the statement "Weller distributed copies of specifications for surface materials provided by DOT in Fairbanks" to read "redistributed as done on June 18 meeting".

Summers moved to approve the August 20, 2002 minutes with Weller's change; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Rescue Squad - Connie Ott stated Bechtel invited the Delta Rescue Squad to tour the Missile Defense Site. Ott was one of the first to take the tour and she stated it was a "real eye opener". The tour will allow the squad to know the area should the time come when they must respond to an emergency call for service. They will also be given escorts at the gate.

Airport - Mark Weller drew a diagram of the airstrip, explaining Jack Morris' idea of putting a taxiway down the middle of the first four existing lots. This would require only a 400-foot taxiway down the middle instead of running along the front edge as previously planned. Weller and Morris are waiting to meet with Art Saarloos for further discussion.

Cemetery - Mary Leith-Dowling requested the City take on the responsibility of providing burial services. This has always 1) been put out for contract and 2) hiring has been the responsibility of the family of the deceased. Now that improvements have been made and the City has equipment it would be to the City's interest to have their own operator perform the services. Council discussed the cost it would entail for the City to dig the burial sites, digging during the winter months, holding bodies in Fairbanks until spring, the issue of damage and problems over the years by having numerous contractors, if procedure would differ for cremations, how the City would implement rules, and the need to replace the lowering device which ranges between \$2000 and \$5000 in purchase cost.

Leith-Dowling stated she would investigate and write up a proposed plan to present to the City Council. The Council agreed to make a decision once information is gathered.

Connie Ott stated family members would no doubt appreciate the City's efforts in making this difficult task easier. She said, "It is not a time of your life when you want to be locating a backhoe operator."

Beck asked about the strip down the middle of the cemetery where the dirt was removed. Dowling reported it is to be replaced with gravel. Beck suggested using the D-1 while they are doing work on Mill Tan Road. Leith-Dowling stated that is their intent and the road is being prepped for that.

City Clerk - Pat White reported no one has filed for the upcoming October election for Council Seats C and F other than the present incumbents, Lou Heinbockel and Ron Beck.

White requested Council members review Alaska Municipal League (AML) Conference materials laid out on the table. Council members are invited to attend the Newly Elected Official (NEO) training in Valdez on November 11 and 12. The AML Conference will continue through November 15.

Dept of Economic Development - Pete Hallgren discussed several topics:

Hallgren presented a letter from Mark Ames requested support from Council members to back him in changing Pioneer Park at Alaskaland to be the Centennial Pioneer Park.

Council members agreed to not be involved, stating the historical matter is best left for the North Star Borough.

Hallgren presented an ad that will go in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner advertising for architectural engineering services, specifically an on-call engineering firm. Hallgren would like to locate firms that have offices out of Delta or Fairbanks. He also stated he is looking for levels of expertise that a single person would probably not provide. The cost will be \$115 to advertise Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Providing conceptual ideas for a possible municipal complex and trying to get the half-court basketball court idea established are two of many projects.

Hallgren distributed packets of confidential applications to Council members regarding the in-house planner position. He stated he would be doing background checks and would appreciate input from Council members on their recommendations and whether or not to continue looking. The planner position is a three-year position, unless there is another source of income.

Hallgren stated he misinformed in error. Instead of \$100,000 for roadwork under the EDA grant there is actually \$250,000. The clinic road is just about finished and final cost is between \$22,000 and \$25,000. There is time, ability, and money to do more roadwork this year. Emmaus (Kusz) Road still needs shoulder work. Hallgren stated Kimball Street is another one that needs maintenance.

Beck suggested working on the road that runs along the airport to the school.

Hallgren stated this is the reason he wants an on-call engineering representative. Kimball, Deborah and Rapids Street and South Clearwater are all roads that have priority in getting paved.

Beck asked about the cost to put an extension of the bike path along the airport road to the school. Hallgren said this is where an engineer would be helpful.

Hallgren added intent is to keep the snow cleared off the bike path along the school road. He is looking to purchase a brush cutter machine, which has a snow-blower attachment. He reported the purchase cost is \$2,600 and then another \$450 for the attachment.

