



City Council Minutes
December 6, 2005 ~ 5:00PM

Regular Meeting
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, December 6, 2005 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Gilbertson called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

Council members present: Mayor Roy Gilbertson, Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith-Dowling
Mike Tvenge, Lou Heinbockel, Leslie Feilner, Pablo Martinez

Council member excused: Lynnetta Marcellus

City employees present: Dave Zimmerman, Pat White

Nine members from the community were also present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Leith-Dowling identified two amendments to the November 15 minutes: She asked to correctly identify Ken Cole's title on page 3 (from "Missile Defense representative for impact funds" to "Community Impacts Program Manager") and she clarified that purchase order #010398 to Delta Sanitation on page 8 was not for November as originally posted on the agenda. The billing covered the October service.

Feilner asked to clarify wording on page 2 regarding installation of the gate near the airstrip. She said it would prohibit vehicle traffic but would not stop snow machine and four-wheeler traffic.

Leith-Dowling moved to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2005 meeting as amended; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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

OATH OF OFFICE

White administered the Oath of Office to Pablo Martinez per his appointment on November 15, 2005.

REPORTS

Fire Department – Carin Bear reported she received a phone call from Senator Stevens' office and was informed that the Fire Department was awarded \$50,000 in a FEMA grant. The grant would cover the yearlong Fire Fighter I training and therefore the old lime green tender would not need to be sold.

Airport – Leslie Feilner said she previously suggested placing a metal gate in one of two areas, at the access road near the airport or between the access road and the body shop business. She said the Pilots' Association asked to hold off decision making until the "bottom road" issue was resolved. (The bottom road runs off the Richardson Highway and parallel between the park and the airstrip.) Feilner said the "No Public Access" sign that was posted by Division of Forestry / Department of Natural Resources has created problems. The gate issue would not be pursued until the sign dilemma is resolved and installation of a gate would be a last resort.

City Clerk – Pat White reminded Council of the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) public meeting scheduled from 4:00 to 8:00PM on December 7 at the Jarvis West building. ARRC is requesting public comment on EIS issues. She also reminded Council of the meeting presented by Ft. Greely and the US Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) regarding development of a hotel and clinic near the Ft. Greely main gate. The forum will be held at the Westmark in Fairbanks on December 12-13 and Leith-Dowling and Gilbertson were scheduled to attend. Information about both meetings is posted on the Delta News (deltanewsweb.com).

White stated Sloan's positions as Public Health & Safety representative and Council-appointed chair for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) needed filled and asked Martinez if he was willing to take the responsibility of both.

Martinez agreed to represent both Public Health & Safety and to act as LEPC Chairman. (LEPC meets the first Thursday of each month for regular meetings and at other times for planning exercises specific for natural disasters in the Delta area.)

Bear stated LEPC would participate in a mass casualty exercise in March at the Ft. Greely School. The military is providing the lead in preparations for the exercise and the local committee would participate.

DREDC – Mike Tvenge reported the next meeting is scheduled for January 16.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Wendy Smithen was hired to replace the part-time position held by Eileen Herman who resumed her work at the Legislative Information Office (LIO). Leith-Dowling stated the well pump was replaced with a larger one. It appears to be functioning "well". Drinking water is not yet available because the flushing-with-chlorine process is not yet complete.

Park – Leslie Feilner reported the lock off the concession building was stolen. She asked the public to report any clandestine activity in the park to City Hall. She said high winds caused trees to fall on the fence line and asked that the public look for that also.

Personnel – Roy Gilbertson reported a scale house operator was hired and she would receive orientation on December 9.

Recreation – Mike Tvenge reported the Skating Association would host an Open House at the Ice Arena at 6:00PM on December 7. Food will be served, a Christmas tree is decorated and the building is festive. The Ice Arena sign will be shipped on December 5. Tvenge stated he was reviewing information regarding dome-shaped recreation facilities that range in cost from \$1 million to \$9 million. He said he heard the existing ice rink is designated as an evacuation center for the school.

Discussion followed regarding evacuating during cold weather, past plans established to bus people during an emergency and a power plant that is necessary for backup in the event of a devastating earthquake.

