



City Council Minutes
August 2, 2005 ~ 5:00PM

Regular Meeting
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, August 2, 2005 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Gilbertson called the meeting to order at 5:02PM.

Council members present: Mayor Gilbertson, Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith-Dowling
Lou Heinbockel, Leslie Feilner

Council members excused: John Sloan, Lynnetta Marcellus, Mike Tvenge

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

Eleven members from the community and eight out-of-town guests were also present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gilbertson reported three purchase orders to add to *New Business*:

- ✓ PO#010113 to Buffalo Fuel in the amount of \$550.48
- ✓ PO#010114 to TESCO in the amount of \$1,406.16
- ✓ PO#010115 to Tom Ferri Company in the amount of \$4,566.72

Leith-Dowling moved to approve the agenda as amended; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Heinbockel moved to approve the July 19, 2005 minutes as presented; Leith-Dowling seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chris Webb stated he was interested in four lots listed in the City's over-the-counter property. He said the lots on South Clearwater had not sold and there appeared to be no interested parties. He asked if the Council would accept a reasonable bargain for their sale if he were to purchase all four lots.

Heinbockel said the property had not been in demand in over 20 years, long before property was increased from 150% to 200% above their last appraised value (July 15, 2003).

Leith-Dowling said she would like to know what areas were selling and what were not.

Discussion followed regarding parcels that were in demand and discussing it further at the next meeting.

Webb said he needed to move a building and could not wait two weeks for a decision.

Hallgren stated the decision should allow the general public the same opportunity to cut the purchase price of property. It must be available to everyone.

Webb asked to buy two at the regular price and put off buying the other two in hopes they could be negotiated.

Heinbockel moved to sell two lots on South Clearwater to Chris Webb at the current appraised value (200% of the last appraisal) as long as the property sale requirements are met; Feilner seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ken Farrow asked for resolution to traffic problems on Rapids Street. He referred to a letter he submitted to the Council and the local AST on August 1.

Heinbockel said Rapids Street is not the only road that gets “idiot drivers.” He said he recently experienced a vehicle passing him on Deborah Street when he was traveling at 25mph. He said he followed the driver to his home to take the license plate number. As a second-class city there is no ability to have law enforcement and therefore little can be done.

Hallgren said the Troopers responded to Farrow’s letter by watching the area.

Discussion followed regarding potholes on Rapids Street, complaints about speed bumps and putting up ‘stop’ signs where Rapids intersects with other roads similar to what was done on the DGSD campus.

PR Miller suggested ending all road maintenance on the airport road and the Richardson Highway to force drivers to slow down.

Gilbertson explained scenarios in which four-wheelers and pickup trucks create damage to the newly graded roads. He excused himself from the meeting at 5:17PM and returned mid-way through discussion of the Gerstle River Testing Site.

Discussion followed regarding maintaining streets and paving projects for next summer.

Heinbockel said the City did not have the ability to enforce rules and until there was a change to its organization or a method was established to finance police protection and law enforcement there would be no way to alter the present situation.

Discussion followed regarding citizen’s arrest and community watch.

Feilner said working with the local troopers was the only resolution.

Farrow said vehicles move too fast to identify the vehicle, much less their license plate. He said it would take some innocent child or elderly person being injured or killed to make a statement.

Discussion followed regarding posting more speed limit signs.

Farrow said he would appreciate any attempt to stop speeding on Rapids. To date trimming overgrowth from the signs to make them more visible and the obvious presence of the troopers had not been effective. He said he was not exaggerating in saying vehicles travel at 40-50-60mph on the gravel road.

Hallgren said he would have more (25mph) signs posted.

COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Pro tem Leith-Dowling called for Council comments on non-agenda items with none being offered.

REQUEST TO SPEAK

Teresa Thomas, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Manager for the Gerstle River Expansion Area (GREA), introduced herself and stated her purpose was to present findings for the Chemical Weapons and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Munitions Site Investigations at the GREA. She referred to copies of her presentation, *Draft Close Out Report / Gerstle River Expansion Area Ordnance Sites Near Delta Junction, Alaska* and *Draft Final Site Specific Chemical Warfare Materiel Scoping and Security Study Report*. Thomas encouraged public response and asked that the comment sheets, available in the back of both reports, be used to submit input. The responsibility of Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) was to keep the public informed, present closeout reports for public comment, provide an explanation of findings and then make recommendations and conclusions. She said public involvement was a critical issue in trying to close the Gerstle project. Thomas referred to a handout, *Gerstle River Expansion Area Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) Site Closeout*, which showed a map locating the Gerstle site. She briefed Council and the public with an overview of the reports, explaining findings of the work done on the project in the past 10 to 11 years. The expansion area was an additional quantity of land that