Hallgren stated maintenance can be done under the EDA grant. The Missile Defense, at the Partnering Conference, were receptive and agreed to add more categories and allow paving with federal impact money. This will allow the City to maintain existing roads at a level where needed. Kimball and Emmaus are the next in-house projects after Rapids Street.

Lamar Cotten reported on the Partnering Conference in Fairbanks on August 27 and 28. Cotten, Hallgren, Mayor Gilbertson and school Superintendent, Dan Beck, attended and stated it was a worthwhile meeting. They discussed how not to get caught up in the paper mill. Items of discussion were in using FY02 money (roughly 9.6 million dollars) on the equipment building, the fire station upgrade, the landfill and the school. Because there is no category for recreation, they did object to using '02 funds for the hockey rink. There is money available for that in the '03 funds. He explained the money and planning was done over a year ago. Things have changed and will no doubt change next year as well. Missile Defense agreed to flexibility and changes because of this. He also stated paving projects can be adjusted. Bike trails would fit under this and also recreation. The Missile Defense really wants the City to deal with how the community impact money is used.

Cotten reported Ken Cole stated there will be more construction for Missile Defense expansion.

Hallgren contacted Sid Ashworth, from Senator Stevens' office, to jar money loose. Cotten reported it was a good meeting. The school submitted a 39 million dollar request to the State for funds. There is a public school meeting on Thursday, September 5.

Kemp asked if there was talk about numbers of people moving into Delta. Cotten stated information is still vague.

Leith-Dowling stated the elementary has already met the school's projected increase in students.

Council members individually shared contact with new residents moving into Delta.

Gilbertson said some reported their decisions to move to Delta and take job offers was based on viewing the City website.

Kemp stated that the housing issue is still a big problem. There are a lot of people in this community who have jacked their prices, under the perception that the new workers are making big wages. She said these are federal employees, not pipeline workers, and are nice families that would be an asset to our community. Kemp reported that two families have already moved and two have turned down jobs because they could not find affordable housing. Kemp would like for the City to find a way to spread the word to educate and discourage gouging.

Gilbertson reported he inquired and found that Fanco Apartments asks \$550 and Hutto's highest is \$600 (for the three bedroom). Gilbertson said \$800 for a house is not unreasonable. Reasonable housing is full.

Gilbertson requested Cotten have contact with Delta and Fairbanks real estate people and have a partnership meeting to discuss building. There will be over 300 people looking for housing in Delta next year. Neither the man camp, nor Ft. Greely will be able to accommodate them.

Cotten asked, aside from the impact funds that they provide us, if there is any federal program to assist their employees in locating housing. It can't be a first situation in which this event has happened.

Kemp stated she read about a seminar in Fairbanks regarding federal grant funds for low and middle-income housing, senior housing, and maybe handicapped. It is advertising for interested builders.

Cotten stated he talked with Brian Rogers about possibly having a homebuilders meeting to entice builders. The public needs educated from a third party. There is no downside of spreading word to realtors. What's available for land? Utilities?

Park - Ron Beck spoke in Lou Heinbockel's absence. He reported he was in Valdez over the weekend and stated their skate park would be worth modeling after. There is no separate supervision but it is part of the recreation program. He offered to get more information on developing one for Delta.

Weller added he'd like to see a telephone hooked up also.

Lands - Lamar Cotten spoke in Susie Kemp's place. He discussed the need for mapping to describe Delta Junction in a broader way. The Denali Commission has a program needing involvement from a minimum of 10 communities. Normally this would cost \$30,000 each. This way, collectively, the cost would be \$10-15,000. The maps will detail land ownership, use, utilities, etc. Council members agreed with the importance, especially for emergency services.

Hallgren stated he would like to hire some consultants to determine exactly what the City owns. Letha Burcham, Administrative Assistant, has done much work but it is just scratching the surface. Hallgren would prefer to put out an RFP. What do we own in the old-rifle City dump? Part of the property on the corner of Rapids Street is in the flood zone area. Hallgren stated he's been researching the old 1988 master plan. Hallgren stated he is still reviewing minutes from the old Planning Commission to determine what roads the City is to be maintaining. Here again, the City Planner position needs filled.

