



December 16, 2002 - City Hall  
(Moved from December 17, 2002)  
Delta Junction City Council  
5:00pm Regular Meeting

## MINUTES

Mary Leith-Dowling, Mayor Pro tem, called the meeting to order at 5:09pm. Also present were members of the Council: Susie Kemp, Ron Beck and Mark Weller. Lou Heinbockel and Henry Summers were excused. Mayor Gilbertson arrived at 5:45, his tardiness previously excused.

### AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA - APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Leith-Dowling explained one add-on to New Business: Purchase Order #7534. Kemp moved to approve the agenda with the one add-on; Weller seconded. Motion carried.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Beck moved to approve minutes of the December 3, 2002 community meeting and the December 4, 2002 regular meeting; Kemp seconded. Motion carried.

### REQUEST TO SPEAK

Whit Hicks, speaking on behalf of Delta Mine Training Center, Delta/Greely School District, Alaska Works Partnership, and the University of Alaska, Tanana Valley Campus (TVC), distributed packets explaining their *Proposal for Delta Junction Vocational Training Plan*. [Hicks' presentation was at 5:50pm, in between items under REPORTS. This documentation of minutes is in line with agenda items but was out of actual sequence of the topics discussed.] Hicks identified each area of employment and discussed them at length. Areas of employment for the Delta region included construction/maintenance, health & safety, communications/logistics, information technology, business and administrative support, and mining. Cost analysis was provided for FY03 and FY04.

Hicks stated the key benefits of the proposed plan concentrated on coordinating resources available in the community to provide training for local residents, creating a workforce at a higher skill level with opportunity for long term jobs and better wages.

Gary Hall, Construction Trades Program Coordinator/Instructor, explained an overview of the construction trades and how he became the coordinator to help put the program

together. He started work on this project on November 1 and has just returned from a research trip in the lower 48. He looked at other training programs and schools. Across the country he found all the construction trades are suffering a shortage of skilled workers. Hall visited several facilities that are similar to what they are starting here in Delta. There is a move to train and recruit at the high school level because of the gap of those going into the apprenticeship training programs. Funding has been appropriated at a national level. Hall described schools he visited. In St. Louis there are eight different training schools. The oldest program was 10 years old. Construction Careers Charter School started after a 3.8 million renovation of an old inner-school building. The first year, in 2001, there were 125 9<sup>th</sup> graders. It will take 4 years to achieve credentials, covering all the academic sides even though the school is construction oriented. He visited one-year old Construction Career Academy in Chattanooga, TN. It is a school within a school, integrating required high school core classes with construction training. In Fairbanks, Hall visited with the Electrical, Operators, Pipefitters and Laborers apprenticeship training programs. Alaska Works will work with those training programs. Hall explained what it takes to conduct a program like this. They moved a modular unit in to be used as a temporary classroom for next semester. There are 19 juniors and seniors in Delta that are signed up to start this pilot program.

Hall presented the books on which he is basing his curriculum. Some examples of topics are Construction Math, Safety, Introduction to Hand Tools, and Introduction to Power Tools. Hall stated there would be emphasis on "soft skills", the ability to get along in the workplace (punctuality, work ethics, basic math and English, public speaking skills, etc). He stated that every instructor he encountered addressed the shortage of skilled workers but teaching them the technical training was secondary to learning basic skills required for employment. Construction Trades Preparation Program will expose students to different skills and different vocations, helping them make education and career choices. Hall described his handout, *Construction Trades Overview*. He said space is very important because 75% of the training is hands-on.

Hall explained how one school that has a junior and senior program and has been operating for ten years, builds fairly high dollar homes (\$275,000 range) and sells them to the public. They build one home per year. They made a \$75,000 profit off the home they sold last summer. What the Delta program would like to have is a junior-senior program to include training segments for adults. Building small modular homes will provide areas to teach all aspects of construction (plumbing, residential electrical wiring, drywall, painting, carpentry, etc.). Hall will be the primary instructor. Guest instructors will come from the apprenticeship trades unions. One building will be built per year. Because of climate situations it is suggested to have a facility large enough build modular homes inside and then sell to the public. There will not be any conflict with local business. Local contractors will be guest speakers. Funding sources are from tax base, endowment, grants, profit from projects built and tuition.

Dan Beck said he would like to emphasize communication and that he met with Boeing and they outlined what they are looking for in an employee. TVC is open to anyone in the community who wants to take advantage of the education opportunity. The budget presented is close but not set in concrete. The operation should be in full swing by next fall.

