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**City Council Minutes**  
**June 16, 2009 ~ 5:00PM**

**Regular Meeting**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**  
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The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2009 at City Hall in Delta Junction, Alaska. Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Council members present: Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling, Mayor Pro tem Pete Hallgren, Dawn Grossmann
Lou Heinbockel, Sherman Stebbins, Pablo Martinez, JW Musgrove (telephonically)
City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman
Public Works Supervisor Butch Ellis, Facilities Maintenance Employee Jeremy Williams
Librarian Joyce McCombs, City Clerk Pat White
Eleven members from the community were present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Heinbockel reported one item, Paving of the Fairgrounds, to add to *Unfinished Business*.
Martinez moved to approve the June 16, 2009 agenda as amended; Grossmann seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Martinez moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2009 meeting as presented; Heinbockel seconded.
Motion carried.

PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jim Harris, local resident, retired teacher, and representative of Deltana Community Services Partnership (DCSP), explained his involvement and how he became part of the Senior Housing project for Delta. He said the thirteen acres next to City Hall is ideal for the housing complex because it is within walking distance of the Community Center, library, the park, four churches, the Post Office, restaurants, and the grocery store. Harris said they are surveying senior citizens within the community.

Dwight Nissen, local resident and retired teacher, thanked the Council for paving street last year and said they are a wonderful improvement for the community. He said they will move forward with the housing project if, after polling the area, the community supports the idea. One unit will likely develop into assisted living and then into a full-time nursing home. It will allow seniors to remain in their hometown. Nissen said it is well known that seniors are the largest growing segment of the population and they are part of what holds a community together. Some towns that are smaller than Delta have several facilities. Raven Landing Senior Community is the newest housing unit in Fairbanks and has taken six years to complete. He asked the Council to hold the thirteen-acre parcel next to City Hall for ten years and if the project does not materialize, the property can revert back to the City.

Leith-Dowling questioned signing the property over or simply marking it for senior housing.

Harris said setting the property aside would help in the pursuit of funding.

Nissen said one of the first questions financial institutions ask is if land is secured.

Tvenge suggested property on the other side of Remington Road (Clinic Road).

Harris said it is too far out.

Hallgren questioned building senior housing when it will cost \$200,000 to attract a new doctor to this town once Dr. Andreassen retires.

Discussion followed regarding low-income housing, a bus to transport seniors to doctor visits, the difference between a housing complex and an assisted living facility, providing space for parking and sewer and water systems, and other agencies (Alpha Omega) being involved.

Heinbockel said there are no current plans for the property and it has never been auctioned or put up for sale. It is a vacant piece of property. If it is to be set aside, he asked that it be put in writing.

Sebastian Saarloos, Delta Surveys Associates, clarified that the property is between Hayes Street (north), Deborah Street (south), Ryan Avenue (east), and the Richardson Highway (west).

Martinez moved to set the specified property aside for a period of three years until the housing project is confirmed; Grossmann seconded.

Stebbins questioned ownership and responsibility of a structure once it is built on City property.

Leith-Dowling said ownership of the property could be released once the project moves forward. At this point the City is committed to not build anything else on the property for a period of three years.

Musgrove asked for a summary of plans.

Harris said he would produce them as soon as they are available.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Tim Webb, local resident, referred to the firearms ordinance (Chapter 3.07, Discharge of Firearms Within City Limits, adopted September 4, 2007) and said it does not ban hunting completely, but it does limit his capabilities. He asked to amend the ordinance to add handguns as weapons that can be used to hunt.

Heinbockel said the ordinance specifies center-fire cartridges, when it should say high-powered rifles.

The ordinance was initially a reaction to a large-scale cow moose hunt within city limits.

Webb said rifles can shoot long distances, but a twig can slow the bullet or change its direction.

Discussion followed regarding the number of permits that will be issued this year (50), voluntary compliance to the City's letter requesting permit holders not hunt inside city limits, and inability to enforce the ordinance.

Webb said his other concern is about reducing the speed limit on the Richardson Highway beyond Jack Warren Road. Since the road was repaved last year, it should remain 65mph. He agreed that the speed limit on the Alcan (Alaska Highway) should be reduced just beyond the curve after the Trophy Lodge, but he felt the 35mph speed limit on Mill-Tan should be increased to 45mph because it is a speed trap.

