



City Council Minutes
March 1, 2005 ~ 5:00PM

Regular Meeting
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Gilbertson called the meeting to order at 5:02PM.

Council members present: Mayor Roy Gilbertson, Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith-Dowling, Will Pecchia
John Sloan, Leslie Feilner, Lou Heinbockel (arrived at 5:07), Susan Sandy (5:08)

City employees present: Pete Hallgren, Dave Zimmerman, Dennis Dooley, Pat White

Two members from the community were also present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Gilbertson reported one item to add to *New Business*:

✓ Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) - Request to Waive Community Center Rental Fees
Leith-Dowling moved to approve the agenda as amended; Pecchia seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Pecchia moved to approve the February 15, 2005 minutes as presented; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

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.

REPORTS

Rescue Squad – Pat White reported in Debra Darland’s absence. Medic III was out of service and would be for two weeks or more because of problems, likely related to the same (transmission) problems as when it was initially brought up the Alcan.

Hallgren said it was towed to Seekins in Fairbanks for warranty work.

White reported the Delta Christian Ministerial Association sponsored an appreciation dinner for volunteers of the Delta Rescue Squad and the Delta Junction and Deltana Fire Departments on February 26.

Fire Department – Pat White reported in Fire Chief Carin Bear’s absence. Driver training with the new tender was scheduled for March 3. The Fire Department requested that the City not dispose of Tender 5 until they could debate its purpose. Fire Fighter I training was in process, although it had been delayed because of difficulty between the State Fire Training Service and the University of Fairbanks. Seven Delta Junction firefighters and 3 from Deltana would be attending the training.

Hallgren said he was researching parking the old tender in the new fire station in regard to problems with leakage.

Planner – Dennis Dooley reported his efforts had been directed toward mapping and roads. He said also checked on the fire hall lighting, which is engineered to meet code requirement for a building of its size.

Airport – Leslie Feilner said she wished to reiterate not putting anymore airport lots up for sale until the issue regarding crossing the runway was resolved.

Heinbockel asked if the Pilot's Association had paid their half of the insurance premium.

Zimmerman stated \$3,700 (half of the bill) was paid on February 21.

Hockey Rink – Lou Heinbockel asked who pays for the insurance at the hockey rink.

Zimmerman reported the City paid \$7,900.

City Clerk – Pat White reported passport application fees would increase on March 8 to include a \$12 security surcharge that will fund multiple security enhancements in passport processing. Presently fees are \$55 for adults (16 and older) and \$40 for children. Additionally there is a \$30 filing fee payable to the City. Application and filing fees are mandated by the United States Department of State.

School Liaison – Will Pecchia reported expenditures totaling \$6,539,570.82 out of \$7,382,169.00 impact funds was given to the school in the past two years.

Hallgren stated \$5 million of that was given to the school only after the program, in which it was initially intended was rejected by the Secretary of Defense. Upon the mayor's request they agreed to authorize the money be directed to the school. Another \$1.1 million was split between the City and the school.

City Administrator – Pete Hallgren reported Gene Kane would begin work as the new administrator on Monday, April 4 instead of April 1. Hallgren explained a street map displayed on the wall. He asked for input in identifying road names. Some streets are identified by more than one name. Some existing roads may not show on the map. Input from Delta Community Corporation (DCC) would be requested on March 10.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Merle Jantz Associates, Inc. replaced the circulation (front) desk in the library to a more appropriate height for younger children, as according to original plans. Librarian McCombs said approximately 1800 patrons visited the library during the month of January. Local donations toward the matching Rasmuson grant totaled \$49,291 to date.

Park – Will Pecchia asked for ideas for park improvements for the upcoming summer. He said Feilner requested upgrades to the bathrooms.

Gilbertson said a basketball court had been discussed for over 8 years.

Hallgren said brush removal at the city park should be a project this year. It was last done two years ago. He said \$14,000 remained in the matching State EDA grant and the legislature had been asked to reauthorize it for park use. Grass cutting would need to be paid also and possibly more fence repair.

Feilner asked to replant trees that were removed a few years ago. She suggested birch trees.

Heinbockel said the reason the other trees were removed was because they were poplars and would cause damage to the fences. He suggested removing all tree stumps so that birch trees would not be hindered in size and the poplars would not grow back.

Dooley asked to consider coniferous trees so that their foliage would stop snow from piling up against the library. Trees that lose their leaves are not able to act as wind and snow barriers.

Gilbertson suggested fencing the area to keep the snow from building up against the library building and being an enticement for children to play. He said he was concerned with children falling through the windows.

Sloan suggested using mesh near the windows.

Pecchia said he would like to plant more trees along the fence line and finish the playground with play equipment for 2 to 5 year olds.

Military Liaison – Roy Gilbertson reported he, Leith-Dowling and Hallgren attended a Military Civilian Cohort Luncheon on February 28 at the Bolio Lake CRTC Facility and visited the test track that will mainly be used for Stryker vehicle testing.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel reported Dave Boadwine was injured on the job last week when he slipped and hurt his back.

Hallgren stated Boadwine slipped and hit his back on the running board. He did not require medical attention but an injury report was filed.