was acquired to expand vegetation that was range-designed for chemical weapons testing of nerve agents, VX and GB (Sarin). The GREA land was leased by the Army in 1964 and testing was conducted between July 1965 and September 1967. The lease was terminated in 1973 once testing was completed and the land was turned back to the State of Alaska. Testing consisted of detonating chemical weapons and measuring how the chemicals were dispersed. Two methods of ordnance delivery mimicked what would happen on a battlefield: Dynamic testing - when rounds were fired and Static testing - when rounds were placed in pre-determined locations and remotely detonated. Thomas explained the two types of sites: Registration Areas – used to determine proper firing distance and Test Grids – areas where chemical weapons were tested. There were no chemical weapons used in the Registration Areas. However, debris from possible chemical weapons disposal was found at one of the sites. Initial clean up was performed in 1968 when equipment was removed and buried near the Test Grids. In 1970 most of the remaining equipment was removed along with what was previously buried. All the equipment and other refuse that was retrieved were buried in two large pits on the Gerstle River Test Site. In 1976 the initial *Installation Assessment of the Gerstle River Test Site (Report 105)* was published, which assessed any potential chemical contamination at the GRTS. It concluded that contamination from chemical weapons used at the site were not a hazard because sufficient decontamination procedures were followed at the time of testing as part of the routine and even if contaminants were present, they would not remain at the surface and leaching to the groundwater was unlikely. The Chemical Warfare Materials were designed to be short term and short lived, to dissipate and break down rapidly. Subsequent reports that utilized classified documents from the individual tests indicated the records were incomplete and there was a possibility of several rounds of unexploded ordnance on the site. They were referred to as the “four duds”. In 1994 the Corps of Engineers (COE), St. Louis District, conducted an Archives Search that included interviews, site visits and investigation of all available records. That report came up with the same conclusion, that there were some potentially unexploded ordnance on the Test Grid site and because of that BLM firefighters were not allowed to enter the area to fight the Hajdukovich Creek fire that same year. Based on the results of the St. Louis Archives Search Report the GREA was declared eligible as a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS), a program that authorizes cleanup of property that was used by the military and left contaminated. Thomas explained the areas that were investigated at GREA and the extent of what work and research was conducted. The results were: All chemical rounds fired into or detonated in the Test Grids were deemed to be accounted for in the test logs by the COE. None of the roughly 10,000 anomalies (pieces of metal that were initially assumed to be the size and shape of an unexploded round) per site, that were intrusively investigated, had not exploded. Test personnel confirmed that the four potentially unexploded chemical rounds (“unknowns”) did detonate but their burst height and location were unknown and there was no record of any unexploded ordnance fired into either of the Registration Areas. The conclusion by the COE is that no further action is necessary for any of the five MMRP sites. Thomas said the decision could be reconsidered at a future date if information comes forth that could present any type of risk. A set of administrative records would be available at the local library, although the previous copy had apparently disappeared. (A copy of the CD was requested from DNR and anticipated copies will be received from the COE.) Hardcopies and /CDs are available at the Corps of Engineers office in Elmendorf. The public comment period would be August 2 through September 2. An Open House was scheduled in the City Hall conference room on August 3, 11:00AM to 1:00PM.

Robert Layne, DNR, Natural Resource Specialist, stated he differed with some of the facts as they were listed in the reports. He asked to discuss details of how the searches were carried out and how scientifically accurate they were. Specifically the statements about the investigation results were contradictory.

Thomas requested public comments be submitted in writing.

Michael Jaynes, DEC, Environmental Program Manager, stated the reporting dealt with the expansion area, not the test area. He said he was comfortable with the documents and would be available after the

Council meeting and during tomorrow's Open House to offer information in how the research was performed.

Layne said he would be available to address the public also. He said he felt something of this importance should have been scheduled better as this 30-day period is about the worst time of year to get feedback from the public and for reviewing purposes.

REPORTS

Fire Department – Carin Bear stated the Open House for the new fire station would be postponed until September. She reported training on use of the Motorola radios was scheduled for August 5.

Airport – Leslie Feilner reported the vehicle that was involved in a fire on July 12 was removed.

Cemetery – Mary Leith-Dowling reported a memorial tree park was being researched. She would present details as they occurred.