Gilbertson said the school is the only facility in Delta that could sufficiently house our community.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel said he reviewed the Skating Association's budget from last year. Their largest expenditure was to heat the concession / viewing area. It was approximately \$2,700. Heinbockel asked, should the State provide any assistance toward energy costs, that funding be provided to cover the Skating Association's increased costs.

Tvenge said \$600 was spent on fuel in the last 3 weeks.

Heinbockel said the Governor can assist smaller communities but he was concerned for residents who would not be able to afford the increased heating costs.

Heinbockel said the landfill septage pits were full beyond what was expected. It appears valves were never opened according to a timetable that was faxed by the engineers. Apparently communication failed in addressing the drainage process. Attempts are being made now to thaw the frozen valves.

Charter Commission – Lou Heinbockel reported signatures were being gathered to meet the borough petition requirement. He referred to a November 23, 2005 letter written by local resident Mike Murphy. Murphy suggested that adopting the PILT was in violation of the Alaska Constitution. Heinbockel said Murphy's letter was forwarded to the City Attorney for review.

Leith-Dowling reported 179 signatures were collected to date.

Heinbockel said the goal was 250. Overshooting the requirement (15% of the voters who voted during the last general election = 198) would take care of any signatures that may not be registered as voters.

Department of Transportation (DOT) Liaison – Mary Leith-Dowling reported City Electric is working in town and offered to provide a quote to replace bulbs on the school road (Nistler). She said possibly 6 or 7 streetlights needed replaced, especially the ones between the schools. She would contact them to resolve the lighting issue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2006-03, A Resolution Supporting Construction of a Community Recreation Center as a City Priority

Gilbertson said funds are allocated to construct a community recreation center. Lamar Cotten will research grant funding that could support the project. Our focus on recreational activities must satisfy the needs of the whole community and to serve more than one function. Money will be an issue and partnering up may benefit the project. Gilbertson said other construction projects are completed but the community, especially due to increased population, still needs a recreation center.

Tvenge said he has heard concerns from the public regarding how the community can afford fees associated with a recreation center because it will be an expensive building to operate.

Heinbockel said when federal impact dollars were promised to the community, the City requested public input. He personally felt a rec center was a priority but the Council accepted the recommendation made by DREDC in which they requested another library, another landfill and another fire hall. Heinbockel said we already had those. What we did not have was a recreation center that functions well. Not one that has no water, no restrooms and no heat like the primitive one that exists. \$2 million is left from the other construction projects and now the recreation center can be constructed.

Heinbockel moved to approve Resolution 2006-03, A Resolution Supporting Construction of a Community Recreation Center as a City Priority as presented; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Tvenge said he attended the (December 3, 2002) community meeting and it was unanimous by those in attendance that a rec center was needed. Every group listed a rec center/theatre/ice arena as a priority.

Mike Jenkins said a rec center could be used as a theatre also. He knew of many community members who supported the idea and he offered his services in helping making it happen.

Feilner asked to include an activity for the rec center that can be dry and warm.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Legislative Priority List

Heinbockel referenced Hallgren's December 7, 2005 draft letter to Representative John Harris in which he addressed the legislative priority list. Heinbockel said skateboarding at the City Park was omitted. Council had previously received numerous requests for a skateboard park. He said funding presently available would not accomplish much in regards to paving arterial streets.

Gilbertson asked to review Hallgren's letter and contact him with concerns and suggestions.

Feilner stated the pilots were interested in a parallel runway that may prohibit traffic.

Heinbockel said he would like the pilots to speak to him because, as an individual Council member, "This piece of paper (listing legislative priorities) would not be big enough to list priorities that would come before an airport." A crosswind runway was developed a few years ago and may just need to be improved.

Feilner said there is presently a nice ice buildup on the runway but snow machines and four-wheelers are destroying it, by surfacing gravel that causes damage to airplane landing gear.

Discussion followed regarding joint use with Allen Army Airfield.

Community Dividend Program

Heinbockel referenced Governor Murkowski's November 23, 2005 letter regarding the Community Dividend Program. He said he agreed with using interest earnings from the Amerada Hess settlement to assist Alaska communities. Previous administrations were simply reducing revenue sharing to local communities until it was depleted. Murkowski simply took it away. Heinbockel said Delta Junction is the only community in the state that was in the process of possibly incorporating into a borough. Murkowski was offering \$2.5 million for borough operation in the first three years. He said it was a substantial increase from what is presently offered and it is an incentive for local communities.

