



February 18, 2003 - City Hall
Delta Junction City Council
5:00pm Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Mayor Gilbertson called the regular meeting to order. Council members present were Mary Leith-Dowling, Susie Kemp, Mark Weller, Lou Heinbockel and Henry Summers. City employees present were Lamar Cotten, Dave Zimmerman, Dennis Dooley, Pete Hallgren and Pat White. Community members present were Janet Boyer, Pat Schlichting, Vickie Naegele and Tana Wood.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA - APPROVAL OF AGENDA

White distributed copies of additional add-ons to Council members. She explained two add-ons to discuss under New Business:

1. Request to waive fees for the Community Center
2. Purchase Order #07671 to Delta Fuel for January fuel oil.

White explained the third add-on, another letter of interest for Council Seat F, which was received about 3:00pm today from Diane M. Schultz.

Kemp moved to approve the agenda as amended; Summers seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Heinbockel asked for rewording of "shanook" (page 6) to be "Chinook".

White asked to use "warm and recent winds".

Heinbockel moved to approve minutes of the February 4, 2003 regular meeting as amended; Summers seconded. Motion carried.

LETTERS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCIL SEAT F

Council reviewed letters of interest from Judy Dewar and Diane M. Schultz.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBER

Hallgren reported that Diane M. Schultz stated she would be able to arrive by 6:00pm.

Judy Dewar arrived as Council discussed submitted letters of interest.

Heinbockel moved to nominate Judy Dewar for Council Seat F; Weller seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

White administered the Oath of Office to Judy Dewar. She presented Dewar with the APOC application/booklet, requesting it be turned in within 30 days.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS
COUNCIL COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS
REQUEST TO SPEAK
CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Gilbertson called for public and Council comments on agenda items, speakers and correspondence with none being offered.

REPORTS

Airport - Mark Weller asked to consider a covenant on the rest of the airport property that is for sale so that owners are forced to pay the annual airport fee for use of the airstrip. He said softball, hockey, skating and other organizations do their own collection of fees.

Hallgren said it was discussed when lots were initially sold. A covenant is not needed, but simply a rule saying that anyone who regularly uses the runway from an adjoining lot or tie-down space will pay the fee if it is imposed.

Weller stated the only way to enforce the rule would be the honor system.

City Clerk - Pat White requested financial disclosure statements be turned in by March 14 because the actual deadline, March 15, is a Saturday.

White asked if the Council would send a representative to attend the FNSB meeting on Friday, February 21.

Discussion followed.

Kemp said she was concerned that the North Star Borough would be discussing small communities along the Richardson Highway without someone to represent their community.

Dewar offered to attend and represent the City of Delta Junction.

Hallgren explained that recommendation has been put in the regional STIP to have three-passing lanes (one at Salcha, one at Midway and one at Shaw Creek). This will cost \$6,500,000. Delta should push to have this added to the statewide STIP if it is to their liking. It does not include improvements to the Richardson Highway.

Hallgren said Range Expansion Projects, USARAK and their Stryker Brigade would be interested in passing lanes along the Richardson Highway. This could hold down the convoy traffic congestion. The last conversation was to request convoys be sent out in one hour intervals instead of 15 minute intervals.

Hallgren reported that DOT has agreed to reduce the speed limit into town, starting 1500 feet north of Jack Warren Road. This will be done as soon as they can put up signs. What about the Alaska Highway? Nothing is to be done at this time.

Dept of Economic Development - Pete Hallgren reminded Council of the all-day work session on Saturday, March 1 to discuss projects and the City's financial status. The meeting will begin at 9:00am.

Hallgren reported the City has received reimbursement from MD. This \$170,000 covers expenses put out for the past year. The annual 2003 calendar year spend plan has also been submitted. It estimates the City will spend a little over \$4,000,000 in impact funds. \$245,000 will be spent in the first quarter.

Hallgren reported that both the architects and the engineers looked at expansion of the library and the conference room last Friday. They are also working on the fire hall, the rescue squad, the equipment building and the recreation center. They will provide estimates and plans for DREDC and the City Council to review. The cost appears to be in the \$30,000 range.

Hallgren said he received written opinion from attorney, Jim DeWitt, and he suggested proceeding with competitive bid for the new ambulance rather than sole-source it. Because there are so many different federal statutes mentioned in the grant, it is wise to not take the easiest route.

Discussion followed.

Hallgren reported he requested attorney, Jim DeWitt, work on the Eddy Drop Zone question for the City, taking the position that the drop zone is not an appropriate place for the training range. He referred to a memo that was received from DeWitt earlier today. It reported partial stance of the situation, documenting recent cases in Delta's history. It also provided a budget breakdown of \$5,225.00 to assemble information, which must meet a 30-day deadline, in support of the City's position. Hallgren asked that Council members read DeWitt's letter, understand that the budget does allow for such attorney fees and that he recommended Council allow DeWitt to proceed on the City's behalf. Hallgren read excerpts from DeWitt's letter, specifying that the file on the 1999 Donnelly Flats Fire will not be publicly available until after a Freedom on Information Act (FOIA) request. Hallgren stated that this fire that nearly burned down the cantonement area is evidently not considered public information.

