



~~~~~  
**City Council Minutes**  
**October 21, 2008 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

Council members present: Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling, Mayor Pro tem Pete Hallgren, Lou Heinbockel  
JW Musgrove, Leslie Feilner, Pablo Martinez, Dawn Grossmann  
City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman  
Landfill Supervisor Butch Ellis, Facilities Maintenance Employee Jeremy Williams, City Clerk Pat White  
Six members from the community and Ralph Mathews, an out-of-town guest, were present.

**AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Leith-Dowling reported Ralph Mathews would be moved to *Request to Speak* from *Unfinished Business*. Heinbockel moved to approve the October 21, 2008 agenda; Feilner seconded. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Heinbockel moved to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2008 meeting; Martinez seconded. Motion carried.

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

Leith-Dowling called for public comments on non-agenda items with none being offered. She asked for Council comments.

Musgrove reported registered voters could vote absentee at the courthouse if they are unable to vote in the Presidential Election on November 4.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Vote and Vac on November 4** (Janice Templin-Weller and Rachelle Hill of the Delta Public Health Center will offer flu vaccinations at City Hall between 12:00 and 6:30pm on November 4.)

Heinbockel said he liked the idea of getting vaccinations on the same day as the Presidential Election.

**List of Council Members and Departments**

Leith-Dowling asked for a Council member to fill the position of School Liaison.

Discussion followed regarding no interest in the position, the school district being notified when each agenda is posted, and removing School Liaison as a Council report item.

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

**Tract K of Fred Cook Subdivision** (moved from *Unfinished Business*)

Ralph Mathews, Registered Land Surveyor, Mathews Land Surveying Inc., explained the difference between an updated plat, dated October 17, 2008, and the one presented at the October 8 meeting. He referenced a letter he addressed to the City Council, dated October 18, 2008, that requests four variances and said the radii of the two curves in the subdivision road were altered and public access is now dedicated according to the City Code of Ordinance. Mathews said he was surprised that the City would require the easement be dedicated, taking on the responsibility of maintaining the subdivision roads. He has observed two kinds of areas in Delta that deal with platting issues and the criteria for outside the core,

like Mark Gentz' property, is quite rural compared to the area inside the core, which has curbs and sidewalks. Mathews explained the right-of-way dedication, which changes the Tee turnaround and lot areas. He said the required 200' sight distance on the curves is possible and supported by the AASHTO Table, but unnecessary. He allowed 150' sight distance on the curves, which will require 3 feet of additional clearing on the first one. Mathews said he questioned the City Code, 4.75.020(g), which referenced a maximum required street length of 600' in a cul-de-sac and a required street ROW of 60'. Gentz' plat has 922 feet from the Richardson Highway to the center of the turnaround. He referenced the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) road ordinance, in which he has a number of years of experience, and said they allow up to 1320 feet for a cul-de-sac, but road widths are required to be wider when they are over 900 feet. Road widths, shoulder to shoulder, change from 18 feet to 20. He questioned City Code and said 60-foot for a cul-de-sac is difficult to understand. Mathews said the last variance deals with monumentation and he had no experience with how the City Code is worded. He explained history of types of monuments, but had no knowledge of "a brass cap on an iron rod driven to refusal." Discussion followed regarding Howitzer shells driven into the ground, how monuments are held in place in muck that has freeze/thaw cycles, planning a work session to deal with issues in Delta Junction, and platting authorities for DNR and the unorganized boroughs that do not require subdivision roads be built. Mathews said Lori Quakenbush, FNSB Platting Officer, would assist, but she is not interested in a 2-year task force that meets every 3 weeks.

Hallgren suggested having Attorney Jim DeWitt review the current ordinance, work with Ralph Mathews, and then act as facilitator to create a draft.

Leith-Dowling asked that the changes be roughed out first.

Discussion followed regarding re-instituting a platting board and if it is necessary to accomplish the work.

Mathews suggested a work session to get a rough draft.

Musgrove suggested addressing Tract K before the City ordinance can be rewritten or a checklist for platting guidelines can be drafted. He asked, if the City becomes responsible for maintaining the ROW, how the additional 3' clearing on the first street curve, which will be on private property, is to be accessed.

Mathews said the ROW could be modified as a condition to plat approval.

