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**City Council Minutes**  
**August 19, 2003 ~ 5:00PM**

**Regular Meeting**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**

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The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on August 19, 2003 in the conference room at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Gilbertson called the meeting to order at 5:02PM.

Council members present: Roy Gilbertson, Mary Leith-Dowling, Lou Heinbockel, Susie Kemp  
Mark Weller and Henry Summers. Judy Dewar arrived at 5:10PM.  
City employees present: Dave Zimmerman, Pete Hallgren, Lamar Cotten, Dennis Dooley, Pat White  
Additionally there were three members from the community and Attorney Ken Jacobus present.

**AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Hallgren reported two amendments to add onto Unfinished Business:

- ✓ Modification of Airport Resurfacing Agreement with MACTEC
- ✓ TV Emergency Repairs

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Leith-Dowling moved to approve minutes from the August 5, 2003 meeting as presented; Kemp seconded.  
Summers said he wished to comment on what was reported at that meeting in which he was absent. (See REPORTS – Planner in the August 5 minutes.) He said the two-week delay in phone service from ACS is incorrect. There is a one-year waiting period and some reports are longer.  
Hallgren said it was discussed at today’s Roundtable meeting, that the two-week period was poor information.  
Heinbockel said in 1974 it was effective to contact the State of Alaska Public Utilities Regulatory Commission. His phone was installed within weeks.  
Dooley said the Regulatory Commission still exists.  
Cotten reported he had contact with a board member at ACS who is working on resolving the issue. They are aware of the problem.  
Discussion followed regarding the need to speak out and identify unsatisfactory service.  
Motion carried on approval of the August 5 minutes.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**  
**COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mayor Gilbertson called for public and Council comments on non-agenda items with none being offered.

**REQUEST TO SPEAK** - None  
**CORRESPONDENCE** - None

## **REPORTS**

**Rescue Squad** – Roger Harris reported they are attempting to obtain handheld radios. The current radios being used are 15+ years old. Parts are not available to purchase because the radios are so old. Harris said attempt has been made to purchase the radios through a grant. There have been too many stumbling blocks. He reported he met with City Administrator Pete Hallgren and opted to purchase radios out of the Rescue Squad equipment budget. Replacing the radios is the only way to ensure proper communication for the squad. Harris stated he wished to emphasize communication. Last year, during the winter months, the Delta Rescue lost all communication due to the antenna on the Alascom tower. Both the antenna and the coaxial cable (coax) leading to it were deteriorated. Tom Ferri Company of Fairbanks, with the assistance of the Alascom tower crew, put up a temporary antenna to allow communications. In the interim there was no communication for three weeks. Dispatch relied on cell phones. Prior to that there were problems in communicating via radios when the wind blew. They are presently experiencing the same problems. The price doubles when the tower crew makes repairs during winter months. Tom Ferri informed that another antenna must be positioned and coax needs replaced to maintain communication. Harris asked that communications be recognized and addressed as a high priority item.

Harris said the third ambulance is parked in his front yard. It will not be acceptable once cold weather sets in. It is possible to house the ambulance at the fire department but not in the spare bay where they train. The ambulance would then be sandwiched between fire engines, which is not acceptable either. It would not allow easy access should the ambulance be needed in an emergency.

Gilbertson offered keys to a spare bay that would provide 50 feet of warm storage. It would be free of charge and can be used as long as needed. He said what is presently available is shameful.

Harris accepted Gilbertson's invitation.

Hallgren reported bids for heated storage space are due on August 22.

Heinbockel asked how much antenna replacement would cost.

Hallgren said replacing the antennae and feed lines on the Alascom downtown tower, and including that at the Deltana Fire Department, will cost between \$8,000 and \$10,000. It is all part of the contract set for next summer. He said he would meet with MACTEC in Fairbanks on August 20 to discuss the matter. There are problems arising with the temporary system that is in place.

