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**City Council Minutes**  
**November 24, 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, November 24, 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, Lou Heinbockel, JW Musgrove (telephonically), Sherman Stebbins, Pablo Martinez (arrived at 5:05pm)

Council member excused: Dawn Grossmann

City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, City Clerk Pat White

Four members from the community were present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Leith-Dowling stated the number sequence on the last six purchase orders was corrected from 013100/013105 to 013900/013905.

Heinbockel moved to approve the November 24, 2009 agenda; Stebbins seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Heinbockel moved to approve the November 3, 2009 minutes; Stebbins seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Gaming Permit Renewals – Delta Chamber of Commerce and Nenana Ice Classics

Heinbockel moved to show no opposition of gaming permit renewal applications from Delta Chamber of Commerce and Nenana Ice Classics; Stebbins seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Rescue Squad – Pablo Martinez reported only the old Medic I (1993 ambulance) and Medic II (2002) are in operation. The new Medic I (2009) will be picked up from Fairbanks next week and Medic III (2004) still needs transmission repairs.

Airport – JW Musgrove reported there are a few snowdrifts that will be taken care of by a good wind.

Mayor – Mary Leith-Dowling reported:

- A good portion of the Alaska Municipal League (AML) Conference, held in Anchorage November 16/20, was about gas lines. Former Governor Wally Hickel talked about splitting future Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) wealth between communities and Alaskan residents. The University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) presented a report about climate change, based on fifty years of data, and said there is no real answer, that it is all still a mystery. She said she found the whole presentation interesting. Hallgren stated he attended the gasline sessions. Alaskan communities are worried about the cost of energy, but none of the proposals promise cheaper energy. He explained possibilities with the main customer being GVEA and that all competing gasline proposals come through Delta Junction. Propane is something useful to Delta residents because it can be transported and stored easily. Ft. Greely and Pump 9 might be big enough customers to support natural gas, but Delta Junction has far too low of a population. AGIA (Alaska Gasline Inducement Act), the Trans-Canada pipeline to the Lower 48, are investigating a spur to Valdez.

Tvenge said Municipal Revenue Sharing and training for municipal managers were of interest to him. Stebbins said he was grateful for going because it was very informative training.

- The Alaska Stand Alone Pipeline Scoping meeting is scheduled at the Community Center on December 9, 2009 from 4:00 and 8:00pm.
- Bill Seitz will turn 101 on November 29 and a birthday party will be held in his honor at the Denali Center in Fairbanks.

City Clerk – Pat White reported:

- The U.S. Census attempted to hire local residents in March, September, and November. They are scheduled to recruit again on December 1 for census work in January and February 2010.
- The agenda for the December 1 Council meeting will be posted on November 27, but purchase orders will not be available until November 30. City Hall will be closed for Thanksgiving (26th). Discussion followed regarding office staff taking Friday (November 27) off as personal leave, not closing the office without adequate public notice, the landfill keeping Friday/Saturday business hours during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, City Hall and the landfill being closed on Friday (December 25) for Christmas and Friday (January 1) for New Year's, and the landfill keeping Saturdays (December 26 and January 2) open for business as usual.

Heinbockel stated he wanted to establish a policy so that in the future City Hall can be closed the day following Thanksgiving, as long as the public is given adequate notice. It would be taken as personal leave, but staff would not be forced to take the day off.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported:

- The library would close early on Wednesday (November 25), 6:00pm instead of 8:00pm, through Saturday (November 28) and open on Sunday.
- The Gingerbread House Contest, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, would be on display at the library the second week in December.
- Former employee Wendy Smithen will cover evening hours for Danielle Davis, who will be out on maternity leave.

