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**City Council Minutes**  
**October 13, 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, October 13, 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, JW Musgrove
Sherman Stebbins, Dawn Grossmann

Council members excused: Lou Heinbockel, Pablo Martinez

City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman,
Acting City Clerk Letha Burcham

13 members from the community were present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Grossmann moved to approve the agenda as presented; Hallgren seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Musgrove moved to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2009 meeting as presented; Grossmann seconded. Motion carried.

CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS

Burcham reported Election Judges counted ballots after the polls closed at 8:00pm on October 6 and the Canvass Board re-counted them at 9:00am on October 7. Council member (Musgrove) and staff (White) witnessed the re-count. 36 votes were cast in the October 6, 2009 Municipal Election. Mary Leith-Dowling received 32 votes for Seat A. There were 3 write-in votes. Sherman Stebbins received 35 votes for Seat D. There was 1 write-in. Dawn Grossmann received 31 votes for Seat E and there were 3 write-in votes.

Hallgren moved to certify the October 6, 2009 Election results as presented; Musgrove seconded. Motion carried.

OATH OF OFFICE

Burcham administered the Oath of Office to re-elected officials, Leith-Dowling, Stebbins, and Grossmann.

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND MAYOR PRO TEM

Leith-Dowling called for nominations for Mayor.

Stebbins nominated Leith-Dowling for Mayor; Hallgren seconded.

Grossmann moved to close nominations; Hallgren seconded.

Leith-Dowling closed nominations.

Hallgren moved that Leith-Dowling be elected mayor by acclamation; Grossmann seconded. Motion carried.

Leith-Dowling called for nominations for Mayor pro tem.

Musgrove nominated Hallgren for Mayor Pro tem; Grossmann seconded.

Stebbins moved to close nominations for Mayor pro tem; Grossmann seconded.

Leith-Dowling closed the floor for nominations and asked if there were any objections to Hallgren being Mayor Pro tem. With no objections, she proclaimed Hallgren Mayor Pro tem for the next year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Charlie Herman spoke regarding the finalization of his Eagle Scout project, which was building a cache on the Visitor Center grounds. He presented pictures of the cache to the Council.

Stebbins told him to get the moose antlers out of the back of his personal truck to mount over the door of the cache to make it truly authentic.

COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Ron Kirby, dated October 5, 2009, requesting more airport lots

Musgrove commented that people come to city hall and say a lot of things; if people want these lots, we need to know the entire list due to cost of preparation for offering lots for sale. The land must be surveyed and go through a platting process and it costs money. Regulations must be met when planning for the roads and power lines. He said he doesn't remember what it all cost the last time.

Hallgren said that last time the City did make money. He explained that all the lots did not sell originally but were sold over the counter within the next two years. We dedicated all the proceeds originally to putting in the roads and the electricity so they would be useful to the buyers. When the last several lots were sold, it was theoretically profit, which went into the City Permanent Fund.

Musgrove expressed concern in the amount it would cost to put in the power.

Hallgren explained that it would depend on how it was done; it would not have to come as far this time. He said discussion has taken place regarding the placement of the new road being parallel and north of the current one. It would probably go all the way through to the grass strip so as to provide another access to the runways. The upfront costs would involve surveying, deciding where the lots would go and then the costs of putting in the road. He suggested that if more lots were made available, he would like to use the proceeds to properly construct the road beyond the clinic, as it is the legal access. He expects that at the very worst we would break even if not ultimately make money for the permanent fund.

Musgrove said he would like to see more people's names on a list showing a commitment before the City spends a lot of money on it. He is concerned that no provisions were made in the last sale to have the buyers contribute to the upkeep of the runways or liability insurance. He also would like to do a security assessment of the airstrip before there are a lot of improvements. If the road is open to the ski strip it will be a loop with three and four wheelers roaring through. He said he wonders what concerns should be thought about regarding the Missile Defense airstrip's closeness to the City airstrip. He said in some parts of the country it would be of concern and could be an opportunity for some assistance in some things for the City airstrip.

Hallgren said he is surprised that Mr. Kirby had not known about the last sale as it took several years, ordinances, resolutions, advertising and public auction. He said that not all lots sold at the auction and it took another year and a half to sell the remaining lots over the counter on a first come/first served basis at the minimum prices.

Stebbins asked what the lots sold for.

Musgrove explained that the lots with guaranteed road and power access were in the \$8,000 range. The others were less.

Hallgren explained that City Ordinance requires that a minimum bid price be set before public auction and the lots were all set at the appraised value. He went on to say the bidders got together beforehand and decided which lots they wanted so no one was bidding against each other.