Heinbockel said the State determines the speed limit by what traffic prevalingly travels. His concern is the safety of students waiting for school buses in the dark and children riding bikes on roadways.

CORRESPONDENCE

2009 Paving Schedule

Tvenge stated Paving Products, Inc. submitted the May 27, 2009 paving schedule. M2C1 Engineering designed the roads and they are overseeing the project. He gets involved only when there are questions and concerns.

Stebbins questioned why a hot oil sealant is not being sprayed once the surface is prepped. It helps shed water that penetrates the asphalt so it can drain to the side of the road instead of staying under the asphalt. He also asked what degree of crown is being put on the asphalt.

Tvenge said he would inquire about the sealant, which was not part of the specs, and that there is a 2% crown.

Hallgren said professional engineers designed the streets and they check the heat on each load of asphalt.

Four Complaints About Park Outhouse

(Four letters, received on June 10, 2009, were addressed to the City Council by parents of children who use the park playground and nearby restrooms (outhouse), described as "appalling, unsanitary, unsafe, dark, and disgustingly dirty." They asked that the outhouse be condemned and boarded up.)

Heinbockel said outhouses are subject to vandalism. He inspected one about an hour prior to the meeting and found all the toilet paper unrolled and thrown on the floor. He said they are too dark once the door is closed and could possibly be lightened by some plexi-glass or a screen window.

Hallgren said rebar was installed several years ago to prevent children from falling into the pit. It has created a problem in that toilet paper gets draped over the bars and the pit appears full. He said renting porta-potties would be an option, but it would cost \$3,000 or \$4,000 per year.

Stebbins suggested installing a baffle plate to deal with the rebar and to cut a half moon in the wall or door for light.

Discussion followed regarding using inverted chimney flashing to create a pre-fabricated cone versus building a baffle plate, painting the interior walls white, posting instructions for when outhouses are in poor condition, and policing them an extra day besides cleaning them two times a week.

REPORTS

Rescue Squad – Lynn Robertson reported the squad members would participate in joint training tonight with Forestry, Search & Rescue, and the Fire Department.

City Clerk – Pat White reported the Division of Elections in Fairbanks has requested City Hall staff serve as absentee voting officials for Delta Junction. The State of Alaska is responsible to conduct the elections and provide for absentee voting, which is two weeks prior to an election. The local Court House currently handles absentee voting, but it is difficult to accommodate while conducting court hearings. According to Sandi Dighton, Court Clerk, they average 5 or 6 absentee ballots each year for the School Board Election in October, fifty for the Primary Election in August, and maybe two hundred, including early voting, for the General Election in November. The State will pay \$75 per election and they will provide postage-paid envelopes to send the ballots.

Discussion followed regarding additional responsibility and time involved to provide the service.

Leith-Dowling said absentee voting is a State function and the general feeling is to not take on extra work.

City Administrator – Mike Tvenge reported:

- Paving Products, Inc. will work 7:00am to 5:30pm while paving the library parking lot June 19/23. They will allow traffic during the grading period, but not during the paving phase.
- Legislative staff for Senators Mark Begich and Lisa Murkowski will be in Delta on June 25, 2009. They will be available to the public until noon at the Post Office and will meet with Council members at City Hall at 4:00pm.

Lands – Pete Hallgren reported he planned to attend the Alaska Propane Opportunities Conference, hosted by Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority (ANGDA), in Fairbanks on June 17, 2009.

Leith-Dowling thanked Hallgren for representing the City Council. She asked if any airport property would be ready to sell this summer.

Heinbockel said it is too late this year, but if more lots are to be disposed of, enough revenue must be raised to improve the access road, which is a trail between the clinic and the airport property. There was no profit after the last auction (2002) because the money was used to install electric poles.

Hallgren said there is no plan to subdivide the entire property. He suggested adding another street, with lots on both sides, directly north of the existing airport lots and connecting the new lots to the grass strip.

Tvenge said money is budgeted to start the process.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Julie Collins, one of the Trapline Twins, will be at the Community Center on June 19 and fifty-two children attended the summer reading program on June 12.