City Clerk – Pat White reported this year's City of Delta Junction Council elections would be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2005. Four seats are in this year's election: Seat C (three-year term) presently held by Lou Heinbockel, Seat E (one-year) held by Lynnetta Marcellus, Seat F (three-year) held by John Sloan and Seat G (two-year) held by Mike Tvenge. The Declaration of Candidacy filing period would be between August 25 and September 9. In order to vote in the municipal election voters must be registered 30 days prior (September 4). Advertisement would begin in the next paper on August 5.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported:

- \$6,200 was received from the State Library's Public Library Assistance Grant. It is given each year to rural libraries that maintain a certain number of hours, are run by a paid staff, provide interlibrary loans and children's programming and file a detailed annual report. This is the 23rd year that the Delta Library has received the grant.
- The Summer Readers program ended with a Medieval Feast & Costume Pageant on July 29. During the six-week program the kids read 730 books! One of their weekly craft projects was a Chinese Dancing Dragon head, which will be in the Deltana Fair Parade on Saturday, August 20.
- The Destiny grant was spent on new stands and scanners for the front desk, a hand held inventory scanner, a new computer for Interlibrary Loans, handicapped access at the front desk and book bags for interlibrary loans between schools and the public library.
- The library continues to have problems with the front doors because they are heavy and too difficult to open and shut. Attempts to deal with them have failed to this point.
- Rachel Robertson has decided to not return after taking maternity leave. Her part-time shift was Friday evening/Sunday afternoon and the vacant position will be advertised.

Park – Leslie Feilner reported she would like to discuss the drinking-at-the-park issue at a meeting in which a larger Council is present.

Heinbockel said the season will end in two weeks and the problem would not be brought up again for another 9 or 10 months.

Personnel – Roy Gilbertson asked about hiring the scale house operator at the landfill.

Hallgren said scale training was set up for later this month but hiring was put off until the hours of operation were known.

Recreation – Al Edgren asked to speak in Council member Mike Tvenge's absence. Edgren briefed Council on a hockey rink update. He said a couple plans were drawn and several issues needed to be resolved before getting engineers involved. Several Skating Association members planned to visit other similar rinks in the State.

Hallgren said the present working design (interim zamboni room) would not fit on the current property as it exists.

Edgren said the issue over the land needed to occur at some point before any construction is started.

Hallgren said the State is finalizing survey instructions for that entire area. He guessed it would be complete in one month. The property is owned by the school district. DNR suggested the zamboni addition be built entirely on the new section of property and not straddle the line.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel reported the attempt to repair bumps on Nistler Road failed. He explained the scenario regarding the contractors being rushed to complete the paving around the new school. Had it worked (using leftover materials to repair the bumps) it would have been a substantial cost savings. As it stands there are three areas on Nistler that require repair. Heinbockel asked about rocks being sold at the landfill.

Butch Ellis reported 100 rocks were pulled, 80 were sold and 20 were donated to the new elementary school. He also reported UNIT installed bolts and patched roof leaks but were unable to finish them all. Heinbockel said he visited the landfill Tuesday afternoon. He said he appreciated having it open during a weekday and not be limited to two hours on Tuesday evening and four hours on Saturdays.

Hallgren said three days a week is more probable but it was still being decided.

Heinbockel said he was grateful to dispose of 100 pounds of offal for \$5. Even so, he suggested increasing the minimum charge to \$11 as it was at the old landfill. Heinbockel said many years ago chip sealing was experimented at the end of Rapids Street. Now potholes have become so significant that he recommended the road be ripped up and graveled to remove them. He said leasing a packer is expensive and asked if it could be eliminated if roads were graded more frequently, taking advantage of the rain.

Discussion followed regarding advertising landfill hours more heavily for an indefinite period so that the public is well informed, researching phone systems that offer a local number instead of a long distance one and a reasonable price to deliver a minimum load to the landfill.

Heinbockel, referring to a notice posted on the IGA bulletin board, reported someone was willing to pay for “an individual with a truck to deliver a load of yard garbage and junk to the dump on their way to Fairbanks for \$40.” He was unable to identify the phone number that was listed on the notice.

Discussion followed regarding local residents using the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) dumpsters to rid of their garbage instead of paying to use the local landfill.

Hallgren said FNSB charges \$120/ton for imported garbage brought in from outside the borough. There is no additional charge to residents of FNSB because the service is paid through their property taxes. Other garbage inside the borough is \$60/ton. Locally the charge is \$80/ton.

Leith-Dowling said not every piece of property in the FNSB is guaranteed the same services.

Heinbockel said he wished to commend John Lunn for his outstanding work over the summer maintaining the city lawns, clearing the medians and clearing the roadside along the Richardson.

City Administrator – Pete Hallgren reported he issued a letter to the three television stations that translate to Delta Junction. Two stations responded and gave authorization to download and translate their satellite feed to the Delta area. It would enable abandoning the receive towers and antennas and transmit perfect signal compared to what is capable now. Hallgren said he is waiting response from the third station. If they agree also he would continue investigating getting satellite dishes for residents.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Conference Room Fee Waiver – Veterans of Foreign Wars Service – August 16, 2005

Heinbockel moved to approve the fee waiver as requested by VFW on August 16; Feilner seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by consent.