Musgrove said he knew that one of the bidders wanted the lot closest to his adjoining property, but that he did not get involved in that discussion.

Hallgren said that full cash payment was required rather than a deposit and payment schedule has had been done in the past.

Musgrove stated that GVEA ran power all the way to the end and that the over the counter buyers got the lots with power access for less.

Stebbins asked if the road could be improved and make only one or two lots available at a time so that the bidding would be more competitive.

Hallgren said it was certainly possible, except that one of the problems is that GVEA charges less for the more poles you get. He said that if people are looking for airport related uses and lots then the city should consider looking into it.

Leith-Dowling asked if Hallgren was looking into it since lands fell under his responsibility.

Hallgren answered that he had talked to Tvenge on numerous occasions over the last two years and Tvenge has been looking into it.

Leith-Dowling suggested that something be put together to let the bidders know in advance that they would be expected to contribute to the expenses of airstrip maintenance.

Stebbins asked if the Pilots Association had set rates in place.

Musgrove answered that the Delta rates are based on the State of Alaska charges for a gravel airstrip that is not maintained on a daily basis.

Tvenge asked Musgrove to come up with some terms of sale for the airport lots to be considered when putting the plans together.

Musgrove said there is a 3-day conference in Fairbanks that may include trials and tribulations of private airports and he will attend if he gets the chance. The conference would have plans as well as possible funding resources available.

REPORTS

Rescue Squad – Michael Nuckols said the new Medic 1 is in the shop at Seekins and should be back soon. The Squad has transported a few with flu symptoms. He said that there were several in the last week or so and he wasn't sure if a peak had been met or not. The average number of transports is about the same as last year. The squad is still having difficulty providing coverage on weekdays, particularly when transporting to Fairbanks. He said it is easier for a volunteer to take an hour or so from work for a local run, but the commitment for a 4-6 hour run to Fairbanks is harder. There is a couple of people who work alternate work schedules doing it at this time, but unfortunately they are losing one of them very soon and the second one lives across the river at Whitestone so it depends upon the ice bridge whether she can make it or not. He said there are currently three attending an EMT II course.

Musgrove asked what the expenses were after insurance on the repair of the ambulance.

Nuckols said the insurance had already sent a check based on the estimates. However the first estimate did not include having to take the machine apart to see what else was damaged.

Tvenge said the preliminary estimate was about \$15,000 for the repairs; we have a \$500 deductible.

Zimmerman reported that a check had been received from the insurance company in the amount of \$14,300.

Musgrove said that he is glad that the Rescue Squad is available when needed, however it is a volunteer organization so there is no guarantee that it will always be available.

Cemetery – Mary Leith-Dowling called attention to a memo left in council boxes regarding fee changes for the cemetery. She stated that she wanted the council members opinions before making changes that will involve ordinance changes.

Hallgren asked if this would also have to do with potential cremation burials.

Leith-Dowling said yes, it depends on if a City employee helps with the interment or not.

Hallgren said he would appreciate hearing her thoughts since she is the expert on cemetery matters.

Leith-Dowling answered that it is something most people can do by themselves. Once we find the corners to the plot, there really is no need for the City to be involved. If they need or want us to do it, then we should be charging because it costs us to send one of our employees. She said she often volunteers to mark the corners herself since she lives so close.

Hallgren asked if there are standards for how deep the ashes need to be placed.

Leith-Dowling replied that there is nothing written down, but she tells everyone to be sure to go at least a couple feet down. She went on to say that most of the time it just involves finding the corners and she doesn't charge a fee.

Hallgren asked about putting several urns in each plot.

Leith-Dowling said that it is allowed already; the lots are 10' by 10' so they are big enough for several urns.

Tvenge said it has worked best when supervised by a City employee.

Leith-Dowling said as long as people are told what is expected, they usually do it.

Hallgren asked about policy regarding no winter burials.

Leith-Dowling said that it was hard to enforce.

Hallgren said he preferred that the city be involved in finding the corners and charge whatever it costs.

Leith-Dowling asked again for input on the possible changes to the policy.

Mayor – Leith-Dowling reported that we have managed to gather \$5,050, including the City's \$2,000 for Volume 4 of the Alaska North to the Future book. We should get 5-6 copies to share amongst the contributors. The Salcha-Big Delta Soil & Water Conservation District, Deltana Community Services Partnership Project (DCSPP) Corporation, Mt. McKinley Bank and the City were the ones who joined in the effort. She has signed a document to go ahead and a purchase order will be made. A committee will be formed to decide what will go in book; it will be mostly pictures with a little bit about the town.