Park / Recreation – Lou Heinbockel reported he attended a school reunion at the park and, because of the rain, was very grateful for the gazebo, built by the Kiwanis (in 1989).

Public Works – Butch Ellis referred to past conversations about purchasing new loader tires and said foam filled tires range between \$3,300 and \$3,800 per tire and it would not be practical. Wear on the tires is from where the landfill is situated. He said when something breaks at the landfill, costs range between \$5,000 and \$50,000. A lot of it is because the equipment is not what was recommended for that terrain. He said he would appreciate input before comments are made regarding the landfill operation. The last flat tire was 3 years ago and he has spent the winter nursing two leaking tires to avoid travel costs for repairs. Eventually there will be catastrophic failure. He said he would appreciate questions face-to-face and not to hear them secondhand.

Discussion followed regarding the new dumpsters being modified to last longer, the good job of grubbing along to-be-paved roads, brushing needed on the corner of North Clearwater and Nistler, tree removal on

the northwest corner of Hess Avenue/Hayes Street and at the corner of South Clearwater and the Alaska Highway, how GVEA deals with making sure power lines are clear, and street signs being the responsibility of subdivisions.

School Liaison – Sherman Stebbins reported Assistant Superintendent Laural Jackson stated:

- Woody Humphrey is the Project Manager for the weatherization renovations and trash from the project is being hauled to the landfill.
- DGSD will receive \$1.6 million in stimulus funds and it will be used in Title I and Special Education programs.
- Christina Sweet is the new full-time Community Schools Coordinator and can be reached on her district-provided cell phone (803-9467) regarding use of school facilities. The High School is officially off limits throughout the summer during the weatherization project.

Tim Webb, DGSD custodian, said all extra curricular activities are being held at the elementary school. Heinbockel reported information lines that cross North Clearwater (inside the school campus) need to be restrung or buried because they are too low.

Additional Reports by Council – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Vera Gorban has invited the City Council to a picnic at the park for the annual World Refugee Day on June 19. The picnic is to honor the achievements of individuals and families and to share in the joy and hope that come with resettlement.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Paving of the Fairgrounds

Heinbockel said 2nd Street and the fairgrounds are additive alternates for this year's paving project. He is in favor of paving the fairgrounds for elderly and handicapped access, now that it is known that funding is available.

Heinbockel moved to award the fairground pathways contract to Paving Products, Inc. not to exceed \$53,593.85; Martinez seconded.

Tvenge said the paths are engineered to be 10 feet wide. Any wider would possibly flood fair booths.

Leith-Dowling questioned paving the fairgrounds because of how little they are used.

Martinez said the Deltana Fair is held three days out of the year. The Lions Club, Boy Scouts, and 4H use the fairgrounds and Senior citizens could use the paved pathways as an exercise track.

Grossmann said the goal of the Deltana Fair Board is to make the fairgrounds a community destination. Discussion followed regarding other organizations wishing to use the fairgrounds, accessibility, and planned improvements.

Stebbins questioned cheating another potential roadway if the money is spent to pave the fairgrounds.

Leith-Dowling said she is concerned with being able to finish the lighting project on Nistler.

Heinbockel said he has concerns with providing streetlights for the school grounds on North Clearwater because of the uncertainty of being able to pay light bills in the future. He said he would much rather put the \$73,000, that was bid to pave 2nd Street, into the lighting project or to improve the area near the Senior Lounge on the south side of the Community Center.

Discussion followed regarding paving Brewis Subdivision because it is densely populated, trees in the ROW of Brewis, not paving the City Hall parking lot, and not excusing Pablo Martinez from voting because of his position on the Deltana Fair Board.

Ellis said the Fire Department uses 2nd Street to access the Alaska Highway and traffic off the Alaska Highway prefers it to the triangle where it is more difficult to enter the line of traffic on the Richardson.

Ann Geise, Fair Board Treasurer, said the fairgrounds would be used more often if they were paved.

Motion passed on a roll call vote to pave the fairgrounds with six (Martinez, Grossmann, Hallgren, Heinbockel, Musgrove, Stebbins) voting in favor and one (Leith-Dowling) voting against.

NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary Re-plat Approval of Block 3, Jack Subdivision

Saarloos Sebastian, Delta Survey Associates, stated Holly Stewart plans to sell her house and dog kennel (Lot 10), but the well is on Lot 1. Instead of putting in a new well on Lot 10, it would be easier to vacate

the existing lot line and establish a new one. Saarloos said, if approved, he would provide a final plat, platting certificates, and complete a survey showing the changes in lot sizes.

Heinbockel moved to approve the preliminary re-plat of Block 3 of the Jack Subdivision as presented; Hallgren seconded.

Musgrove asked about a checklist. (Establishing a Platting Authority Guideline, a checklist that land surveyors would follow, was discussed in February/March and October 2008.)

Discussion followed regarding electricity easements, water and well separation, and lot size.

White stated she would attempt to coordinate a meeting between Hallgren, Letha Burcham, Ralph Mathews, Sebastian Saarloos, City Attorney Jim DeWitt, and a Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) planner as suggested by Mathews.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Preliminary Plat Approval of GVEA 2 Subdivision

Saarloos said Ed Larson, owner of IGA Grocery, purchased property from GVEA in 2003 and then located the store sign and a new well on it. He intends to purchase an additional thirty feet, which is the wooded area north of the parcel, and then subdivide it into Lots 21A-1 and 21A-2.

Heinbockel moved to approve the preliminary plat for GVEA 2 Subdivision as presented; Martinez seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Public Hearing, Seconding Reading, and Adoption of Ordinance 2010-01, An Ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska Providing for the Budget for the Fiscal Year 2010

Heinbockel moved to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2010-01, an ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska providing for a budget for the fiscal year 2010; Martinez seconded.

Leith-Dowling called for public comments with none being offered.

Heinbockel moved to close the public hearing; Martinez seconded. Motion carried.

Heinbockel moved to hold the second reading and adoption of Ordinance 2010-01; Martinez seconded.

Heinbockel referenced Draft 4 of the FY10 budget and said a 4% salary increase for part-time, non-benefit-receiving employees would amount to \$1,510 and it would affect 5 employees. He said a 2% raise is a \$4/week increase on a \$10/hour job.

Heinbockel moved to amend the budget to include a 4% pay increase for all part-time employees; Martinez seconded.

Discussion followed regarding a 2% increase for full-time employees, adding retirement to the City Administrator position, and seasonal employees making more (\$8.50) than minimum wage (\$7.65).

Motion passed on a roll call vote to amend the motion of adopting the proposed budget to include a 4% wage increase for part-time employees with six (Heinbockel, Grossmann, Martinez, Stebbins, Musgrove, Leith-Dowling) voting in favor and one (Hallgren) voting against.

Council recessed at approximately 7:01pm and reconvened at 7:12pm.

Tvenge explained changes between budget drafts: \$13,000 was pulled from the Permanent Fund and added to the general budget and the Ft. Greely grant was added as a line item to the library budget.

Stebbins moved to amend the budget to provide the remainder of city employees with a 2% pay raise; Heinbockel seconded.

Stebbins said 2% amounts to \$4,200. Future hires should be given written clarity regarding benefits. It is not clear whether the City is committed to provide open-ended coverage or if it comes with stipulations. Employees should know up front that there is no chance of a wage increase if the cost of benefits goes up.

Hallgren said there are no guarantees to free health care forever.

Leith-Dowling said there is no negotiated agreement and employees know they can express their opinions during budget negotiations. It is also the same time the new fees become available.

Heinbockel said he appreciated comments from McCombs on June 2, which changed his perception because he, if an employee, would rather have the increase of a benefit than to have it in salary. The City cannot continue to afford an annual increase in benefits without employee contribution.

Discussion followed regarding shopping for another insurance company, total benefit package increases (7.5%), how other municipalities are coping, cost of living, and no local inflation in the past year.

Motion failed on a roll call vote to give full-time employees a 2% wage increase with four (Hallgren, Martinez, Musgrove, Leith-Dowling) voting against and three (Heinbockel, Grossmann, Stebbins) voting in favor.

Musgrove asked for clarification on Tvenge's retirement plan.

Zimmerman said plan options are Mutual of America and International City Managers Association (ICMA), plus Public Employee Retirement System (PERS).