Hallgren said he envisioned approving a single proposal for impact funds allocated for Education/Job Training, unlike Social Services where there will be many proposals. He said the school district is already fully capable of doing the necessary audits. It is very favorable since this is the only proposal received for this funding. The agreement was signed with the State last week. MD is requiring the State to withhold 10% of the allocated money to ensure completion of the individual projects. This requirement is subject to each project. As an example, it does not apply to purchasing an ambulance. No funds will be released until a scope of work and line item budget are identified. Hallgren said MD wants the State to deal with details. The City will have to negotiate with the State of Alaska, not MD, to provide the required details. Explanation must be provided to the State on what this program will produce with the existing money and what will be accomplished by the end of the decade. How would they envision supporting the project in the future? The State wants to know what the goals are and what funding is needed to help them accomplish those goals. Somewhere along the line the State will need to see an end date.

Hallgren stated there needs to be commitment toward a strong adult education program. Hallgren requested Council authorize the City to negotiate with the State. How can we move on? If approved, we would negotiate and write an agreement to promote this program.

**Ron Beck moved** to approve the vocational plan as presented and authorize Hallgren to work with the school district and others involved to proceed; Kemp seconded.

Beck said he wished to personally commend the school district on their efforts to help students and adults train for jobs at MD, at Pogo and for other job opportunities in Delta.

Gilbertson said to make sure the State approves the proposal. He said to consider possible summer training. He encouraged a strong adult learning program. He asked if there are other entities providing financial support and about future goals/dollars. Where would they come from?

Hicks said he has a proposal to be finished for the Denali Commission. He said he needs a commitment from the City, stating students and graduating seniors from the proposed training program would have preference on the upcoming municipal projects. That letter of support will give their proposal strength, noting the Denali Commission supports projects that are infrastructure based. Building a recreation center and a fire hall meets this requirement. Profits of this training program will have opportunity for work.

Gilbertson stated volunteers and contractors with competitive bids staff the majority of what the City constructs.

Discussion followed about support of the proposal.

Cotten stated this project can be a showcase for the entire state.

Discussion followed about funding and seed-money.

Gilbertson asked about training for the Slavic (Russian and Ukrainian) community.

Dan Beck said it will cost \$2000 per semester for an instructor to teach reading and writing the language.

**Motion passed** unanimously on a roll call vote to support the Vocational Training Plan.

Hallgren and Cotten will draft a letter of support.

Gilbertson asked about the Ft. Greely School.

Discussion followed.

## REPORTS

**Airport** - Dean Cummings, Jr. asked if the Council would consider allowing him to complete the cutting and clearing of wood and debris, required in clearing the 400' X 60' taxiway, in return for a portion of the cost of his airport purchase cost. Cummings said he has the equipment to clear the trees this winter.

Hallgren stated he would look into the idea. The problem would be with the contract, which states wages must be Davis/Bacon. Dave Boadwine, who is already on the City payroll, is looking into tree cutting and equipment. He is preparing to begin clearing the area in the spring.

Weller said if there are no legal complications he saw no reason to not hire Cummings, especially if the work can get done now.

Hallgren said if it gets bid, it must be Davis/Bacon-union scale wages. If people were hired to work for the City or they volunteer for the City, he would like them to be covered by the City's workers compensation. The City would pay under force accounting.

Kemp asked to look into it. If the equipment is to be rented, couldn't the City rent the Cummings' equipment with them as operators?

Hallgren will inquire with the attorney and report back.

Hallgren reported clean titles on the airport properties have been received.

**City Clerk** - Pat White reported the Firefighters/EMS honors banquet was a success. A request was made for the City to help by paying \$250 on the food tab.

**Weller moved** to provide \$250 to cover the cost of the banquet dinner; Kemp seconded.

**Motion passed** unanimously on a roll call vote.

Kemp said she'd like to encourage service organizations in this community to come together and recognize our volunteers by sponsoring an annual banquet. It would be much nicer with representatives from various organizations.

Weller suggested an adoption program.

**Dept of Economic Development** - Pete Hallgren reported the City has a signed agreement with the State as of last Thursday. Tomorrow a request will be submitted to the State to cover purchasing the landfill property and also for reimbursement of what the City has already spent. He also reported that final information was received by EDA, who changed their repayment processes so the City can now put in a request for \$150,000 for EDA expense reimbursement. Basically we've spent \$300,000 of EDA grant money. We have \$150,000 left for next summer to hire two full time temporary equipment operators under forced accounting. \$350,000 of impact funds is allocated for equipment. Bids for the front-end loader were opened last Friday afternoon. They will be evaluated and should cost no more than \$183,000. Hallgren will do up a matrix. The apparent low bidder may not necessarily be the one to receive the bid. Six bids were received.