Hallgren asked if Leith-Dowling had met all of the conditions of the vote of the council concerning the book purchase.

Leith-Dowling said she had and she negotiated to get the cost down. She is talking with local photographers to get pictures, as about 100 are needed. It is an ongoing project.

Hallgren replied that he wanted the record to show that all the conditions had been met.

Acting City Clerk – Letha Burcham reported:

- She would be in attending a free ESRI mapping seminar as well as a free state grant-writing workshop next week in Anchorage.
- Reminded council that the annual blood drive would be held at the Community Center on October 29 from 2 – 7:30 PM.
- Reminded everyone that John Sloan invited the council as well as the public to attend the GVEA board meeting on October 25 (6:00pm at City Hall).

City Administrator – Mike Tvenge reported:

- The Allen Army Airfield (AAA) officially opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Sept. 29 and the runway is now complete. Brigadier General Charles Foster and Thomas Ferguson landed a C-17 in approximately 3,000 feet to the amazement of the crowd. He said that the narrow assault strip simulates other landing sites around the world. He explained that the benefit to this airfield is that planes can now fly from Eielson to Delta to use the AAA instead of having to fly all the way to Washington state to practice on a short airstrip; it will be a big cost savings to the National Guard.
- On October 7, Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association (AMLJIA) Risk Control Specialist, Sean DeWalt, conducted employee safety training and safety inspections at the City facilities. The overall survey was favorable. DeWalt noticed some of the changes we've been making. Facilities Maintenance Employee Jeremy Williams has been helping with the safety at all our facilities. A full report is forthcoming. The inspection was to help identify potential hazards within our infrastructure.
- Reminded Council about the upcoming Legislative Capital Projects list. He asked for a list of items to consider and prioritize for submittal; we need adequate time to produce the documentation demonstrating our needs.

Musgrove said we should start with projects that were requested but not funded on last years list.

Lands – Pete Hallgren reported the final EIS (Environmental Impact Study) for the Delta Railroad Extension had been issued. He has been through it and said that the railroad will be using the route the City recommended which is west of the river, crossing near Jarvis Creek and heading east along the south side of the Alaska Highway. He said it is good news whether it ever comes to pass or not. He said he noted two inconsequential errors in the EIS. One error said that they were approving the route that crossed north, but they meant the one we approved of. The second error is that they changed the wording saying

that there is no public transportation between Delta and Fairbanks. However, when it was pointed out to them that there is a shuttle van, they misunderstood and indicated that the City runs the shuttle to Fairbanks. But the EIS is finalized so there is no way to have those two minor errors corrected, but he wanted everyone to be aware of them.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported that the CANTUS vocal group was brought down from Fairbanks by Alyeska with the Library Board helping to pay for the busses and feeding them. She said the event was very well attended with people having a good time laughing and cheering.

School Liaison – Sherman Stebbins reported:

- School Superintendent, Dr. P. J. Ford-Slack and other school district personnel have that worked out an agreement with POGO mine for a substantial donation for the school weatherization project. He explained that the agreement states that POGO will match all community raised donations up to \$70,000. He said currently there is \$45,000 raised by the community. He said Ford-Slack would use \$68,000 of presidential stimulus money once approval is received. That will bring the total to \$113,000, which brings them very close to their goal. He said they are looking for a donation from the City and suggested the Council be working toward what amount should be donated toward the project. He said he feels that a nice looking school is a good draw for people to stay in the community.

- Delta Girls Volleyball will be hosting a tournament Oct. 16-17 at the high school.

- A career roundtable will be held at the Career Advancement Center on Oct 29 from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm involving the Partners in Progress to show what Delta youth may need in the future.

Leith-Dowling added that the Center also has many TVC courses available.

- There has be a handful of confirmed cases of H1N1 flu. The school absenteeism was up in the last 10 days or so but is closer to normal now.

Musgrove asked for a clarification of the weatherization donation amounts.

Stebbins repeated saying that there is \$45,000 actually raised by the community. POGO is going to match up to \$70,000 and final approval has not been received on \$68,000 that has been earmarked from stimulus money.

Musgrove said he is assuming that POGO won't match the stimulus money.

Stebbins answered that he hesitates to say it, because he doesn't want people to stop donating, but the funds will be very close to the \$190,000 goal needed by May.

Hallgren asked if the community donates another \$30,000 would POGO match it.

Stebbins said POGO would match up to \$70,000.

Musgrove added that this information gives the City a ballpark amount to discuss.

Stebbins says he wants a plan to be worked out for the City donation.

Leith-Dowling stated that she would like to see all those who opposed the borough step up and donate because they said they would support education and do what was necessary.