Hallgren said the revised preliminary plat showed the 40' right-of-way, but the October 17 plat does not.

He said he agreed with the ROW condition and with the four variances as described in Mathews letter.

Hallgren moved to grant the four variances, as requested by Ralph Mathews in his October 18, 2008 letter; Musgrove seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Heinbockel moved to grant approval of the preliminary plat for Tract K, Fred Cook Estates Subdivision, Plat #2003-15, as presented, with a condition that the 3 foot additional clearing be addressed, that the gravel pit be used only in the subdivision, and that the gravel pit meet City Ordinance specs relating to reclamation; Martinez seconded.

Mark Gentz said Lot 9 property is useless except for being able to extract gravel from it.

Heinbockel said it is not necessary for the developer to haul in gravel when it is available, but the end result must be that the gravel pit is covered.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

## REPORTS

**Rescue Squad** – Pablo Martinez reported:

- At the October 8 meeting, Council questioned why Gabe's Towing hauled Medic III to Fairbanks. He said Gabe's is based out of Fairbanks and is the only one capable of transporting the ambulance.

- The RFP for the new ambulance was advertised in newspapers on October 20. He thanked Tvenge for his work.

**City Administrator** – Mike Tvenge reported:

- The ambulance RFP is advertised in Anchorage and Delta papers and four papers outside Alaska.

- Application has been submitted to renew the BLM permit for the Donnelly tower.

Hallgren said he thought the permit is for 5 years. He reported TV stations that are broadcast off Donnelly Dome will continue to be analog and will not need a converter box, which people are being told they will

need by February. He said converter boxes are not needed in low-power stationary areas such as Delta Junction. Fairbanks stations, broadcasting in Fairbanks, will be required to go digital, but the signal at Donnelly will remain analog. The Fairbanks channels that are rebroadcast in Delta Junction may, at some time in the future, choose to go digital. Hallgren said he did not know the future of ARCS (Channel 17).

**Finance** – Dave Zimmerman reported Federal bank rate interest is down to 1.5%, which affects money market rates. The City Permanent Fund at Morgan Stanley is earning very little interest, but has not lost value from the recent worldwide credit market “meltdown.”

**Lands** – Pete Hallgren referred to patents, dated September 18, 2008, and reported title was received from DNR for Tract A (10 acres, airport tie-downs area) and Tract D (4.77 acres, skating rink property).

**Library** – Mary Leith-Dowling reported:

- On October 17, Rasmuson grant funds were used to purchase standing height podiums, bike racks, a defibrillator, floor mats, 4 individual DVD players, a DVD/VHS combo player, bulletin boards for the lobby, and a wind-resistant outdoor trash can. The items are the last of the purchases needed at the library and remaining funds will be used to pave the parking lot.

- Calo Flamenco, the library-sponsored event on October 11, was well attended and a Celtic-African concert, Baka Beyond, will perform in the large gymnasium at the high school on October 30. The event is sponsored by Alyeska Pipeline and hosted by the Library Board and Fairbanks Concert Association.

Musgrove asked about computers that average \$2,400 in cost.

Leith-Dowling said the public computers take a lot of wear and must last a long time.

**Park** – Lou Heinbockel reported a moose attempted to jump the park fence near a corner and it will need to be fixed in the spring.

**Recreation** – Lou Heinbockel reported ice is being made and using water from the new well. This is the first time fire trucks are not used.

**Public Health & Safety** – Pablo Martinez reported level 300 and 400 ICS courses are tentatively scheduled for the first week in February 2009. Council attendance is a grant requirement. Martinez expressed appreciation to Leith-Dowling and Tvenge for attending the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting on October 14. He said City Hall will be the hub for area emergencies and it is crucial to be able to work with the public, the troopers, and emergency responders.

Discussion followed regarding a recent incident in which the school was locked down and Fairbanks Dispatch participation in local emergency situations.

**Public Works** – Lou Heinbockel reported:

- He inspected the landfill on October 18 and was impressed with the amount of material prepared for winter covering.

- The north sludge pit was 2/3 emptied on October 18 and completely done now.

- The D6 is back and repairs (from the rollover in April) are finished.