Park / Recreation – Lou Heinbockel reported:

- A vehicle drove into the fence on Aurora, which will require repairs in the spring.
- The Delta Skating Association (DSA) fundraiser was held at the Trophy Lodge on November 21. DSA raised \$6,800 during the evening, plus another \$8,600 in sponsorship to fund the skating programs. DSA pays a big portion of the rink costs and may be short on funds for the year. The City and DGSD also contribute to the whole operation.
- The Delta High School Hockey players were successful in raising funds during a Skate-a-thon (on November 20) to replace the stolen hockey gear (of visiting Su-Valley Rams, taken from the Liewer-Olmstead Arena on November 13/14).

Discussion followed regarding the \$2,500 needed to replace gear, where the excess money could be used, the extent of damages (broken locks and cabinets), and City insurance not covering theft.

Hallgren said he and Musgrove visited the outdoor rink when it was fully illuminated. He said it is a fabulous facility and should be advertised to the public.

Tvenge said the lights are on a timer inside the Liewer-Olmstead building and go on between 4:00 and 9:00pm, recently changed from 5:00pm because of the darkness. Outdoor rink hours will be posted on the outdoor Liewer-Olmstead Arena sign.

Heinbockel said he had previously thought of alternating the lights to cut energy costs, but all ten (10) LED is a minimum when sticks and pucks are in use. He said he needs proof that the new lights are affordable, that each one only draws 100 watts per hour.

Stebbins asked why one side of the outdoor rink does not have protective fencing.

Tvenge said the screening was not installed on the side of the player benches and penalty boxes. It has not yet been purchased, but will eventually be added.

School Liaison – Sherman Stebbins reported:

- The elementary school experienced some zone problems that resulted in busted water pipes in the front office area.

- The 2009-2010 MOA between the City of Delta Junction, DSA, and the school district still needs to be hammered out and finalized.
- A community survey will be mailed or emailed by Christina Sweet, DGSD Community Schools Coordinator. The purpose is to understand the needs of the community in using school facilities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Second Reading, Public Hearing and Adoption of Ordinance 2010-03, An Ordinance Granting Certain Public Utility Easements to Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA)

Heinbockel moved to open the public hearing on Ordinance 2010-03; Martinez seconded.

Heinbockel said there is no real option because not approving the easement would deprive property owners from accessing power.

Stebbins said once electricity is established more people will purchase property in the area.

Heinbockel moved to close the public hearing. Motion carried by no objection.

Heinbockel moved to adopt Ordinance 2010-03, An Ordinance Granting Certain Public Utility Easements to Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) as presented; Martinez seconded.

Hallgren said he appreciated being able to work with GVEA to create a rational development plan.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

Tvenge referenced the December 11, 2008 list of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and descriptions: 1) Street Paving / Road Improvements - \$2,500,000.00, 2) Water Tender - \$190,000.00, 3) Public Works Building - \$750,000.00, 4) D8 Dozer - \$700,000.00, and 5) Airport Runway Security Fence - \$100,000.00. He said Governor Sean Parnell is focusing on projects that meet criteria for transportation, infrastructure, and education.

Heinbockel asked to add a bobcat or skidsteer utility tractor with attachments and a low-bed, pull-behind trailer, which is needed to move snow in and around the rink and hockey building and to clean gravel out of intersections and driveways. He said the loader is too big and Butch Ellis is making cost inquiries.

Martinez asked for another ambulance.

Discussion followed regarding discarding or refurbishing older used vehicles, the newest (2009) ambulance being one of last year's CIP requests, and Missile Defense providing the 2004 model.

Hallgren asked to add the End of the Alaska Highway (Commemorative) Arch and said the cost was \$475,000 ten years ago.

Discussion followed regarding postponement of the project because of contamination in the area, progress on that cleanup, Chamber of Commerce's involvement in the arch project because of the tourism industry, engineering of the project already complete, and it would be a good addition to the Farmer's Market, Visitor's Center, and Sullivan Roadhouse, which are already located at the "Triangle."

Heinbockel said if adequate parking space is also needed.

Leith-Dowling stated she would like to restore the Betty Crocker fire truck and park it near the Arch because it represents the true spirit of volunteerism. Close to 7 million Betty Crocker coupons were collected to purchase the fire truck in 1972.