Hallgren said he would like to see the three-quarters of the Delta area population who live outside city limits ante up some of their part of it.

Musgrove said he felt Hallgren was right; that even though most of the students live outside the City limits, the City should help. He felt that the city should contribute even if the school were to be located outside the City limits.

Stebbins again stated that one reason people decide to settle in a community is the quality of the schools.

Musgrove added that the City receives money that is not limited to just within the City limits.

Hallgren said his point was that most of the area population does live outside the City limits, so they shouldn't be looking for the City to bail them out of everything.

NEW BUSINESS

Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) Request for Alleys/Easements (for power line route to serve Buffalo Townsite) – to override what was granted at the July 28, 2009 City Council meeting (20-foot ROW easement on extension of Fourth Street, which is not named or built and exists only on a map)

Cheryl Laudert, Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) Land Management Supervisor displayed a large color-coded map of U.S. Survey NO. 3293 A & B, Townsite of Buffalo Center. She said they have decided that if GVEA could just get easements along the streets then as people apply for power, they could determine how best to get power to them.

Patty Davis, GVEA Right of Way Agent explained that at first they had it all planned but ran into problems. She explained in detail all the routes investigated and the reasons property owners would not grant easement. She also pointed out the problems encountered due to the “anchoring” requirements. She pointed out that the majority of the lots have never been sold or developed and are still under the original patents. She found that there is no way to track down owners to get easements. She said they came to the council meeting to brainstorm with the council to see what would be the best for all concerned.

Musgrove asked for clarification of the alleyways.

Davis explained that the township allowed for 30 feet in the alleyways for utilities. It does not show on this plat, but on the adjacent plat clearly show it..

Discussion ensued regarding the city’s ownership of the streets and alleys, how to best serve the subdivision, whether or not the streets or alleyways would be made into utility easements and property ownership issues.

Laudert said they could go back to their office and re-plan the grid just as if it were a regular subdivision and bring that back to the council for continued discussion.

Musgrove asked if this new plan was better than the one approved on July 28, 2009.

Laudert answered that once Terry Garwood, GVEA Engineering Technician, came to Delta and looked at the situation, it became clear that anchoring would be a problem partly due to the size of the lots.

Garwood proceeded to explain the anchoring requirements for setting the poles, running lines to lots and the problems that would be encountered.

Hallgren said he would prefer to grant utility easement right-of-way (ROW) on the alleyways and wherever necessary on the streets by resolution providing GVEA comes back with a plan showing the alleyways and how they will serve the subdivision. That plan would need to be approved by the city attorney. He added that a rational plan to provide power is to the advantage of everyone in town.

Musgrove said that the council wants to make it all happen.

Leith-Dowling said that if the clerk has the new plan in time, it would be placed on the Oct. 20 agenda.

Laudert said that the property owner who requested the power is outside for the winter, so he knows it will be worked out while he is gone.

Laudert agreed to have a new plan drawn and submitted for inclusion on the Oct. 20 agenda. She thanked the council for considering their dilemma and being willing to work things out. She also introduced Dean Bean, who replaced Fred Sheen as the Delta Division Line Job Foreman.

Tvenge said that he had spoken to Jim DeWitt, City Attorney, and it all depends on how the GVEA request is worded; vacating is much harder.

Musgrove asked again what the definition of an alleyway.

Hallgren explained that the plat does not describe them.

Stebbins offered to bring in his deed to his lots in this subdivision to help clarify how the title company describes the easements or ROW’s.

Purchase Orders

PO#013761 to Airport Equipment Rental in the amount of \$3,150.00 for rent of backhoe for cemetery burial and compactor for street paving

PO#013762 to ACS in the amount of \$1,562.21 for Sept '09 telephone service

PO#013763 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$649.65 for Sept '09 911 phones and power

PO#013764 to Bank of America in the amount of \$2,232.35 for credit card charges (hotel rooms for AML Conference in Anchorage, oil roller replacement for color printer, anti-virus software update, office supplies, 18V battery at Public Works building, airfare for Flower Cole to attend LEPC conference in Anchorage, and epoxy glue and injector tool used at skating rink)

PO#013765 to Delta Concrete in the amount of \$1,500.00 for 20 concrete parking barriers for library and Community Center parking lots

PO#013766 to Galls Incorporated in the amount of \$741.51 for Fire Department gear (vests, gloves, name tags, shirts)

PO#013767 to GVEA in the amount of \$1,786.05 for August '09 electricity

PO#013768 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$3,982.52 for legal services (Code of Ordinances, Title II – Elections and Title III, Section 3.01.011 – Regulation of Firearms)

