



**City Council Minutes**  
**July 5, 2006 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Wednesday, July 5, 2006 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith-Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:01PM.

Council members present: Mayor Pro tem Mary Leith-Dowling, Lou Heinbockel, Mike Jenkins  
Leslie Feilner, Mike Tvenge, Pablo Martinez (5:02PM)

Council member excused: Mayor Roy Gilbertson

City employees present: Dave Zimmerman, Pat White

Approximately 6 members from the community were also present.

#### **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Leith-Dowling reported three purchase orders to add to *New Business*:

- ✓ Purchase Orders # 010990, 010991, 010992

Heinbockel moved to approve the agenda as amended; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Heinbockel asked for clarification regarding no-traffic signs at the airport (page 2). He asked that the signs be referenced as “no motorized vehicles.”

White explained one correction on page 2 in which she added explanation to complete a full sentence. Heinbockel moved to approve the minutes from the June 20, 2006 meeting as amended; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

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

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

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

#### **REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Janice Templin-Weller introduced herself and Rachelle Hill, local public health nurses (PHN), and said their purpose was to discuss public concerns regarding the pandemic Avian (bird) influenza and to provide general information about healthy communities.

Rachelle Hill reported National Public Health Week is promoted in April but applies year round. This year’s theme was *Designing Healthy Communities: Raising Healthy Kids*. Hill referenced handouts and stated healthy living activity and weight control are challenges in America. She provided statistics of

Alaskans with weight issues. Hill said she was aware of attempts in getting more paved bike paths in Delta but because of long winters other forms of activity were important. Delta offers bike paths, even if some are gravel, the ice-skating rink, City park ball fields and playground. She explained the need to provide paved bike paths to keep youth off the highways. Hiking a marked trail would benefit tourists and cross country skiers. A rec center in Nome offers a swimming, basketball, roller-skating, aerobics, and organized exercise programs. Indoor facilities provide year round exercise opportunities as well as a safe place for those inflicted with asthma and other conditions. A swimming pool would allow water aerobics, teaching of water safety to all age groups, kayaking safety, etc. Local businesses could tap into the rec center and promote healthy lifestyles for their employees also.

Discussion followed regarding financial support of a rec center and how other communities afford it and lack of access to the Ft. Greely pool.

Tvenge asked Hill for suggestions of summer use for the Ice Arena. The flooring is gravel once the ice melts but maybe not in the future.

Hill said it could possibly offer a running track or an area for roller blading or indoor soccer.

Tvenge said he hoped to consolidate practices to allow more time for younger skaters.

Weller-Templin presented an overview of the Avian influenza that was presented to the public on June 27. She distributed handouts and explained the history of the flu, saying waterfowl are the reservoir of influenza A, circulating it through their migration. It is not a new strain. The reason for concern and making preparations to deal with the flu now is because of recent global changes in which bird flocks are showing signs of the high pathogenic strain. The question is not if another epidemic will happen, but when and it may show in a different strain. Epidemics appeared in 1918, 1957 and 1968. Templin-Weller explained numbers of cases and deaths between 1997 and 2004. She said as of February 27, 2006 infected wild or domestic poultry have been identified in 31 countries in Asia, Europe and Africa. As of March 24, 2006 186 human cases have been identified and 105 deaths reported in 8 countries (Azerbaijan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iraq, Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam). She said the virus is one that the population has little immunity to because our bodies do not recognize this strain. It is not yet considered pandemic and does not have the ability to transmit from person-to-person. Templin-Weller explained the biological significance of how viruses change and how our bodies form memories to protect against them. The Avian strain is one that humans have no protection against even if they receive flu immunizations on an annual basis. Concern for the elderly is in normal flu viruses but with the Avian flu most fatalities are found in young adults between ages 15 and 18. The State is concerned with preparing for possible spread of the bird virus in Alaska and its communities. Templin-Weller said if our community were hit it could be devastating and every service, including normal delivery of fuel and groceries, would be affected. She asked to also consider that the virus wave could last up to 2 years. Another misconception is if we can catch it early we can snuff it out. That is not the case. It can be detected and the public can be educated but it is not something the government can take care of. Preparedness is critical. She referred to websites and hotlines that offer information and said there is a State plan, the Delta PHN office is identifying what they can do to prepare and the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) will work on a plan. Templin-Weller threw out possible questions in preparing for a pandemic crisis. What groups or agencies could the PHN office partner with? Who are the essential workers needed in a mass-dispensing clinic? Eventually there would be a vaccine, but initially there would only be an anti-viral medication. Who would receive that drug? Will the local clinic be overwhelmed? Where could alternate sites be located? How will residents be housed who cannot care for themselves at home? Who are they? How do we know who depends upon oxygen or a ventilator? Templin-Weller reported potential health impact to Alaska as a whole and also specific to Delta Junction. Of the 200,000 Alaskan residents that could become ill, an estimated 100,000 would receive care from clinic visits but 2,000 to 22,000 would require hospitalization, 300-3,000 would be admitted to ICU and 150 to 1,500 put on mechanical ventilation. Those figures are alarming considering there are only 1,400 hospital beds in Alaska. Resulting deaths is estimated to be between 400 and 4,000. (There were 400 deaths in the State of Alaska in the year 2005.) She said if 30% of Delta's population