White stated Dawn Grossmann asked to consider bike paths, which was previously submitted as a stimulus package, but not a capital project.

Heinbockel said the D6 is doing the job at the landfill, although it is marginal. Equipment depreciates in value and it may be of more value just to keep it. He said cleats (pads) on the tracks would need to be replaced in January.

Leith-Dowling asked to add research funds for the senior housing project. It is projected to be a regular housing structure that can later provide minimal care services and possibly a medical facility attachment.

Hallgren said Deltana Community Services Partnership (DCSP) has requested the City sponsor their grant application for the feasibility study. It is not yet known if the housing unit would be subsidized or how it will operate. He explained that the City of Valdez, who has a 20-mil tax base, covers major maintenance costs on their senior housing facility plus they pay at least \$100,000 annually to cover out-of-pocket expenses. Hallgren said he supports donating the land for the project, but because the City of

Delta Junction represents approximately 1,000 people with no assured income or taxes, he is not willing to support the Delta-Deltana population of 5,000 by subsidizing anything on a permanent basis.

Heinbockel suggested adding it as a line item during the next cycle of budget negotiations.

Tvenge suggested putting senior housing on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan to help DCSP comply with the Community Block Grant.

Musgrove said the End of Alaska Highway Arch fixes nothing and if a brush attachment cannot be purchased for the John Deere tractor, then it should be auctioned off before replacing it.

Discussion followed regarding the front-end loader (old Case) and finding replacement parts, renting equipment instead of owning, storing, and maintaining it, the history of maintaining Brewis Subdivision, non-paved streets that need material added (Rebecca Lane, Sandra Street, Reeve Avenue), past paving and upgrade costs, the ski-slope condition into Granite View Subdivision, and road improvements into the airport lots subdivision.

Stebbins said to add wording to the description of street paving and road improvements on the CIP list to read, "... to provide access for emergency services."

Discussion followed regarding how the list of City-maintained streets has grown in recent years because of requests from the public, inability to maintain all the roads that are listed, and a November 12, 2009 request from the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to identify arterial and collector roads in the Deltana region. The CIP list was revised as: 1) Street Paving / Road Improvements, 2) Public Works Building, 3) Ambulance, 4) Skidsteer Utility Tractor and Trailer, 5) End of Alaska Highway Arch, 6) Water Tender, 7) Airport Runway Security Fencing, and 8) D8 Dozer.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Revision

Leith-Dowling referenced a memo from Mike Tvenge, dated November 10, 2009, identifying a list of capital projects from the November 2004 CEDS Plan. She said DCSP needs it updated in order to apply for a Community Development Block Grant. Delta Regional Economic Development Council (DREDC) compiled the CEDS after BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure, 1995-2002).

Hallgren said the senior housing project should be the first Top Tier Priority.

Discussion followed regarding the indoor skating rink never being fully concreted, not being able to afford refrigeration and maintenance, which would have satisfied the #1 priority in 2004 (heated indoor recreation and youth center with hockey rink, arcade, and indoor track), the City Council acting as the only organized governmental agency to revise the CEDS because DREDC no longer exists, and each item on the 2004 list (scratching several for either being accomplished or no longer necessary, getting the school's opinion on a new high school and middle school, moving the existing middle school off post, using local school facilities or another multi-purpose building for community-based activities and performances, what Ft. Greely facilities are open to the public, NRA support to local shooting ranges, the need for a new Post Office facility with a large parking lot and home delivery, area-wide water and sewer, and a community kitchen).