**Planner** – Dennis Dooley reported he prepared an addendum to the fire engine bid specs. Bids are due September 8. Of the 30 manufacturers, 19 have shown interest. He said he will meet with Ted Hamilton to finalize specs on the Deltana fire engine and it will be posted shortly thereafter. Forty manufacturers were solicited for the Delta Rescue Squad's new ambulance. Of that, 16 have shown interest. Dooley said the final draft of specs on the ambulance should be complete by August 20.

Dooley reported a meeting with the Commissioner of Public Safety is scheduled for September 23. The Mayor and all Council members are invited to the meeting at 1:00PM in the City Hall conference room. DREDC and LEPC will meet at 2:30PM and 4:00PM respectively, followed by a public meeting at 6:00PM at the Community Center.

Dooley reported that notice regarding flood zone permit requirements for DGSD's two construction projects, was submitted to the school's architect.

Dooley reported that construction drawings for the hockey rink and the library were located in the library.

**Cemetery** – Mary Leith-Dowling reported grass is growing in the newly planted section.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported on the upcoming City Council Election. She said candidate packets are ready to be distributed on August 22. The filing period is August 28 through September 12 and notice has been posted and published in both the newspaper and on the City and DeltaNewsWeb sites.

White reported the City would become a passport agent, providing services formerly done by the court system. She explained that the court systems are removing themselves from the service. It is understood each transaction takes 10 minutes to process. Local magistrate, Tracy Blais, reported they average five each month, which equates to \$150/month in income.

Hallgren explained the process of obtaining a passport.

**Department of Economic Development** – Pete Hallgren reported the work at the airport should be complete within the week.

Hallgren reported on the Eddy Drop Zone (EDZ) issue. The military has a Department of Justice (DOJ) attorney from Anchorage. He is working with the city attorney to get an extension or time to respond to our motion for an injunction. A letter was received from the DOJ attorney stating they will be designing the amenities of the EDZ through February 2004 at which time it will be put out for construction bid. Hallgren said no one would be injured as long as the motion for injunction is argued and decided before February 3, 2004. The military does not have to provide an answer before the end of October even though they must respond to the City's motion before then. The City is still waiting for a "comfort" letter in which the military states they will do nothing to prejudice the lawsuit. Hallgren reported he would meet with Attorney Jim DeWitt on August 20. A government study was compiled in the 1970's about Jarvis Creek. It mentioned the need to thoroughly investigate building consideration in these overflow areas. Hallgren repeated the City's position regarding the lawsuit. The reason for the injunction was because we were out of time and could not discuss it any longer. The City has no objection to sites other than the EDZ.

Hallgren reported on the hearing, held last week, on the transformation of the US Army USARAK. He spoke to them regarding convoy concerns. Hallgren said the city attorney is writing a letter on potential impact of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Environmental Assessment (EA) on EDZ. We believe the EIS has nothing to do with EDZ. It must be in writing to clarify that the two reports do not impact each other. Hallgren will address a second letter regarding the convoy. A response is needed by early September. They have indicated this community will have moderate impact by the military convoys. The EIS states we have low impact at this time. Hallgren said the current convoys are infrequent but when they occur there are problems. He needs USARAK to understand these problems so that they do not escalate. His intentions are not to interfere with the Stryker brigade but more so to work with them in support of the community who all (local residents, heavy tankers and truckers hauling from Canada) use this one and only highway system. Hallgren said there is not enough information to fully respond. "Vehicle miles" does not distinguish between highway, air or rail. It is difficult to identify how much more convoy activity there will be. A rough guess would be to double what convoy traffic comes out of Fort Wainwright now. The amount of traffic from Glennallen is not known. 322 Stryker vehicles will reside at Fort Wainwright and a number of them will be traveling between Wainwright and Delta. They would not be stationed in Delta, as they must be deployed at a moment's notice. The wide, heavy 8-wheel vehicles will either be driven or transported by wide load trucks.

Dewar asked about bringing a railroad into Delta.