(estimated high at 8,625) contracted the virus it would total 2,587 and that does not include other illnesses already impacting the community. Templin-Weller said best-case scenario would total 9 deaths (estimated 0.1%) in Delta Junction and worst-case, 216 (2.5%).

Tvenge asked if the schools would be closed.

Templin-Weller said the reality is that it is difficult to keep students at home, especially if they are feeling better. The key is to educate the public about social isolation during illnesses and promote hand washing and use of disinfectants. It seems so simple but it is not.

Hill said some people are shedding the virus before they have symptoms that indicate they're carrying it. She said they attended a mass-dispensing clinic in Fairbanks last November and learned about stakeholders (representatives or volunteers from churches or other organizations who contribute help).

Templin-Weller said the school would be the largest facility to accommodate a dispensing clinic. It won't happen this year but they hope to conduct one in Delta. She asked Council members to consider accompanying them to a work session in Fairbanks, possibly in September, for pre-pandemic planning. That workshop will help Delta focus on immediate preparations. She said she did not want to place fear but to educate the public of the flu's significance.

Hill restated the need to always wash hands and cover coughs no matter what the illness.

Tvenge asked about hunting waterfowl.

Templin-Weller said carrying disinfectant or wearing gloves are recommendations. Hunting guidelines are available on the State's website ([www.pandemicflu.alaska.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.alaska.gov)). She said not to touch dead birds in the field if the cause of death is unknown. Simply report them to the local authorities. Eggs should be washed and cooked well. Infected birds are not likely to produce eggs.

Feilner asked if there were any reported cases in the United States.

Templin-Weller said there were none yet but the country is gearing for it because the virus is such a new strain and the population has no defenses to draw from.

Tana Wood this month's *Alaska Magazine* provided a good article on bird hunting.

Feilner said Alaska is in Asia's path and needs to be as concerned as the Lower 48.

Templin-Weller said the purpose of their presentation is to brainstorm ideas to protect our vulnerable population in any disaster, whether it is from earthquake, fire, or flood. One idea through LEPC is to get a confidential list of residents who voluntarily provide personal information regarding their immediate needs in the event of a disaster. A form could be run in the local newspaper or downloaded off [deltanewsweb.com](http://deltanewsweb.com) or the City's Emergency Preparedness link and returned to the PHN office. It could provide information of who is out there in the community that could possibly require assistance in a crisis situation. She said she could prepare a sample draft to present for approval.

Martinez said it was a good idea.

## REPORTS

**Airport** – Leslie Feilner reported constant helicopter activity at the airport due to the firefighting season.

**Finance** – Dave Zimmerman reported \$250,000 of Pogo PILT was delivered on June 30. A draft copy of the Escrow Agreement for the second \$250,000 is to be completed upon Hallgren's return. That money is to be held in reserve until 2008, depending upon borough formation or no borough. Pogo chose Wells Fargo to be the escrow agent.

**Library** – Mary Leith-Dowling reported wireless hook-up at the library is very successful. Gary Hall and students at the Career Advancement Center are planning to build an out-building for storage. Arrangements are being made for John Haines, longtime Alaskan poet and published book author, to visit the library in August or September.