Heinbockel said a considerable amount of money was spent to repair Fourth Street last fall because of damages created by a neighboring business. He asked if half of the cost to repair the street was ever recovered from the business.

Zimmerman reported there had been no response.

Hallgren said a reminder would be issued.

Charter Commission – Lou Heinbockel reported many petitions had been placed around town regarding conducting a vote before the Charter Commission submits the charter to LBC. Who would conduct the vote and who would pay for it was unknown. He understood their hope - to short circuit the process, thinking there can be no borough if a charter is not submitted. He said nonetheless it would be in the public's best interest to attend the Charter Commission meetings for more understanding.

Department of Transportation (DOT) Liaison – Mary Leith-Dowling distributed letters, written on February 18 by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), requesting public comments and attendance at a public meeting scheduled at the Community Center from 5:00-8:00PM on March 3. She said the deadline for written public comment was April 11. DOT basically planned to remove the bend out of the Richardson near the Jarvis Creek Bridge, rebuild the bridge, widen and resurface that part of the Richardson Highway, install turn lanes at the Ft. Greely main gate and mid-post gate, resurface the existing scenic turnout at MP 262.6 and possibly relocate existing electrical and communication utilities.

Heinbockel asked to inquire if DOT would spread gravel at the intersection of Mill-Tan and Nistler roads because of the dangerous situation. He said he tried to convince the Council to purchase a sand/gravel truck 25 years ago. With federal impact funds available now he would hope that it would be a reality by next winter.

Sloan said recently fresh skid marks went straight across Nistler. The intersection had potential for a major accident scene.

Hallgren said the truck was not part of approved projects but he had researched it. A one-ton with a crew cab, blade and sander unit ranged about \$60,000.

Heinbockel said the vehicle would have to be 4 or 5-ton. There would not be a big difference in price.

Feilner asked to include the Richardson and Nistler (School Road) intersection.

Heinbockel said the intersection of Emmaus and the Richardson was also important.

Hallgren said he would request assistance.

Heinbockel said years ago Paul Nistler would donate gravel and Heinbockel would physically spread it. He asked to seriously consider purchasing a vehicle to serve that purpose.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Sandy Subdivision Approval

Hallgren stated the City Council was the government body required to approve the Sandy Subdivision because it was located within city limits.

Heinbockel moved to approve the draft subdivision and authorize execution of the final Sandy Subdivision plat; Pecchia seconded.

Sandy asked to be excused from voting because the property was in her husband's name.

Heinbockel moved to excuse Sandy from voting; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote to excuse Sandy from voting.

Motion passed on a roll call vote to authorize execution of the Sandy Subdivision plat with six voting in favor and one (Sandy) abstaining.

Delta Veterinary Service – Dead Animal Disposal

Hallgren stated that a new procedure had been worked out with the vet for disposal of dead euthanized animals and said \$10 was charged in the past to dispose of an animal at the landfill. Now that arrangements had been re-established to deliver animals to the landfill under the City's operation, were the fees per animal still acceptable?

Discussion followed and it was decided to leave it at \$10 for each animal, no matter what the size.

Deltana Fair Association – 2005 Gaming Permit Application

Heinbockel moved to show no opposition to the gaming permit application from the Deltana Fair Association; Sloan seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with six voting in favor and one (Pecchia) voting against.

Public Hearing and Second Reading of Ordinance 2005-06, An Ordinance Authorizing the Negotiated Sale of Municipal Land to Golden Valley Electric Association to Provide Emergency Power Generation Capacity for the Delta Area

Hallgren said the ordinance allowed GVEA the option to purchase 8+ acres (equivalent to two lots) of property near their current substation for \$50,000 and required \$5,000 down. He said one-acre airport lots were comparable and sold for \$7,000 without electricity.

Heinbockel moved to open the public hearing of Ordinance 2005-06; Pecchia seconded. Motion passed.

Tana Wood said GVEA was relocating their generator for the benefit of the community. They were not developing.

Sloan said her point was well taken but the property was good real estate and worth more than its last appraisal.

Hallgren said at least \$50,000 was spent in the past year hooking up the newly constructed facilities.

Heinbockel moved to close the public hearing; Leith-Dowling seconded. Motion passed.

Leith-Dowling moved to hold the second reading and adopt Ordinance 2005-06; Heinbockel seconded.

Heinbockel said the only way the City of Delta Junction had to raise revenue was to sell land. The proceeds would be deposited into the City's Permanent Fund.

Discussion followed regarding the amount of land required by GVEA and the sale price.

Motion passed on a roll call vote to adopt Ordinance 2005-06 with six voting in favor and one (Sloan) voting against.

Public Hearing and Second Reading of Ordinance 2005-07, An Ordinance Amending Municipal Code Chapter 1.67, Enhanced 911, Section 1.67.020 to Include Surcharge on All Locally-Billed Wireless Phone Numbers and Adding Section 1.67.030 to Define the Delta Junction Area

Sandy moved to open the public hearing of Ordinance 2005-07; Pecchia seconded. Motion passed.