Hallgren said a RR would be useful. He will ask for more highway passing lanes between Delta and Fairbanks. DOT has investigated passing lanes. Beyond that, it would be useful to stagger the convoy starting times. He will recommend at least 45 minutes in between and to travel during off-peak hours, have fewer vehicles in the convoys and that they advertise when they will have convoy activity. The less tangible problem is that some Army vehicles drive as if they are still on base, creating hazardous conditions. It would be appreciated if the convoys follow the rules of the road, especially in regards to a recent incident with a stopped bus in the middle of loading a young child.

Heinbockel said a school bus driver must never count on one of those heavy pieces of equipment being able to stop. He suggested moving the whole Stryker brigade to Ft. Greely.

Kemp said if they need to be deployed they could simply move them from the airport here.

Hallgren said the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance will provide a dinner on September 5 and intend to invite 80 Delta residents. They are an industry organization in favor of missile defense and would like to present just where MD sits in this nation's defense. The dinner will be RSVP and will be held at the Community Center. MD Advocacy Alliance will bring 12 of their own. Mike Jenkins will cater the meal. Riki Ellison, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, is overseeing arrangements.

Hallgren reported the quarterly review was last week. It entailed impact fund reports with MD and the State of Alaska. The city's engineer and architects informed that construction projects in the interior are running 30-50% higher than last year.

Cotten reported on the monthly Roundtable meeting: \$10 million is to be used on the Allen Army airport. They are in search of qualified fence builders. Bids for the school construction are being accepted until August 27. Local realtor Cleeta Barger reported market has begun to slow. Those that inspect homes are still running into construction cost problems. The market is still too weak.

Cotten reported housing at Ft. Greely is still undecided. Housing was to be available for guardsmen and their families. The number of guards has fluctuated between 120 and 310, to be slowly integrated as of October 2004.

Kemp said it is understood that the community cannot accommodate new residents. On the other hand it took 30 years to get the last of the civilians moved off post. She said we have an aging home status in Delta because nothing has been built in such a long time. Many homes would not qualify for financing.

**School Liaison** – Judy Dewar reported she attended the Delta-Greely School District (DGSD) in-service. Currently there are 38% English Language Learners (ELL), previously referred to ESL (English as a Second Language) enrolled. Katherine Brown, ESL specialist, spoke at the two day in-service.

Dewar reported the Human Resources Council (HRC) from Wasilla visited Delta, looking for space to set up their school. They contracted with the Department of Public Assistance to serve 40 ESL adults who qualify for public assistance. HRC is a valid agency in Wasilla, having had 11 years success in providing ESL programs, adult education and GED programs. A well-known Russian-speaking employee, Galena Peck, directs their ESL program. HRC is a non-profit agency that operates on grants. Dewar reported there is still a need to provide English classes for ESL adults who are not on public assistance.

**Hockey Rink** – Lou Heinbockel reported Mike Tvenge and his work crew are finishing installing boxes and benches, expanded the seating area for players, general cleanup of the building and complete painting of the locker rooms. Tvenge requested the forced hot air furnace be serviced before hockey season.

Heinbockel requested involvement from the Hockey Association in pouring concrete, in hopes of getting it done. The work could not be finished due to Tvenge's help returning to school and other personal commitments. Heinbockel said the city has provided the funding for the concrete but volunteers are needed to complete the work before freeze-up.

**Landfill** – Lou Heinbockel reported he visited the dump. It is in better condition now than it has been in the past.

Hallgren presented the Draft Environmental Assessment for the new landfill, which was prepared by MACTEC Engineering & Consulting, Inc. He said the lowest overall operating costs still indicate the landfill design to have three cells and no incinerator. MD is not yet willing to commit. The operating plan must be completed for permitting. Hallgren reported that three cells, without MD involvement, would still be the best choice in constructing the new landfill. Without MD costs are raised approximately \$20/ton; the more customers using the landfill, the less in overall operation costs. One-third of operation costs will be put toward a sinking fund and used to build new cells once the 40-year life span ends. To operate the septic disposal system, the charge will increase 5 cents per gallon rather than the annual \$100 fee charged to the septic haulers. For the average homeowner that means a jump from \$100 to \$150 to have a 1,000-gallon tank pumped. The community has not been paying for the true cost of operating the landfill and the septic dump so there will not be enough money to close it. He is investigating an interim fee to build

enough funds to close the existing landfill. A new landfill is needed with or without MD because the existing dump will not withstand an upgrade.