Public Health and Safety - Henry Summers reported there is a Fire Chief conference in Sitka on September 11-13. Jim Eden-Kilgour, Fire Chief, has requested to attend. The cost will be \$1,000.

Summers stated part of the federal impact money is for the firehouse. He suggested simply improving the existing firehouse and to put the equipment shed on the same property so they are in the same area. He stated keeping the two structures attached or not, is not a big issue.

Gilbertson said work sessions will be needed. The equipment building and the Rescue Squad building will both happen next year.

Kemp stated it would not hurt to look at both, to enhance what we have as well as build something new.

Summers stated new equipment is a consideration. The newest equipment at the firehouse is from the late 1980's. The new ambulance came last year.

Hallgren added this is why on-call engineers are needed, to come up with conceptual drawings and cost estimates. Anything we build should have at least a 20-year lifespan because the financial future of this community is not known.

OLD BUSINESS

- **E-911 description report**

Dave Zimmerman distributed an Enhanced-911 report. Zimmerman reported he is still researching how much the specialized equipment will cost and the location where it will be (Delta or North Pole). Right now, we have service through the North Pole Dispatch. Zimmerman stated about \$1200/month is received and put into this special account.

Summers stated the phone company will not provide Caller ID to the Delta area because our population is too small. He asked now, if the City funds part of their cost to do it, will they provide this service.

Discussion followed. Council agreed to pursue this and come up with particulars.

Summers stated Rural Deltana is having problems with their repeater at the Alascom tower.

Hallgren stated it was disclosed at the Partnering Conference that the City would be receiving funds to broaden from just television to include emergency communications. We could do work on the Deltana receiver. The Missile Defense had no problems with that. There is potential to relocate. Again, an engineering firm is needed.

Weller asked about fixing it to get the repeater up and running.

Hallgren stated the problem at Deltana is possibly the antennae and the feed cable, not the translator. If it is a matter of just buying and installing a new cable or an antennae impact money can be used to do these repairs.

Hallgren stated he wants an engineer to look at this instead of constantly spending money repairing. He will research having an engineer come in to do the job.

Beck stated that if this is a life-threatening issue, it needs looked at and given estimates on how much it would be to get it up to grade. Hallgren said he would do this and that money out of impact TV fund could be used.

Weller stated he'd like to have it done as soon as possible.

Ernie Wyrick, Deltana Assistant Fire Chief, stated they rely on the Deltana repeater, Channel 1, more than the City's.

Discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Request from Fire Department to Increase Subscription Fees**

Summers referred to the handout that was provided by Fire Chief, Jim Eden-Kilgour. Currently there is a \$50/year subscription fee for fire service to residences and \$100 for commercial businesses. Non-subscribers, who require the help of the fire department to attempt to save their foundation, will be charged \$2,500. \$5,000 will be charged for commercial non-subscribers.

Council discussed and questioned if this needed to be in an Ordinance. Subscriber fees get processed through the general fire fund. Summers offered to research.

- **TV Repeater**

Hallgren reported Harding ESE provided a proposal to do temporary repairs on the TV repeaters, rebuilding antennas and repeat lines for the winter. This will include rebuilding the platforms next spring as well as report on long-term television service.

Their candid recommendation is to NOT take their proposal. They feel it would ultimately be a lot more expensive, costing between \$25 and \$30,000 more to do the temporary work this fall and the final work next spring. Harding recommends doing a turnkey project, engineering now and then completely upgrading the antennas, the feed cables and the transmit cables next spring.

Hallgren stated he also requested Harding engineers do a report on long-term television service. The FCC is currently mandating that all broadcast TV stations be digital by 2007. Digital signals will not reach Donnelly Dome from Fairbanks. Hallgren requested Harding look into satellite down-feed. We could go to digital now but this way we would lose the Fairbanks local news and advertising. If the equipment with digital capabilities is purchased now it may be totally obsolete by 2007.