Tana Wood asked for clarification. There would not be an increase in the surcharge; it would simply need specified which community was to receive it. Fairbanks presently receives the 75¢ monthly surcharge but it would be shifted to Delta because that is where the phone is billed. She asked, "Why then does it require an ordinance?"

Hallgren stated State Statute requires the process be changed via resolution or ordinance. Statute changed two years ago enabling wireless phones to be included in the E911 surcharge rates. Hallgren said each wireless company must be contacted. ACS cannot identify the number of cell customers until the ordinance is passed. E911 service, just for monthly phone company connection charges, would cost more (\$2,300) than what is brought in by the City (\$1,800). Possibly wireless phones could make up the difference. The total E911 phone company charges do not include any of the City's expenses to cover the mapping/addressing project and dispatch service. ACS charges \$150/month to collect the surcharge fees. They are authorized to charge no more than 10% of the money that they collect. He said E911 might not be affordable.

Wood said it would help if local residents notified their phone providers to direct their surcharge to Delta Junction.

Pecchia moved to close the public hearing; Feilner seconded. Motion passed.

Leith-Dowling moved to hold the second reading and to adopt Ordinance 2005-07; Sandy seconded.

Leith-Dowling identified one change, to remove one "hereby" in the first page of the document.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) - Request to Waive Community Center Rental Fees

Hallgren stated PTAC of Alaska is a government organization, funded under a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Defense and the University of Alaska and was part of the Small Business Development Center. They provide service for local businesses wanting contract work with the federal government. They currently had 22 clients in the Delta area who were actively seeking government contracts.

Heinbockel moved to approve the fee waiver as requested by PTAC; Pecchia seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Purchase Orders

PO#09676 to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$5,449.59 for Mar '05 group health insurance

PO#09677 to Bank of America in the amount of \$1,377.64 for credit card charges (printer supplies and Cotten travel)

PO#09678 to Lamar Cotten in the amount of \$4,459.38 for Feb '05 consulting services

PO#09679 to Delta Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$11,444.49 for Social Service Grant, Payment #2

PO#09680 to GVEA in the amount of \$2,651.87 for new fire hall electricity (9-10-04/2-14-05)

PO#09681 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$9,741.55 for Jan '05 legal services (general, borough commission, UNIT SKW claims)

PO#09682 to MACTEC Engineering & Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$4,594.08 for Jan/Feb '05 landfill delays/claims

PO#09683 to Motorola Inc. in the amount of \$53,748.00 for (15) portable digital radios

Leith-Dowling moved to approve purchase orders 09676 through 09683 as presented; Feilner seconded.

Heinbockel asked about 09680. Was the \$2,600+ part of the \$10,000 in energy costs that was discussed at the February 15 meeting?

Zimmerman stated it was not.

Heinbockel asked about 09683. He said the American taxpayer is paying for what is purchased with funds for Homeland Security. He had a problem with it. Each of the 15 radios would cost \$3,500 and would be divided amongst the Delta Rescue Squad and the Delta Junction and Deltana fire departments. "We are small potatoes and we are spending \$53,000 + \$40,000 (last month) just on radios." He said he could not justify spending that amount of money for the defense of our community and our nation. "How many sorry radios were purchased over the years and where are they now?"

Hallgren stated over \$400,000 was received for specialized items designated for Homeland Security. The City manages the funds but receives no administrative overhead. The City is the only government entity capable of providing the service. He explained the grant process and said the money must be fronted to purchase items and then the City must apply for reimbursement.

Gilbertson said the program is out of control because it had been blown out of portion.

Sloan asked about 09682. "When would the engineering firm charges end?"

Hallgren said that purchase order dealt with finalizing claims on the landfill. The City claims were approved and are approximately \$60,000. \$85,000 in retainage was being held for final payment on the claims and remaining work to be completed in the spring.

Heinbockel, referring to 09680, said there must be problems that need fixed.

White reported she spoke with Agnes Stowe, MACTEC engineer, who reported the high utility charges to Richard Bonwell, who then made inquiries regarding them.

Hallgren said he specifically did not request the engineer's assistance because of increasing costs. He felt that MACTEC would provide professional answers in how to correct the problems.

Discussion followed regarding high engineering fees, routine water testing and State certification, well drilling and the depth for decent water and the high-energy costs for the new facilities.

Hallgren said he would ask the engineers to investigate what was causing the energy-efficient buildings to cost so much to maintain.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with two (Pecchia, Heinbockel) voting against.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Gilbertson called for public comments with none being offered.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS

Heinbockel said 30% of the City's yearly (\$400,000) income would be needed to operate just the library.

Leith-Dowling said building a larger library was based on the needs of Ft. Greely. She said it might be that the hours of operation could be reduced to cut down costs.

Heinbockel said the question had always been asked of “how maintenance and operation would be afforded down the road.” It happened in 1975, in the ‘80s and now. In 10 years the Council will be faced with the same. The problem is that as a community we are not willing to pay for services that are made available. Hallgren stated Mayor Gilbertson had brought \$16 million dollars to the City in recent years.

ADJOURNMENT

Pecchia moved to adjourn at 6:36PM; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White
City Clerk
City of Delta Junction
Date of approval: March 15, 2005