**Library** – Mary Leith-Dowling reported two years ago in July there were 1,223 patrons. This past July there were 2,171.

**Park** – Judy Dewar reported the ball fields were mowed and look good. The gravel between the two softball fields needs to be leveled.

**Hallgren** said removal of the metal pipes was attempted. Because they are embedded in cement it will require equipment and more extensive labor to remove them. Boadwine is aware of it.

**Dewar** asked that the soccer goals be erected as soon as ball season is over. It opens a soccer season and invites use of the park. The mounting areas still exist. Dewar asked to order nets and have them ready for next year.

**Hallgren** said he would look into it.

**Dewar** asked about city liability for subcontractors working in the park. She said her concern regards a young boy operating a riding lawn mower.

**Hallgren** said workers compensation covers city employees. The city has a liability policy but it does not cover contractors.

Discussion followed regarding coverage in case of injury and family members involved in family owned businesses.

**Hallgren** reported receipt of a stop-work-order from the State Fire Marshal. It pertains to the broken fire alarm system in the Community Center that has been in the process of being replaced since March. The State requires a permit and drawings. Grinnell quoted up to \$400 for the permit and up to \$1,200 for the drawings. Grinnell has attempted to reason with the Fire Marshal, saying the building is 20-years-old and does not need drawings. Hallgren has drafted a letter objecting to the demands. A copy will be sent to Commissioner Edgar Blatchford of Community and Economic Development. He is aware of recent problems with building in a timely and a reasonably economic manner.

Discussion followed regarding local business owners and problems they have experienced.

**Hallgren** said what is needed is to “stem the tide of bureaucracy,” which raise the cost to everyone involved. The fire system to be installed at the Community Center is \$9,000. If it were known that a permit was needed to put in a new system it would have been simpler to repair the old system.

**Gilbertson** agreed with drafting a letter.

**Public Health & Safety** – Mark Weller asked about the State putting together an emergency radio system. He asked if we are buying into it.

**Summers** said all Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers have agreed not to buy into the system until it can be perfected. It is an expensive endeavor to not know if it will exist two years from now.

**Hallgren** said the new system was supposed to already be in effect but it is not. Grant requests for new radio funds have been submitted. The new radios will work with both the digital system and the old, existing system. He said he has received verbal notice that “everyone received money” in the grant process but he has not yet received any written documentation.

**Hallgren** reported the design of the new fire hall is complete. The problem is the cost of construction. A construction firm asked to review the 35% drawings before deciding if they would make a presentation to the city for a fixed price. Hallgren said he also provided them with a copy of the geotechnical work. He said the city is being advised to dig out 14 feet of overburden and fill it in with gravel before putting down the foundation. He said he is not distributing the professional estimate costs.

**Hallgren** asked MACTEC how long it would take to get over the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) hurdles if construction were to start on the new fire hall. A scoping letter would be sent on August 20. Site prep could happen as early as September 10. When asked if the letter could cover both the fire hall and the library as a method of saving money he said MACTEC is not ready to work on the library.

A scoping letter for the library will cost \$3,000 to \$4,000. This letter, for the fire hall, will cost about \$8,000. It is a NEPA requirement.

Kemp stated MACTEC should explain how many permits would be required.

Hallgren said decisions would have to be made within the next 3 to 4 weeks if we are to move forward. He said the city is now in the position to get construction done. The design appears good but we need innovative ways to accomplish construction.

Heinbockel added "with less money than what has been projected as costs." He said the same needs done for the library.

Hallgren said it is understood that construction costs are 30-50% higher. What would happen if you held off for one year? MD appears to understand that the bid climate is not favorable at this time.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Library Design Services

Hallgren reported at the last meeting MACTEC requested \$30,000+ for preliminary design work. It was turned over to the library board and they provided the city with their recommendation.