PO#013769 to Hale & Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$2,351.91 to add 2009 ambulance to insurance policy

PO#013770 to Heritage General Contracting in the amount of \$1,040.00 for library boiler troubleshooting

PO#013794 to Alaska Library Network in the amount of \$1,817.90 for 3 Dell laptop computers

PO#013795 to Alaska Municipal League in the amount of \$1,499.00 for FY2010 membership

PO#013796 to Amazon.com in the amount of \$2,383.76 for library books, DVDs, and audio-tapes

PO#013797 to Audio Editions in the amount of \$546.98 for library audio CDs and CD binder

PO#013798 to Delta Sanitation in the amount of \$657.34 for Sept '09 dumpster services

PO#013799 to Delta Professional in the amount of \$1,499.72 for Sept '09 vehicle fuel

PO#013800 to Butch Ellis in the amount of \$664.52 for reimbursement of travel to Anchorage for MOLO (Manager of Landfill Operations) re-certification

PO#013801 to Raymond Andreassen in the amount of \$2,500.00 for Sept '09 ambulance sponsorship service

PO#013802 to Heritage General Contracting in the amount of \$825.00 for library boiler cleaning and tuning

PO#013803 to John Johnston in the amount of \$1,399.60 for library network update and installation of Internet "Gatekeeper" software

PO#013804 to NC Machinery in the amount of \$938.78 for four grader edges and bolts

PO#013805 to St. Bernard Software, Inc. in the amount of \$4,359.88 for library Internet Gatekeeper Software

PO#013806 to Carin Bjorn Von Letzendorf in the amount of \$1,919.49 for reimbursement of travel expenses for firefighters (Chief Bear, Chris Rapan, Amelia Morlock, and Cory Nydam) to attend the firefighter conference in Anchorage

PO#013807 to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$11,503.21 for Oct '09 group health insurance

PO#013808 to Alaska Library Network in the amount of \$1,280.87 for library books

PO#013809 to BETA Lighting in the amount of \$8,680.00 for ten (10) LED streetlights near Delta High School and Delta Elementary School

PO#013810 to Crowley Petroleum in the amount of \$2,393.60 for landfill heating oil and vehicle fuel

PO#013811 to SWANA, Alaska Chapter in the amount of \$700.00 for Butch Ellis' Landfill Operations Seminar (3-year certification)

PO#013812 to Wyndham Publications, Inc. in the amount of \$5,050.00 for Alaska Communities publication fee – \$2,000.00 from the City of Delta Junction and \$3,050.00 from Mt. McKinley, Deltana Community Corporation (DCC), and Delta Soil & Water Community Conservation

Musgrove moved to approve payment of purchase orders 013761 through 013812; Grossmann seconded. Musgrove asked if the library boiler is working better.

Tvenge explained what the problems are and that Siemens is coming down on Thursday with their boiler specialist.

Stebbins asked about the twenty-four PO number gap in the middle of the list.

Leith-Dowling said that the others were for less than \$500 and do not require council approval.

Hallgren said he is confused about signing the under \$500 PO's. He said he thought that even though the lesser PO's could be processed, he was under the impression that they all would still come to the council for approval. He thought the authority was only in signing them.

Zimmerman explained that PO#013761-013770 were checks he had written on Sept. 25 for the meeting he thought would be on the first Tuesday in October. Since the meeting was moved to October 13. He had additional invoices arrive during the first part of October, so he started numbering again at 013794. The gap is for the small invoices under the \$500 that do not require council approval.

Leith-Dowling said this is the procedure that has been followed for a long time.

Hallgren said he had always assumed that all invoices came before the council not just the ones over \$500. He thought that procedure was to process the smaller ones, but that they still appeared before the council. He said he would be happy to be wrong, but if he wasn't he wanted to get it straight.

Stebbins said he would appreciate knowing about all the nickel and dime expenses.

Leith-Dowling said that a sheet is printed out with each batch of checks and all anyone would have to do is ask Zimmerman for it.

Hallgren asked that someone research the ordinance so that everyone knows the procedure.

Tvenge said that he would.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hallgren remarked that he noticed that issues of the Delta Vanguard are sold out but the Delta Wind is not.

Leith-Dowling said she had called Mike Paschall, Delta Wind Editor, regarding the elections not being announced in the paper. She felt that the local newspaper should have made the public aware that a local election was being held. She said they print articles from other newspapers all over the state but nothing on School Board, Deltana Corporation or the City Council elections. She thought it was a pretty sad situation that the editor made that choice.

ADJOURNMENT

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 6:41pm; Stebbins seconded. Motion carried.

Letha Burcham, Acting City Clerk

Approved: October 20, 2009