- A lot of gravel has been spread on the streets and a good portion of the new guardrail (near the intersection of Jack Warren and the Richardson Highway) that the State installed this past summer is gone, obviously ruined by someone running into it. He said vehicles are known to skid off the corner on Rapids Street also.

Musgrove said drivers slow down when they approach the corner and if they make it without going off the road, they speed up, once they realize they could've traveled faster.

Feilner said she appreciated gravel being used instead of salt.

Heinbockel asked if courser gravel would be better than the sand that is currently used.

Ellis said 3/8-minus is the grade of the gravel, it has the dirt removed, and it is the same as what Department of Transportation (DOT) uses.

**Additional Reports by Council** – Pete Hallgren reported it is too expensive to send everyone to Ketchikan for the Alaska Municipal League (AML) Conference in November because it would deplete the travel budget for City staff.

Hallgren moved to send Pat White to the Clerks Conference and Dawn Grossmann to the Newly Elected Officials (NEO) portion of the AML Conference; Heinbockel seconded.

Feilner asked to budget for the conference next year when it will be held in Anchorage and will be more feasible to attend.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Paving Library Parking Lot**

Tvenge referenced a September 30, 2008 spreadsheet showing expenditures for the Rasmuson Library Matching Grant. He reported Librarian Joyce McCombs received permission from Rasmuson to use grant funds to pave the library parking lot. A commitment is needed to secure the remaining funds for the project that will go out for bid in the spring. It will also close out the grant.

Hallgren moved to commit the remaining Rasmuson Foundation grant funds for paving the library parking lot; Feilner seconded.

Tvenge said the RV parking area is not included in the paving project.

Hallgren said he would prefer it be included and suggested adding it as an additive alternate.

Heinbockel said he is not against paving the library parking lot, but preferred it be part of a whole project that included the areas around the Community Center and City Hall.

Leith-Dowling said funding must be committed by November 30.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

### **Capital Legislative Projects (Wish) List**

Tvenge reported he met with Representative John Harris and Legislative Aides Pete Fellman and John Bitney on October 17 to discuss Capital Legislative projects. Approximately 8 miles of paving was done this year and Harris suggested putting in another request for more to improve outlying roads that the City maintains. Material can be added to bring the subsurface up to specs, a step toward paving them in the future. Tvenge said other items that were discussed included purchase of a backhoe and a water tender, forgiveness of the prison debt loan, building an auditorium, and school campus improvements. He said Representative Harris plans to speak with Attorney General Talis Colberg about the prison loan. They discussed how the school district is progressing with the local match and how many locals are employed at Pogo Mine. He said the Capital Projects List is to be submitted in early January and items should fall under transportation, public safety, health, and education.

Musgrove said numerous snow machine and four-wheeler tracks cross the runway diagonally and are proof that fencing or access restrictions are needed at the airport. Planning is necessary, especially if more airport lots are to be sold, and "plugging" holes near the trees, along the pipeline, would shut off some access. Airport fencing is a definite safety item.

Hallgren said he had a problem with building and maintaining an auditorium. He questioned if the present D6 is big enough for the landfill, if a D7 or D8 is needed for compacting.

Ellis said the D6 is too small for the landfill operation, but a new one costs approximately \$700,000 without any trade-in. Replacing or reconditioning the D6 pads/tracks will be necessary by spring and that will run between \$25,000 and \$60,000, plus transportation fees. The pads are 70% worn and will be "racing" slick by next year.

Hallgren suggested insulating the Public Works facility (old fire hall) to make it more efficient and to consider using a calcium chloride treatment on roads that cannot be paved. It holds down dust and appears to make maintenance simpler.

Heinbockel said Brewis Subdivision is another core area in which paving would be ideal. They have the population, lots of activity, and the subdivision is on a school bus route. He said to consider adding Service Street ("Clinic Road") to the list also, to construct access to the airport lots.

Hallgren said he preferred to tie that cost to the sale of future airport lots.

Discussion followed regarding land sale proceeds and constructing an access road to the airport subdivision lots.

Musgrove encouraged the public to provide ideas and input, especially if they perceive wanting funds, but to do it before budget negotiations in May and June and now, while preparing the Capital Wish List. He said input should come from outside the City limits also because some City funds are to be used both "inside and outside the fence."

Leith-Dowling said bike paths in the Delta area are brought up often.