Leith-Dowling reported the library board prepared a priority list. If this City Hall building is turned into meeting rooms, the new library will not have any need. Funding would provide an 800 to 1,000 square foot increase in the current library size. Expansion of the library has been "whittled" down to \$1,200,000 from the initially proposed \$1.5 million.

Discussion followed regarding specifics to the library plans.

Leith-Dowling said the current library space is estimated at 2,300 square feet. Increasing only 800 more feet will not be satisfactory.

Hallgren said the big barn idea, building more square footage and having fewer amenities inside, would provide between 4,000 and 5,000 square feet. He said he would ask for 5,000.

Dooley said it is easier to get furniture through grants instead of with construction dollars.

Cotten stated details of construction or amenities helps push paperwork through grant programs.

### Airport Resurfacing

Hallgren reported the agreement for airport runway resurfacing, dated January 6, 2003, has been modified due to changes in the scope of work. The modification requests an additional \$5,037. Most of these charges are from putting together a generic boilerplate. A major portion was to be charged off to the Mill-Tan project but was not because costs exceeded the allowed amount. There is significant cost for the boilerplate specs. It will be needed for both the library and the fire hall projects. The resurfacing bids were not accepted and force accounting was used to pay for the project. It should be finished by August 23. The gravel, the main portion, will cost \$65,000. The MACTEC agreement will be \$25,000. Equipment rental and employee wages will be other expenses. It is possible the project will cost \$110,000. We will not have to subsidize from general funds, as there is enough money in the EDA grant.

Heinbockel asked if 25% is reasonable for design and engineering.

Gilbertson said it runs 30-33%.

Discussion followed regarding bid packets and the percentage norm for engineering costs versus the total number of project costs.

**Dewar moved** to allow Hallgren to execute MACTEC's agreement, with an increase of \$5,037; Heinbockel seconded "for the sake of discussion."

Hallgren explained the history of how the changes occurred. He said an RFQ (request for quote) was put out for E-1 gravel. Because a contractor was not chosen the gravel had to be put out for bid.

Weller said he wished to see the original agreement. He would be able to make a better decision.

Dewar said MACTEC's role has changed because the City changed what was originally planned. The city will now provide what was expected from the contractor. She said pilots are concerned about not having access and use of the airstrip.

Gilbertson asked to make phone calls tomorrow, upon locating the original agreement. If necessary it can be voted on.

**Motion passed** on a roll call vote to approve the agreement with the increased amount (\$5,037). Four (Dewar, Heinbockel, Kemp, Summers) voted in favor and three (Weller, Leith-Dowling, Gilbertson) voted against.

### **TV Repair**

Hallgren reported bid packets for the emergency TV repair were scheduled for opening today but there were zero responses. Everyone is too busy. No one requested to even look at the translator shed to bid the job. He had feared someone putting in a high bid without looking at the work and it being the only bid response. Hallgren asked Council to consider making a motion, in the face of no bids and winter arriving, to authorize the administration to hire the work to be done at the best price without rebid.

**Leith-Dowling moved** to authorize the administration to pay for TV repair at the best price; Kemp seconded.

Heinbockel said, "to take dollar amount of the grant fund and give every family, first come first served, \$400 to put toward a satellite system. The city needs to get out of the sorry business. It has been a pain since it was put in." Heinbockel said he has dealt with the issue during all of his terms on City Council, this being the third go-around.

Leith-Dowling said the motion is to complete repairs to keep it operable for the winter.

Hallgren said the repairs are for the overall design of the system. The Army has only given verbal permission to complete permanent TV repairs. A permit to have access to the area has yet to be issued.

Kemp stated there are no choices. The people of this community deserve decent television. She said she would agree with Heinbockel's idea of giving satellite dishes except that it will not provide Fairbanks stations.