**Park** – Leslie Feilner reported completed upgrades at the park (safety bars in outhouses and playground outhouse painted). She said John Lunn cut and stacked downed trees. Locked toilet paper holders are being researched with local businesses. She said the areas were kid-friendly and very attractive.

Tvenge asked to research the State's design for dispensers.

**Public Works** – Lou Heinbockel reported equipment operators had completed grading and compacting every City street and road. 140,000 gallons of water was used despite the amount of recent rains. He said there was a plan in the past to repair the lime green “albatross” but maybe, “it is naturally a water spreader.” Heinbockel said he took photos at the landfill because there was a lot of standing water due to heavy rainfall. He said it probably would not be a problem because it was an unusual occurrence.

Leith-Dowling said Kent Monroe, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) inspector, reported the old landfill looked so good it could be used as a golf course. He was not sure the new septic pits at the new landfill would be ready to empty by fall, that another year to complete the cycle may be needed. Tom Pylon, a DEC co-worker, would investigate and give recommendations.

**Charter Commission** – Lou Heinbockel stated it was doubtful the borough issue would be on the October ballot.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Resignation – Mayor Roy Gilbertson**

Heinbockel moved to reluctantly accept Mayor Roy Gilbertson’s letter of resignation, dated July 5, 2006; Feilner seconded.

Heinbockel asked that the body of the letter be included in Council minutes.

Dear City Council members:

Please accept my resignation from City Council to allow me time with my family. I am grateful to have served as Councilman and Mayor for the past 8 years.

As a 51-year resident of Delta Junction I’ve seen our community grow from a small wide spot in the road to what we have now, with a population of over 5,000. I attribute the success of our community to the many dedicated volunteers that have given so freely of themselves over the years. Our community is one to be proud of.

I would like to thank the public that attends our Council meetings and shares their input. We, as government leaders, appreciate the support and guidance received from our neighbors.

Lastly, I would like to ask that our Council continue to open every meeting with prayer for I strongly believe that we must depend upon God’s guidance and wisdom in all of our decision-making.

I especially wish to thank my fellow Council members for your continued service to our community.

Respectfully,  
Thomas “Roy” Gilbertson

Tvenge said he was sad to see the letter but grateful toward Gilbertson for his dedication to our community and hoped the time away was to Gilbertson’s benefit.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Heinbockel said Gilbertson resided in Delta for 51 years and dedicated more than anyone will ever fully understand.

Leith-Dowling stated she would not be present on July 18 and asked Heinbockel to preside in her absence.

Heinbockel agreed to run the meeting on July 18.

White stated she would advertise Seat B vacancy. Deadline to file would be the close of business on August 4, 2006. Appointment of a new Council member would be at the meeting on August 15.

Discussion followed regarding other absences and having a quorum at the next meeting, choosing a Mayor and possibly a new Mayor Pro tem from the existing 6-member Council and procedure of voting for a new Mayor.

Heinbockel asked to appoint an acting Mayor and acting Mayor Pro tem at the next meeting and then elect a new Mayor after the regular election on October 3.

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#010962 to Amazon.com in the amount of \$1,711.49 for library books

PO#010963 to Becker Arena Products, Inc. in the amount of \$2,717.05 for rink materials

PO#010964 to Government Computer Sales, Inc. in the amount of \$1,262.00 for library computer and printer

PO#010965 to L.N. Curtis & Sons in the amount of \$12,228.87 for Hurst Jaws of Life and rescue saw for City Fire Department

PO#010966 to L.N. Curtis & Sons in the amount of \$6,499.00 for City Fire Department smoke clearing fan and rescue cutter to accompany Jaws of Life

PO#010967 to Motorola Inc. in the amount of \$51,914.71 for 13 portable digital radios for Rescue Squad, City Fire Department and Deltana Fire Department

PO#010968 to Motorola, Inc. in the amount of \$15,908.00 for 4 mobile radios for City and Rural Deltana fire trucks

PO#010969 to Nortech, Inc. in the amount of \$1,330.00 for noise monitoring of EDZ noise demonstration on 5-16-06

PO#010970 to Bank of America in the amount of \$1,543.00 for credit card purchase of LEPC In-focus table projector

PO#010990 to Delta Industrial Services in the amount of \$830.00 for compactor rent for streets

PO#010991 to Delta Texaco in the amount of \$1,303.05 for vehicle fuel

PO#010992 to MACTEC Engineering & Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$6,480.88 for landfill septage disposal permit

Feilner moved to approve purchase orders 010962 through 010970 and 010990 through 010992 as presented; Martinez seconded.