Discussion followed regarding working with Deltana and the State to build bike paths.

Feilner said it is unfortunate that bike paths were not included when the roads were paved.

Heinbockel said streetlights on Nistler, between the Richardson and the school district, need to be in better working conditions.

Tvenge said Fred Sheen of GVEA has been given permission to replace the bulbs as a service to the City. Discussion followed regarding installing more efficient fixtures and LED lights lasting longer, providing a better quality of light, using less electricity, and functioning better in the cold.

Feilner was excused at 6:42pm.

Tvenge said GVEA has grants available for LED street lights and he is working with Anchorage in purchasing a volume of them.

Hallgren asked to consider replacing outdoor lights at the library and the streetlights at City Hall with LED lights because they cannot start in temperatures colder than -20° and must be left on all winter.

Heinbockel asked to advertise in the local paper for public input on Legislative Capital items.

Discussion followed regarding repairing the water tender or replacing it, history of the thirty-plus year-old tender, and ten current firefighters who are qualified to operate it.

Fire Chief Carin Bear explained a lengthy attempt to get a replacement that proved unsuccessful. She asked to 1) purchase a used tender, or 2) repair the existing one, or 3) use it as long as possible. She said 2 water vehicles are needed. Bear explained how Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings are affected, how much water can be produced, the number of firefighters in the department, and the average that respond to fires. Fire hydrants qualify for an ISO rate of 8B or lower.

Heinbockel said forgiveness of the prison loan has nothing to do with capital improvements. The State of Alaska should take responsibility for it and the City of Delta Junction should not be paying \$50,000 each year for the next twenty years.

Hallgren said he agreed with Heinbockel.

Discussion followed regarding the benefits of having a rapid response vehicle, removing the columbarium as an item, justifying a backhoe, and being in a bind when one is not available to rent.

Heinbockel stated handicap accessibility is needed at the fairgrounds.

Tvenge said plans are already engineered.

Heinbockel said to continue discussion and prioritize items at the next meeting on November 4.

### **Purchase Street Sand**

Tvenge reported Butch Ellis has requested 400 cubic yards of 3/8-minus sand to use on the asphalt streets. Two quotes were received, the lowest being \$3,080. The City's truck and employees will haul the sand and stockpile it. He said money is available in the budget under street maintenance.

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#012964 to ACS in the amount of \$1,775.02 for Oct '08 telephone service

PO#012965 to Analytica Group in the amount of \$870.15 for annual testing (water at City Hall, Library, and Community Center) and septic waste at the landfill

PO#012966 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$641.45 for Oct '08 phones and power

PO#012967 to Delta Sanitation in the amount of \$695.01 for Sept '08 dumpster service

PO#012968 to Jan R. Dick in the amount of \$4,344.00 for Rescue Squad EMT training

PO#012969 to GEOAPPS, Inc. in the amount of \$794.06 to transfer mapping software to new computer

PO#012970 to GVEA in the amount of \$2,413.76 for Sept '08 electricity

PO#012971 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$848.15 for legal service in revising employee handbook

PO#012972 to NC Machinery in the amount of \$3,910.16 for rent of compactor roller and replacement edges for grader

PO#012973 to Lynn Robertson in the amount of \$529.64 for reimbursement for 7 chairs and supplies for the Rescue Squad meeting area

PO#012974 to Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$15,000.00 for FY09 donation

Musgrove moved to approve purchase orders 012964 through 012974 as presented; Martinez seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote with six (Musgrove, Martinez, Heinbockel, Grossmann, Hallgren, Leith-Dowling) voting.

#### **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Ellis reported an environmentalist from Pogo visited the landfill about a week ago and he plans to recommend Pogo waste being hauled to the City's landfill. He also said the camera-security system for the landfill gates is very close to being finished.

Marge Mullins, editor of the Delta Vanguard, asked to add the Senior Citizen Center (home) to the Legislative List. She said Alaska has a growing population of aging adults and it should be at the top of the list.

Tvenge said a local group is working on the project and it is in its early stages.

Musgrove thanked the "die-hards" in the audience who stayed for the duration of the meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Heinbockel moved to adjourn at 7:10pm; Martinez seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White, CMC

Approved: November 4, 2008