Hallgren recommended repairing the antennas and the antenna lines, enough to get through the winter. New towers can be built next summer. Hallgren will discuss the matter with MACTEC. One option is to pay by force accounting under the direction of a MACTEC technician. He has tasked the city attorney with finding out answers on full time or temporary employees and Davis Bacon wages in regards to Missile Defense grant funds. A written opinion is needed from the attorney.

Gilbertson asked to find out the entire dollar amount of the proposal and what it includes.

Hallgren said he would.

Weller stated it was decided, at the last Council meeting on August 5, to spend \$10,000 to \$15,000 on emergency repair.

Hallgren said the ordinance dictates bids. Because there were no bidders, the emergency clause of the ordinance requires a different approach. The city would hire the work done. Either act as our own contractor and hire a professional electrical engineer or simply have MACTEC oversee and direct the work of a city employee.

Heinbockel requested not allowing anybody to physically access the old towers.

Hallgren said a bucket truck would be used.

**Motion passed** unanimously on a roll call vote to allow the City Administrator to find the best solution in getting the TV repairs.

Hallgren reported the \$100,000 also includes rebuilding the emergency radios for the Rescue Squad and the two fire departments, including what is done on the towers located within the city limits.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **Resolution 2004-02, A Resolution Requesting FY04 Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Funding From the Department of Community and Economic Development**

**Leith-Dowling moved** to approve Resolution 2004-02; Heinbockel seconded.

Hallgren reported the City is to receive approximately \$53,000 more than what was received last year (\$381,000).

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

### **City Comments Concerning Transformation of US Army USARAK**

See *REPORTS – Department of Economic Development*

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#**08127** to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$4,883.00 for Aug '03 health insurance

PO#**08128** to ACS in the amount of \$770.19 for Aug '03 phone services

PO#**08129** to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$575.33 for Aug '03 E911 service

PO#**08130** to Delta Texaco in the amount of \$1,107.19 for July '03 gas and diesel

PO#**08131** to GVEA in the amount of \$728.13 for July/Aug '03 electricity

PO#**08132** to MACTEC Engineering & Consulting Inc. in the amount of \$30,195.69 for engineering services on Fire Station and EMS building

PO#**08133** to MACTEC Engineering & Consulting Inc. in the amount of \$6,230.93 for TV repeater repair design

PO#**08134** to MACTEC Engineering & Consulting Inc. in the amount of \$5,425.38 for existing landfill grading plan

PO#**08135** to Willis Corroon in the amount of \$7,425.00 for annual airport insurance

**Weller moved** to approve purchase orders PO#08127 through 08135 as presented; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Heinbockel reported he would vote against approving PO#08135 because an explanation is needed. A substantial portion is to be paid by the Pilot's Association. Over \$100,000 has been spent for improvements for a very narrow group who use the airstrip for their business enterprises. He said city dollars need not be spent unless the Pilot's Association can't afford to pay their share.

Zimmerman reported an invoice has been sent to the Pilot's Association for the full amount. Presently he has not received a response. He stated the insurance rate has increased and it is roughly \$300 more than last year.

Weller asked about PO#08133, what was paid for TV repair design. He asked what product has been produced for the money already spent.

Hallgren said the agreement is to pay MACTEC \$35,697 for the full design of the TV and emergency radio. It will produce a full set of construction drawings and bid packets to put out. The work will include construction, supervision and inspection.

Dewar excused herself at 7:05PM.

**Motion passed** on a roll call vote to approve purchase orders as presented. Five voted in favor and one (Heinbockel) voted against.

## ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS

### ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Pro tem Leith-Dowling called for additional public comment with none being offered.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Weller moved** to go into Executive Session at 7:06PM to discuss the Allvest prison issue with Attorney Ken Jacobus; Leith-Dowling seconded.

**Motion passed** by unanimous consent.

Six Council members (Gilbertson, Heinbockel, Leith-Dowling, Kemp, Summers, Weller), four city employees (Hallgren, Cotten, Dooley, White) and Attorney Ken Jacobus were present.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Summers moved** to end the Executive Session and adjourn the regular meeting at 7:55PM; Heinbockel seconded.

**Motion passed** by unanimous consent.