Tvenge said the outlying communities were represented at the AML conference. They were begging the revenue sharing program be restored because their communities were literally dying for lack of economy.

Delta-Greely School District (DGSD) Request for Funding

Leith-Dowling referenced a November 23, 2005 letter received from Superintendent Dan Beck. She said action was not necessary tonight but she would like more information regarding the request.

Heinbockel said he had a "knee jerk" reaction to the funding request. However, he thought there should not be a problem in subsidizing the school if the landfill is subsidized for \$100,000. The school district is of more importance to the community.

Gilbertson said the \$500,000 PILT was received and it was known that the landfill subsidy would be returned to the City's coffers. He said he hopes the City will put the money into an interest-bearing account and not spend it. He felt it was the responsibility of the current Council to allow resident voters to have a voice in how the money is handled. The money should be available for the new assembly, should a borough be formed.

Discussion followed regarding school reserves and the loan from the City that was not used.

Alaska – Hawaii Moose Association – Renew 2006 Gaming Permit

Heinbockel moved to show no opposition to the gaming permit renewal as requested by the Alaska-Hawaii Moose Association; Leith-Dowling seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Purchase Orders

PO#010466 to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$6,633.30 for Dec '05 group health insurance

PO#010467 to Delta Sanitation in the amount of \$522.48 for Nov '05 garbage pickup services

PO#010468 to Delta Texaco in the amount of \$657.33 for Nov '05 gas and oil

PO#010469 to GVEA in the amount of \$1,527.53 for Oct '05 electricity

PO#010470 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$4,240.82 for legal services (EMS drug testing policy and August closeout of new landfill)

PO#010471 to IBS in the amount of \$1,699.45 for library well materials

PO#010472 to Lamar Cotten in the amount of \$3,663.05 for Nov '05 consultant services

PO#010473 to Mikunda, Cottrell & Co. in the amount of \$4,500.00 for FY05 audit

PO#010474 to Outdoors American Communications in the amount of \$1,755.00 for Nov '05 web services (re-design of City website and advertisement postings)

PO#010475 to Penworthy Company in the amount of \$770.56 for library books

PO#010476 to Powerhouse Signs in the amount of \$1,748.05 for various street signs

Leith-Dowling moved to approve purchase orders 010466 through 010476 as presented; Feilner seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Janet Boyer asked if the \$2 million quoted in Resolution 2006-03 was from federal impact dollars. She also asked if the City had received any other requests for funding besides that from the school district.

Gilbertson said the \$2 million was federal impact money and no other funding requests were received.

Stephen Hammond said he presented the packet of information pertaining to a recreation center design. He offered to explain the monolithic dome technology when it was convenient for the City Council.

Gilbertson said he would appreciate the information at another time.

Boyer asked about the septage issue. Would septage dumping no longer be permitted?

Heinbockel said the engineers were attempting to thaw the valves.

Zimmerman said the septage volume being delivered has slowed.

Gilbertson excused himself at 5:52PM. Mayor Pro tem presided over the remainder of the meeting.

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS

Tvenge stated Ken Cole, Missile Defense Community Impacts Program Manager, requested progress on the addition to the skating rink by last month so that the project could be completed by next spring. He asked about the legislative wish list, in which \$500,000 is requested to assist in the renovation of the existing rink and construction of a recreation center. Some of the \$2 million stated for the rec center would be used for the addition on the existing rink.

Heinbockel said matching funds are needed for the projects if they are to be completed.

Tvenge said the addition should serve the existing building and the new rec center would have its own utilities. This year has presented many issues around the zamboni and the need for water. The cost of the rent-a-cans could pay for a month of heat in the concession area and locker rooms.

Feilner reported she, Heinbockel and Martinez attended the dinner ball at Ft. Greely. She said it was a very lovely affair. Feilner invited everyone to the tree lighting at 4:00PM at Ft. Greely on December 7.

Leith-Dowling welcomed Martinez to the City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Heinbockel moved to adjourn at 6:00PM; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White

City Clerk

Date of approval: December 20, 2005