Heinbockel moved to authorize Hallgren request DeWitt pursue research on the range expansion project; Summers seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Heinbockel said there should be no development of active firing ranges on the east side of the Richardson Hwy.

Weller asked if Ed Sheehan would aid the City and attend the upcoming meeting.

Gilbertson affirmed.

Finance/School - Mayor Gilbertson explained the offices and those needing altered and filled. New Council member, Judy Dewar, was given an opportunity to consider positions before making a commitment.

Hockey Rink - Mayor Gilbertson said engineers are to provide recommendations on the hockey rink roof next week.

Hallgren said the Community Center is too small. Something larger is needed but not as large as a gymnasium. The architects will provide drawings. Hallgren reported on a dinner/dance held at the Community Center this past Saturday. There were 75-80 people in attendance even though there was seating and tables for 110. Space allowed room for a band as well as a decent dance floor. Hallgren stated, as one possibility, in order to gain more space without spending a lot of money, the (bingo) wall could be removed to expand into the garage area. This could pick up another 27 or 28 feet of floor space.

Weller stated the garage area, currently used for storage, could be replaced in the proposed heavy equipment building.

Lands - Susie Kemp discussed a handout (distributed at the beginning of the meeting) showing bids for repairs/improvements to the Visitor's Information Center.

Hallgren said EDA money would be used, as it would be considered as maintenance on a City facility. The Visitor's Center is leased to the Chamber of Commerce and they are required to maintain it. Hallgren stated that because of financial hardship, the City offered to pay for the cost of materials if the Chamber could volunteer the labor.

Kemp moved to accept the lowest bid (\$1,815.50) from Interior Building Supplies Inc. for materials, to provide the funds to the Chamber so that the work can be completed; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Library - Mary Leith-Dowling reported the library received a Library Association grant for \$900 and it will be used for Nancy King to travel to the Library Conference in Juneau in March. She also reported since October 1, 2002 there have been 150 new patrons, the most ever reported. There are currently 6,000 items checked out from the library. And paperwork has been finalized to receive (three) new computers through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Park - Lou Heinbockel reported a tree blew down the night of the last Council meeting, on February 4, and the fence will need to be repaired. He suggested replacing some areas with birch trees next year.

Council discussed replacing some playground equipment.

Heinbockel returned information and requested it be put in a special Park file for when the time comes to inquire about new equipment.

Public Works - Mark Weller said there are two stop signs on North and South Reeve that have been vandalized by both bullets and paint.

Gilbertson said effort needs made next summer to provide clear visibility along some of the streets.

Hallgren reported on the front-end loader bid process: Questions from prospective bidders disclosed the need to change the bid specs slightly. It was learned, after the fact, that DOT had made changes to their bid specs after they provided the City with a copy to use as a model. The bids are to be opened Friday, February 28.

Cotten reported discussion about housing. MD is exploring private industry building housing for the military. These regional housing needs are not restricted to just MD employees. Pogo expects 500 jobs during construction and another 300 for operation, working a 4-day workweek. This will probably result in a portion of the workforce living within this community. Many professional miners will migrate from Idaho and Nevada. Cotten stated members of the Roundtable group are trying to pursue the idea of building directly with the military and others that have interest in working with the military. He said the General emphasized that some of the guard members (318) along with other post employees will probably locate to Delta with the intent to stay for their entire careers. Even if they revitalized the housing it will not meet the demand that they perceive. The quality of the existing housing present on post is not as good as what the private sector could provide.

Cotten reported a meeting is planned on March 18 with Interior Builders Association and some bankers to discuss the impact on Delta. Mayor Gilbertson, Pete Hallgren

and Dan Beck (school district) will attend. Cotten reported there is a need for morale support, survey and a plan for Ft. Greely to identify what is needed for new families. Could Delta meet some of those morale activities? Could we integrate some of their recreational needs into our building plans? The survey team will be in the community soon.

Cotten reported 66 guardsmen positions are being advertised. The closing date is March 3. It is a recruitment opportunity for high school students and 20-year-olds that wish to stay in this community. Those joining the Army National Guard would be guaranteed being stationed at Ft. Greely. He said they like to hire townspeople who want to live within their home community because they believe they make good soldiers.

Cotten stated when and if the base is closed for future school use is still an ongoing debate.

Cotten reported progress at the Missile Defense. There will be a peak of 500-550 employees at Fluor alone in late September, October or November. That number will no doubt exceed the existing housing capacity at the mancamp. They are currently looking at other housing options.

Cotten reported that there is difficulty nationwide in filling firefighting positions, particularly after the 9-11 tragedy. At present 42 slots have been filled on post with 20 more to fill.

Discussion followed.

Gilbertson stated those that move to Ft. Greely would attend the Delta school. If there are 300 families, it is likely there will be 600 children.

Kemp said we should be concerned about the water and sewage situation.

