



~~~~~  
**City Council Minutes**  
**February 2, 2010 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 at the Delta Junction City Hall. Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Council members present: Mayor Mary Leith-Dowling, Mayor Pro tem Pete Hallgren, Pablo Martinez
Sherman Stebbins, JW Musgrove, Lou Heinbockel

Council member excused: Dawn Grossmann

City employees present: Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman, City Clerk Pat White

Thirteen members from the community were present at the beginning of the meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Leith-Dowling said *New Business – Airport Subdivision – Conceptual Design* would be moved to *Request to Speak* as a courtesy to Ralph Mathews who has to drive back to Fairbanks.

Hallgren said he wanted to add a topic to *Unfinished Business* and would make a motion to authorize the City Administrator to disclose the reason for the Executive Session on December 1, 2009.

Heinbockel moved to approve the February 2, 2010 agenda as amended; Musgrove seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

White asked to add wording on page 4 of the January 19, 2010 minutes, to read, “Musgrove moved to approve the easement document for the GVEA ROW in the Buffalo Center Townsite....”. She said Ordinance 2010-03, granting certain public utility easements to GVEA in the Buffalo City Townsite, was approved on November 24, 2009.

Martinez moved to approve the January 19, 2010 minutes as amended; Heinbockel seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Leith-Dowling called for public comments on non-agenda items.

Charlie Herman, Boy Scout Troop 56, said it would be beneficial for the community to have a rubber surface track instead of an asphalt track. Both Delta High School and the Middle School could host track meets here instead of always having to travel to Fairbanks. Herman said running on the existing school track causes shin splints that put runners out of commission. Tripping on hurdles causes injuries also.

Leith-Dowling suggested adding the track to the Legislative Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) list.

Musgrove asked if it is to be built from scratch and where the location would be.

Herman said to build from scratch or resurface the existing High School track.

Heinbockel questioned the North Pole track, if the rubber surface is in fact on top of an asphalt track.

Discussion followed regarding ASAA (Alaska School Activities Association) rules/requirements, most competitions being held in Fairbanks, and gathering information.

Stebbins asked why the High School has not looked into replacing the track.

Leith-Dowling said it has been discussed at the school district several times. She said a track would be a good addition to the City Park.

Heinbockel said if an asphalt track is to be a legislative item, a dollar amount is needed.

Hallgren suggested City Administrator Mike Tvenge speak with Superintendent P.J. Ford Slack before researching the subject.

Ralph Mathews said he was involved in surveying the track behind Lathrop School in Fairbanks several years ago and was astounded with the cost of the project. The center of the track was designed for both a football field and a soccer field. Mathews said he did not know the rules of a track meet, but did know that if anyone broke any kind of a record, it meant nothing unless it was on a track that met certain specifications and that is the reason Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) built the rubber-surfaced track.

Leith-Dowling called for Council comments on non-agenda items.

Musgrove said he appreciates the public attendance and participation.

Stebbins reported he looked into a collector's firearm for the City's 50th anniversary celebration and displayed the Ruger Super Blackhawk, a pistol that was designed for the Alaska 50th Anniversary. He said its retail value is \$1,200 and it is one of five hundred guns, but it took a year and a half to produce.

Discussion followed regarding a minimum order of two hundred fifty customized pistols that cost \$1,100 each, being unable to have them made in time for the City's 50th celebration and whether a minimum order could be gotten, and sticking to pins, hats, and t-shirts as commemorative items.

Airport Subdivision – Conceptual Design – moved from *New Business*

Ralph Mathews referred to a design draft and enlarged version of the new airport subdivision. He explained the approaches on both airfields (east-west runway that runs along Rapids Street and the north-south ski strip) and a public tie-down area (Block 5). He suggested designing the airport subdivision in phases, the first phase accomplishing the necessary requirements to vacate the section line easement, which will take the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) approximately one year to approve. Mathews explained that a major requirement for section line easement vacation is that rights of way ensure adequate alternate access. He asked to designate contacts for resolving issues.

Leith-Dowling said Musgrove, Hallgren, and Tvenge could make decisions without the entire City Council.

Discussion followed regarding obtaining a Certificate to Plat, whether the eighty-foot ROW in Block 3 and 4 of the new subdivision was preferable for both road traffic and taxiing aircraft, or if sixty-foot, as it is in Block 1 and 2 (2002 airport subdivision) is adequate.