Purchase Orders

PO#010094 to Alaska Industrial Hardware in the amount of \$772.93 for cutoff saw to install street sign posts, first aid kit, grind wheel, wire brush, sledge hammer, two poly drums and oil pump to be used at landfill and black anti-slip tape to use at the fire station

PO#010095 to Sunshine Services in the amount of \$947.50 for topsoil at cemetery, rock and gravel for fire station driveway, library driveway and parking area, and RV parking, turnaround and parking lot near the Community Center

PO#010096 to Carin Bjorn Von Letzendorf in the amount of \$723.76 for fire station furniture

PO#010097 to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$5,795.41 August '05 group health insurance

PO#010113 to Buffalo Fuel Inc. in the amount of \$550.48 for July '05 dump truck fuel
PO#010114 to TESCO in the amount of \$1,406.16 for (old fire station) EOC ceiling lamps
PO#010115 to Tom Ferri Company in the amount of \$4,566.72 for services (upgrade and transfer of TV and FM translators from dilapidated shed to concrete shed) on Donnelly Dome repeater
Leith-Dowling moved to approve purchase orders 010094 through 010097 and 010113 through 010115 as presented; Feilner seconded.

Heinbockel, referring to PO#010094, reported he received a phone call from a local vendor who could have provided the items sold by the Fairbanks vendor but was never approached. Heinbockel said the intent of the Council is to buy locally if the items are available. He would vote in favor only because the purchase had already been made.

Feilner said local businesses would like an opportunity to solicit business.

Gilbertson stated quotes must be obtained locally before any further purchases are made.

Hallgren said he would take further steps to end the issue.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Janet Boyer asked if hazardous waste was being accepted at the landfill yet.

Hallgren said partially. It was still being investigated. He spoke with Kent Monroe at DEC who explained that household hazardous waste was not regulated.

Michael Jaynes, DEC, Environmental Program Manager, said household hazardous waste is simply hazardous waste in smaller volume. As an example a small bottle of bleach was unregulated compared to a large tanker. Water-base paint can be left out to dry. Oil-base paint is combined with used oil and turpentine and then burned. It would be transported to other landfills that burn.

Hallgren said consideration is being given to designate an area for household hazardous waste. Motor oil and batteries cannot be accepted because of the cost to properly dispose of them.

Jaynes, as a consultant, suggested separating hazardous waste from regular garbage and removing it so that it does not accumulate over a 15-20 year period and become an issue.

Hallgren said fry oil is lawful to put directly into the landfill. The problem is not illegality. It just makes a mess. The best solution would be to put it in a container or designated area, mark it and store it until it solidifies in cold weather and then bury it. Hallgren explained other landfill procedures. He suggested having residents make appointments to dispose of household hazardous waste.

Edgren said he'd hope that the landfill employees could use their judgment in charging for small amounts of garbage. Regarding the Gerstle River Test Site, Edgren cautioned Council from making comment until they had thoroughly discussed it with those that have been involved with the project.

Tim Webb stated the Hajdukovich fire in 1994 "sparked" a lot of interest by neighbors when the firefighting efforts ceased. They lived in it from July through October when the snow fell.

Tana Wood, referring to phones used at the landfill, said ACS does not require a long distance charge.

Heinbockel, referring to the Gerstle River issue, said answers would be difficult to come by because the operation was very haphazard back in the 60's. He explained an experience he was involved in when he was stationed at Ft. Greely. It was so secret he doubted records were kept. "How could they if they allowed stuff to set on a lake and fall to the bottom once the ice melted?" Heinbockel said what needed to be looked at was the property where the old buildings stood and what had been buried. The building were removed last year.

Tim Webb said any future fire would not be fought in the area even though the expansion area was pretty much taken care of.

Heinbockel said the Gerstle timeline addressed 1964 through 1967 when they were actively testing nerve agents. There was a test site before 1964 but little was known, not even what tests were performed.

Edgren said the test site is on Army land and there are no plans to deal with cleanup because it is still Army land. "We are dealing with what was formerly a test site but now belongs to the State."

Jaynes said he was comfortable with the expansion area reports. Dealing with the test area is the next step. He said he now manages the DOD staff and will do his best to get answers.

Webb said the main reason the buildings were taken down by the COE was because of vandalism. He said his main concern was to get it cleaned up so firefighters are allowed to fight fires in the area.

ADJOURNMENT

Leith-Dowling moved to adjourn at 6:40PM; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White

City Clerk

Date of approval: August 16, 2005