Cotten said the expectation is to look at the downtown area. It should be in the DEC budget, available on July 1 on this year. It will be for planning and engineering only.

Hallgren said it is a water system, not a sewage system/treatment plant, which would be much more expensive. The plan is to eliminate the problem of septic and water systems crowding themselves.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Regional Government Options Study Committee**

After lengthy discussion Council members agreed to select community members who volunteered to be on the study committee. Those appointed by their organizations/committees are Lou Heinbockel to represent the City, Steve Fields to represent DCC, Paul Knopp representing DREDC and Barbara Craig representing the Chamber of Commerce. Note: DGSD had not selected anyone at the time of the Council meeting. It was thought that Mike Schultz would possibly be selected.

Weller moved to approve Council selection of volunteers to represent the community at large as Tana Wood, Pete Fellman, Anne Mauer, Pat Schlichting and Mike Murphy with Fred Sheen as an alternate; Kemp seconded.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

- **MACTEC Proposal to Prepare National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Document for New Landfill**

Hallgren reported the proposal would complete all necessary work up to the point of being ready to start preparing the final design. The scope of work will include completing the NEPA document which will include preparing a preliminary engineering plan for the landfill, updating the Solid Waster Management Plan and preparing an Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) solid waste landfill permit application.

Discussion followed regarding participation from MD in using the landfill and whether or not the City can economically afford the new landfill. An incinerator is not necessary unless MD commits. The City would require a larger landfill if MD decides to utilize it.

Hallgren stated the plan is to finish construction and open the landfill in September 2004.

Summers moved to accept the MACTEC proposal for "not to exceed" \$149,505.78; Weller seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote. Six voted yes and one (Heinbockel) voted no.

Discussion followed regarding expansion of the landfill.

Hallgren stated it is important to understand that the State will be withholding 10% of the construction cost until the end of the construction phase. It will be \$550,000, just about what it will cost to install an incinerator. He asked to realize also that environmental laws change periodically. The more cells dug now will prove to be advantageous later on.

Heinbockel said he voted no because the military said they wanted a new landfill, we purchased \$270,000 worth of property with their money and now they say they want to see it in operation for three years before they decide to use it. It ought to be understood that if they are not going to use the dump we have no reason to be out there preparing a landfill, having to haul the surrounding area trash through downtown Delta Junction to appease them. We are moving 7 or 8 miles away from town, away from the people we are to be serving. Our 1980 landfill still has 10-12 years life left. It has already cost \$270,000 for the property and another \$150,000 to get permitted and we still have nothing.

- **Resolution 2003-02, A Resolution Requesting FY04 Safe Communities Funding from the Department of Community and Economic Development**

Kemp moved to accept Resolution 2003-02, requesting funding from DCED; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote. Six voted yes and one (Judy Dewar) voted no. Note: Dewar received agenda packet upon being appointed to Council Seat F earlier in tonight's meeting without time to review all items on the agenda.

- **Purchase Orders**

➤ PO#07667 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$572.10 for February E911

- PO#07668 to Bank of America in the amount of \$5,353.10 for miscellaneous charges to credit card (travel, office supplies, water heater parts)
- PO#07669 to GVEA in the amount of \$1,141.79 for Jan/Feb electricity
- PO#07670 to Mikunda, Cottrell & Co. in the amount of \$1,796.81 for FY2002 Audit
- PO#07671 to PDC, Inc in the amount of \$5,183.50 for engineering of City buildings
- PO#07672 to ACS in the amount of \$771.32 for Feb phone service
- PO#07679 to Delta Fuel Company in the amount of \$798.48 for January '03 fuel oil

Kemp moved to approve purchase orders (07667-07672 and add-on, 07679); Heinbockel seconded.

Dewar asked for clarification of services for 07671.

Discussion followed and it was decided to give better description to PO#07671. The engineering fees were for the (hockey) recreation center but also included services for the fire hall, the Community Center and the library expansion.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote to approve purchase orders #07667 through 07672 and #07679.

- **Request to Waive Fees for Community Center Use on February 28**

Heinbockel moved to approve fees be waived for the Delta Chamber of Commerce to use the Community Center on February 28, 2003 for the "February Friendship Feast" /Community Potluck; Weller seconded.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tana Wood asked for a Proclamation for May 1st, National Day of Prayer. She requested City Council allow people to gather at the Community Center.

Gilbertson presented the Proclamation that was prepared earlier today. It explains President George Washington proclaimed the tradition during the first Continental Congress in 1775. In 1988, legislation set aside the first Thursday in May each year as the National Day of Prayer, passed by both Houses of Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. In 1997, legislation set aside the first Thursday in May as the Alaska Day of Prayer, passed by both Houses and signed into law by Governor Tony Knowles. And Mayor Roy Gilbertson proclaimed May 1, 2003 as a Day of Prayer in Delta Junction, Alaska.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Gilbertson called for additional Council comments with none being offered.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gilbertson asked for a motion to adjourn at 6:37pm. Heinbockel moved to adjourn; Summers seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat White, City Clerk