Discussion followed regarding next year's budget requests, wage comparisons with other municipalities, and differing opinions regarding paying the retirement.

Heinbockel moved to adopt Ordinance 2010-01, an ordinance for the City of Delta Junction providing for a budget for FY10, to include a 4% pay increase for part-time employees; Martinez seconded.

Motion passed to adopt the budget on a roll call vote with six (Heinbockel, Martinez, Hallgren, Musgrove, Grossmann, Leith-Dowling) voting in favor and one (Stebbins) voting against.

Purchase Orders

PO#013533 to ACS in the amount of \$1,542.65 for June '09 telephone services

PO#013534 to Alaska Wildland Support in the amount of \$4,187.98 for June '09 park and cemetery lawn maintenance contract

PO#013535 for Raymond Andreassen in the amount of \$2,500.00 for May '09 services as physician sponsor for ambulance

PO#013536 to Arctic Fire & Safety in the amount of \$682.85 for Fire Department (purchase fire foam and test SCBA air tanks)

PO#013537 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$641.45 for June '09 911 phones and power

PO#013538 to Buffalo Center Auto Parts in the amount of \$738.91 for landfill and street supplies (grease, hose ends, absorption pads)

PO#013539 to Crowley Petroleum Distribution in the amount of \$819.56 for landfill heating and equipment fuel

PO#013540 to GVEA in the amount of \$2,366.99 for May '09 electricity

PO#013541 to M2C1 Construction & Engineering in the amount of \$6,052.00 for May '09 paving design and bid process

PO#013542 to Moore Medical Corp in the amount of \$1,232.52 for Rescue Squad supplies (airway kits, syringes, fracture kits, trauma dressing, infant oxygen masks)

PO#013543 to Powerhouse Signs in the amount of \$725.00 for 10 stop signs

PO#013544 to Weidner Construction in the amount of \$850.00 for 2 portable toilets used at the park through the end of May until the pavilion restrooms were thawed

PO#013545 to Lynden Transport in the amount of \$6,284.16 for freight on 3 landfill containers

Martinez moved to approve purchase orders 013533 through 013545 as presented; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Martinez said he appreciated the ladies who submitted letters about the outhouse conditions and that they would be upgraded and effort will be made to keep them cleaner. He asked that the public not hesitate to contact City Hall when there are problems.

Heinbockel suggested approaching the paving contractor to provide a price to pave around the Community Center. He said the loop by the Presbyterian/Lutheran Church (from the library to the Richardson Highway) is not a street, but it would compliment the library parking lot.

Tvenge said the ideal time to talk to the contractor is while the library parking lot is being paved (through June 23). The area was engineered a couple years ago, but never put out to bid.

Discussion followed regarding paving the Presbyterian Church's driveway, whether it is City property, the fairgrounds not being City property, paving all the way around the Community Center, and making sure funding is available for the Nistler street lighting project (installing new equipment on new poles or repairing the old ones first and how many light poles).

Hallgren asked Tvenge to get a price and conduct a phone poll instead of scheduling a special meeting.

Leith-Dowling said Dr. Andreassen reported at the Round Table meeting today, that he has been working with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) to get a doctor to commit to work for them for a certain length of time. Incentive would be to pay off their student loan debt and he wants to establish an account for it. Dr. Andreassen is asking the City Council to consider a monetary contribution. He is attempting to get community support through the military and other organizations also.

Hallgren said reasonable health care is needed if senior citizens are to remain in the community. The City already budgeted \$30,000 to subsidize Dr. Andreassen's clinic.

Martinez said the money was to keep the Rescue Squad functioning because Dr. Andreassen would no longer volunteer his time as the physician sponsor to support local Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Discussion followed regarding difficulty in getting medical providers to rural communities, setting up an account and asking the City to control it, and Dr. Andreassen's 5-year plan to close, sell, or lease the clinic and retire.

Heinbockel said the City Council was instrumental in bringing Dr. Andreassen to Delta in the mid-80s with the help of the Fairbanks Clinic. The same process could be done again to recruit new doctors. Dr. Andreassen eventually became independent and bought the Fairbanks Clinic out.

ADJOURNMENT

Grossmann moved to adjourn at 7:55pm; Martinez seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White, CMC

Approved: July 7, 2009