Hallgren stated the professional advice is not to engineer the temporary fix but wait until next spring to do a thorough job.

Discussion followed.

- **Approval of Archeological Consultant**

Hallgren stated Harding ESE was previously approved to complete the subsurface exploration on the landfill property. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) intervened when Harding attempted to get their core permit, necessary to do the drilling. The State identified a conflict with the permit request, stating the property is close to Donnelly Dome and survey of the property must meet compliance with SHPO standards and that of the National Historic Preservation Act. Harding recommends their investigation be delayed until the archaeological survey is completed. Hallgren requested Council approve additional funding to have Northern Land Use Research, Inc. (NLUR) perform the survey under contract to Harding ESE. It will be about three days worth of work. Hallgren stated we are sitting on the edge of losing the rest of the season.

Weller moved to approve the expenditure of \$10,682.00 to complete the survey; Kemp seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

- **Approval of Hiring Harding ESE to Design Bid Specifications for Runway Maintenance**

Hallgren reported that Harding ESE is recommending the City not do the airport resurfacing and/or extension of runway this fall. Hallgren explained the project (see information packet) is all maintenance except for the extension of the western end of the runway. This part constitutes new construction. Paving and construction are not allowed in the EDA grant. It is for maintenance only. Hallgren stated there is an invoice for what has already been done by Harding.

Weller moved to approve hiring Harding ESE to do a design/bid specification for the runway and maintenance; Beck seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

- **Purchase Orders**

Kemp moved to approve purchase orders to include the additional three that Zimmerman added at the beginning of the meeting; Summers seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

- PO#07285 to Airport Equipment Rentals, Inc. in the amount of \$3,395.00 for equipment on clinic road project
- PO#07286 to Chief Supply in the amount of \$814.59 for Rescue Squad "long life" batteries
- PO#07287 to Clearwater Construction in the amount of \$2,133.32 for August lawn maintenance
- PO#07288 to Delta Building Supply in the amount of \$600.00 for clinic road culverts
- PO#07289 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$1,512.29 for July legal services
- PO#07290 to George Sandlin in the amount of \$1,316.66 for August lawn maintenance
- PO#07291 to Sunshine Services in the amount of \$8,383.00 for gravel and dump trucks on clinic road project
- PO#07292 to Lamar Cotton in the amount of \$550.73 for August travel expenses
- PO#07293 to Harding ESE in the amount of \$1,953.40 for Airport Runway Evaluation
- PO#07294 to Pat White in the amount of \$1,746.71 for ambulance billing contract work

Hallgren reported he would be meeting with Thomas Gross of T.J. Land Clearing tomorrow regarding disappointment in brush cutting along the City streets.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Connie Ott asked that the Council consider something beyond the skateboard park for older kids. "Where does a kid take his date but out on the dikes? Young teenagers can't go to a movie, get a hamburger and hang out with a Coke."

Gilbertson stated there will be money available and hopefully the right idea will come along. He asked for more community involvement, specifically from the Chamber and DREDC.

Beck asked where the City is on the skateboard park. Hallgren will make contact in regards to insurance coverage.

Tana Wood commented on the Enhanced-911 project. Wood stated she doesn't care where the equipment is located; it enables the dispatcher to know the exact location of the one in need.

Ernie Wyrick asked if this E-911/Caller ID would work with cell phone callers also. The fire department could not locate a recent cell phone caller.

Hallgren stated he would research with Missile Defense to see if maybe it would fit into communications and emergency service. Council requested Hallgren pursue the issue.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS

Leith-Dowling stated she agrees with Connie Ott's concerns for a legitimate place for teenagers.

Beck said Valdez has a young-teen center and a separate one for older teenagers.

Leith-Dowling stated a place away from the school would be preferred.

Weller stated Healthy Schools could have a one-room facility.

Cotten suggested designing a separate, independent building exclusively for teens so that social interaction opportunities, games, pool, etc. are all oriented toward teenagers.

ADJOURNMENT at 6:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat White
City Clerk