Tvenge, referred to 010992 and asked how MACTEC secured a contract with DEC regarding the old landfill permit.

Heinbockel said it was in the initial agreement but the bill should rightfully be billed to impact funds.

White reported e.mail correspondence from Hallgren quoting, "There is a continuing question in my mind at least as to whether this is really our expense because of our not having been told by MACTEC how to run the new septic system in the first place. However, we are closing out the Impact Grant phase of the new landfill construction as of June 30 (last week) and this would be our last opportunity to charge this money to the Impact Fund rather than our general fund. (The State & Missile Defense already knows that we plan to charge this to the new landfill construction.) So, I advise paying this bill today."

Tvenge asked, "Who is responsible for this? You designed it, you engineered it and then we re-open the old landfill to accommodate the error."

Zimmerman said the topic was discussed during the last MD Impact Funds quarterly report meeting in July and it was determined to be construction related.

Heinbockel said he agreed that the \$6,500 should not have to be paid and it should be used elsewhere. Referencing purchase orders 010965 through 010968, Heinbockel said he had a problem with Homeland Security Grants if every community in the nation is spending money this way. He questioned if the old

radios were obsolete, when the grant ran out, how many sets of Jaws of Life are needed in our community and how often they are used.

Zimmerman said the purchase of the radios is the balance of the grant.

Feilner asked what floor mats cost for the Ice Arena.

Tvenge said 12 mats were ordered and they cost \$120 each. He said he also purchased goal netting and plastic paper line kits that mark the rink ice. The paper lasts about 4 years. He also purchased protective padding to cover the exposed column in the player boxes.

**Motion passed** on a roll call vote with five (Jenkins, Feilner, Heinbockel, Martinez, Leith-Dowling) voting in favor and one (Tvenge) voting against.

#### **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Scottie Brown introduced himself as the President of Delta Junction Moto-Cross (DJMX) and said he wanted to brief Council on the motorcycle, ATV and BMX racetrack plan. He distributed packets of information that outlined his presentation. He provided club member names, their functions and other organizations and businesses in town that support DJMX. He explained the need for financial funding to cover costs for dozer work, construction of a tower, a well, fencing, equipment, etc.

Leith-Dowling asked about safety lessons.

Brown said safety is emphasized and no one will be on the track without completing a safety course. Presently too many youth are at risk because they do not use helmets or abide by standards while operating four-wheelers.

Tvenge asked about the prospect of clearing trees.

Brown said possible agreements with local businesses would cost between \$3,000 and \$4,000. Insurance coverage creates the problem. The best solution is to hire an operator who owns his own equipment. He explained that plan.

Feilner asked how many members were in the moto-cross club.

Brown said there were 20 members and growing. There are several families interested in joining.

Feilner asked what amount of noise can be expected and during what months.

Brown explained the fairground layout and its surroundings. He said windrows and berms would act as sound barriers. The noise off the racetrack would be mild and constant except during initial startup of engines. The tracks would be used during the spring-summer-fall months, as soon as the weather breaks.

Tvenge asked if snow machines would be considered.

Brown said there is interest.

Discussion followed regarding track hours open to the public and youth learning basic skills.

Brown said fencing would prohibit use during evening and middle-of-the-night hours.

Heinbockel said present experience in listening to mud boggers is that the noise is temporary. There is a big wind up, big splash and then it's over.

Leith-Dowling thanked Brown for his presentation but said the City was not in a position to promote the racetrack at this time.

#### **ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mayor Pro tem Leith-Dowling called for additional Council comments with none being offered.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Feilner moved to adjourn at 6:44PM; Jenkins seconded. Motion carried.