Purchase Orders

PO#013894 to ACS in the amount of \$1,548.20 for Nov '09 telephone service

PO#013895 to Raymond Andreassen in the amount of \$2,500.00 for Oct '09 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) sponsorship

PO#013896 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$646.56 for Nov '09 911 phones and power

PO#013897 to Alaska Municipal League (AML) in the amount of \$1,050.00 for conference registration fees for Grossmann, Stebbins, and Hallgren

PO#013898 to Bank of America in the amount of \$1,473.16 for credit card services (Leith-Dowling registration fee to attend AML Conference, Grossmann air travel to AML Conference, Burcham mapping software training and grant training in Anchorage, Tvenge grant training in Anchorage and visit with AMLJIA, City's insurance company)

PO#013899 to Buffalo Center Auto Parts in the amount of \$671.42 for parts and materials (Fire Department Brush 5 starter replaced, oil, gasket, All-wipes, and scraper for use at the landfill, and oil funnel, cap screws, and brake cleaner needed for street maintenance projects)

PO#013900 to Crowley Petroleum in the amount of \$3,604.99 for Oct/Nov '09 heating oil

PO#013901 to GVEA in the amount of \$3,143.05 for Oct '09 electricity

PO#013902 to Guess & Rudd in the amount of \$5,705.44 for legal services (firearm policy and GVEA easement)

PO#013903 to Mikunda, Cottrell & Company in the amount of \$13,000.00 for FY09 annual audit progress billing #1

PO#013904 to United Parcel Service in the amount of \$1,151.18 for freight to deliver outdoor rink lights

PO#013905 to Jay White, White's Septic Service in the amount of \$1,150.00 for services at park pavilion and outhouses

Heinbockel moved to approve payment of purchase orders 013894 through 013905 as presented; Martinez and Musgrove seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Flower Cole said she still supports bike paths.

Heinbockel said DOT should be pressed to construct bike paths when the Jarvis Creek Bridge and the Richardson Highway (to Ft. Greely) are rebuilt.

Hallgren referred to the 2004 CEDS and said this community has been blessed in the past ten years. He said he was amazed at how many projects actually have happened, including those that were paid by Missile Defense.

Margie Mullins referred to CIP discussion and asked to add installation of heat-sensitive, self-directed heat tapes for all public buildings as a means to save energy.

Hallgren asked Mike Tvenge to research them.

Mullins asked about clearing around homes of elderly residents because Delta Junction is one of the highest risk fire areas in Alaska.

Tvenge said Bruce Swaim from Delta Forestry is working on grant application for it.

Mullins asked how the roads in Brewis Subdivision became a City responsibility.

Heinbockel said it was advantageous to the City when the State offered revenue sharing for road maintenance. At that time 27 ½ miles of roads within City limits were identified. Over the years grants have funded maintenance of these roads. There are still many platted streets that have never been built.

Leith-Dowling said other roads, particularly those in the Jack subdivisions, were built by the State and left for the City to maintain.

Michele Trainor said the new Medic I was driven back from Fairbanks today. She asked about advertising public use of the outdoor rink.

Heinbockel said the outdoor rink is available to the public, although the rink building may not be open at the same time to access restrooms.

Stebbins asked if the MOA with the school can be amended to say that the City is not responsible for theft of private property, especially when there is a secure building on the school's premises.

Tvenge said the November 13/14 theft at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena was a new experience. The stolen hockey gear that belonged to Su-Valley was not covered under the City's insurance policy.

Martinez said the National Health Care Plan would require any policy over \$6,000, which would include the City's "Cadillac" plan, to be taxed 40%. He asked who would pay the cost, the insured or the benefit provider?

Heinbockel stated the employees should meet and realistically discuss what can be afforded.

Mullins said there are now LED bulbs that can be used in existing fixtures. The initial cost of a LED bulb is \$18.95, but it only costs 16.5¢ per year in electricity. Mullins said appliances and equipment that are turned off, but still plugged in, continue to draw power. The new Smart Power Strip senses when something is turned off and stops sending electricity to it. It is another way to save on the cost of energy.

Hallgren said an article in the latest GVEA Rural Lite stated it is better to let bulbs burn out while LED technology is perfected, particularly with outdoor lighting.

ADJOURNMENT

Heinbockel moved to adjourn at 8:11pm; Martinez and Hallgren seconded. Motion carried.