Hallgren reported he spent last week in El Paso at "Missile Fest", the Association of United States Army Space and Missile annual symposium. Many of the event's speakers have attended meetings at the Community Center here in Delta. They had very nice presentations of the Delta area. Everything he sees indicates the test bed will be operational by the end of September 2004. Construction will likely continue for a number of years past that.

Discussion followed regarding an informal work session to discuss impact funds. Council agreed and set the meeting for 9:00am, Saturday, January 18. Breakfast and lunch will be served to the Council.

Hallgren reported he checked the Delta Youth Court (DYC) proposal for Social Service (impact) monies. City staff will put together an ad for social service proposals that will go into the local newspaper.

Hallgren reported he requested Harding revise the TV/radio work schedule as decided at the last meeting.

Hallgren reported the letter to DOT, addressing maintenance and speed limits, is in draft form and will go out this week.

Cotten reported on the Slavic Community Service meeting held on December 10. There were 23 people in attendance; some were from state agencies, the school district and the City. Several representatives from the Russian/Slavic community identified key issues, concerns and experiences they have had within this community. Agencies talked about what they are doing, have already done and what they intend to do. The Russian/Slavic community members stated they expect another 300 families next summer. Because of the recent large purchases of property in and around Delta it was felt that number is pretty accurate. Catholic Social Services said their clientele is *not* the Slavic community; it is the refugees within the Slavic community. They are looking to fund a position here but it is good for only 40 people. One of the main things the Slavic community has asked for is some sort of a clearinghouse position, locally staffed to help community members interface and identify private sector activities.

Discussion followed regarding integrating the Slavic community with the Americans.

Cotten brought up information about how at during the last session the legislature directed the Local Boundary Commission (LBC) to come up with a list of likely candidates for future boroughs. They put Delta and Tok in a category of model borough boundaries. The LBC staff has assured Cotten that it is not a difficult argument and there should be a separation. Cotten stated if lines need drawn they should include the entire Pogo Mine.

Cotten reported the City Council and School Board must come up with a list of priorities for the community; what we're trying to achieve.

Cotten said presently 44% of the grade school children are from the Slavic community.

Discussion followed regarding school issues.

**Weller moved** to go into recess at 6:55pm; Kemp seconded.

Council meeting reconvened at 7:07pm.

**Hockey Rink** - Mayor Gilbertson reported he visited Polar Ice. He stated it costs between \$3,000 and \$4,000 each month to just freeze the ice. It is an additional \$12,000 for additional facility lighting. Discussion followed.

Weller said one might save \$10-12,000 by getting good compressors.

Gilbertson discussed other options and said Hallgren will get specs on the existing hockey building. There will be 5 different scenarios/proposals for the multi-use/recreation facility from Bettisworth in January.

**Public Works** - Council discussed the water system at the Community Center.

White stated Bob Morley reported the tablets had broken away large amounts of debris from the pipes. The process was working very well.

Hallgren stated the contamination is not deadly, it is just not supposed to be there.

Hallgren said he made the proposal to the Chamber of Commerce that the City would pay for the materials if they would do renovation work at the Visitor's Center. He will write a letter, formally making the offer.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Deltana Fairground Proposal

Hallgren said the submitted proposal for money to fence the fairgrounds would fit under EDA money. There is \$60,000 left but the City has other projects in line to use it. Impact dollars could be used toward the fencing under certain circumstances.

Gilbertson identified the areas of fencing that need improved.

Discussion followed about theft at the fairgrounds. Theft is devastating to the Fair Association because they cannot replace what is stolen.

Kemp said she would like to see the City support activities at the fairgrounds. The Deltana Fair Board is working on ways for the fairgrounds to be more useful to the community. One activity, mini golf, was recently donated and will be appreciated by visitors as well as locals.

Discussion followed about building an auditorium inside the fenced fairgrounds.

Beck asked if this could be discussed at the work session meeting on January 18.

Kemp suggested addressing a letter to the fair board in response to their proposal.

Gilbertson suggested having someone come to the meeting.

- Purchase Orders

- PO#07529 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$572.10 for December phone service
- PO#07530 to Bank of America in the amount of \$2,140.00 for City Planner computer
- PO#07531 to Delta Fuel Company in the amount of \$912.15 for heating fuel
- PO#07532 to Fairbanks Title Agency in the amount of \$750.00 for airport land titles
- PO#07533 to Mikunda, Cottrell & Company in the amount of \$4,030.93 for City audit
- PO#07534 to GVEA in the amount of \$898.32 for Nov/Dec electricity

**Kemp moved** to approve purchase orders 7529/7534; Beck seconded.

**Motion passed** unanimously on a roll call vote.

## **ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Kemp asked White to post City Council meeting notices on the Delta News Web under Community Activities.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Gilbertson moved to adjourn at 7:28pm; Kemp seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat White  
City Clerk