Mathews explained lot sizes (1.3 to 1.4 acres each) and the new subdivision that would consist of three blocks (3, 4, and 5), twenty-two lots, and a tie-down area (Block 5). He said GVEA does not want any electric poles within two hundred feet of the edge of an airstrip, even if existing trees are taller than the poles, so an underground public utility easement (PUE) would likely go through Lot 12 of Block 4 to serve lots in Block 3 and 4. Getting a plat to DNR is the immediate concern.

Discussion followed regarding getting power to all the lots and the tie-down area, Block 5 being used mostly by transients and how electricity would get paid, and how snow blows and where it drifts.

Musgrove said an estimate is needed to know how much it will cost to develop the new subdivision and how many people actually commit to purchasing lots.

Discussion followed regarding construction of roads being the major expense and whether lot owners should be responsible to put in their own electric poles.

Heinbockel said the new subdivision should be developed in the same fashion the other one (2002) was and that the City should not lose money in the process, but should not make a profit either. It must break even.

Hallgren said ordinances dictate that lots must be sold at auction, at a minimum of the appraised value. If power and roads are installed, the appraised value is higher. Electricity was installed in the first subdivision so that the value of each lot was basically the same. He said it is not known whether or not to subdivide the whole parcel as to what will be useful thirty years from now.

Discussion followed regarding platting the whole subdivision and developing only part of it, deeds including aviation related restrictions, why and when appraised value of standard city lots were increased (200% in July 2003), and whether Block 3 of the airport lots could be unrestricted (without aviation requirements).

Mathews said phasing the airport development process would allow time to tell what the market will bear, so whether or not lots have aviation restrictions is not a concern at this point.

Hallgren said the clinic road (Service Street, a.k.a. Remington Road) is the only legal access into the airport subdivisions and it will need to be upgraded.

Discussion followed regarding accessing the airstrip through the hundred-foot tree buffer by taxiing down the ski strip, location of existing electrical poles, and the problematic power lines between the airstrip and the Richardson Highway that would preferably be buried.

Musgrove said a price tag to develop the airport subdivision to completion should be known in advance. Will it cost \$10 or \$100 million? Where is the money going to come from? A rough ballpark figure is needed.

Heinbockel said the City would front the money and pass the costs onto the purchasers.

Hallgren said costs would be known before the property is sold. It was known that there would be a slight profit in the last (2002) sale, even after the roads and power were installed, because enough cash from the initial sales provided the money for them.

Mathews can give an estimate once the design is finished. The real costs will be in road construction. Hallgren said an engineer would provide those costs. It is known that the road from the clinic to Lot 1 of Block 3 to Matt's Body Shop must be built to decent standards.

Discussion followed regarding putting the whole area up for a private individual to develop, depositing all land sale profits in the City Permanent Fund, and being able to use up to 90% of the interest for general operating funds.

Heinbockel said most State land was held for schools (education), but the schools decided they would not need it, so it was given to the City.

Stebbins said he is interested in overall costs because if only \$1,000 profit is made off each lot, it would be pennies in the whole process.

Discussion followed regarding the first phase costing approximately \$2,000 and not more than \$5,000 and beginning with a plan, even if it changes in the future.

Martinez moved to authorize Ralph Mathews to proceed with vacating the section line easement to get the subdivision platted; Musgrove and Heinbockel seconded.

Hallgren said members from the public have requested airport usage property. The process can be stopped at any time should it prove not feasible.

Mathews said vacating the section line easement and plat approval does not require roads be constructed (for the alternate access).

Hallgren said Zimmerman would keep a running tally of all associated costs in developing the subdivision.

Musgrove thanked Mathews for his work on the subdivision and attendance at the City Council meetings.

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

Mathews said a FNSB Platting Board meeting is scheduled for February 17 at 6:00pm in Fairbanks. He will present a plat that appears to be adversarial and it might be educational. Because of that it would be beneficial to attend the meeting to witness procedures and get some hands on experience.

REPORTS

Fire Department – Pablo Martinez reported Dale Diviney delivered a box of stuffed moose, compliments of the Delta-Clearwater Moose Lodge 911, to give to children for comfort when their homes burn down.

Mayor – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Riki Ellison, founder of Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance (MDAA), would like to know if the City of Delta Junction would be a sister city to a community in Hawaii. She said Ellison would be here February 11 or 12 and needs an answer by then.

Hallgren said he would like to look into it.

Lands – Pete Hallgren referred to a report from Department of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development (DCCED) and said the City of Delta Junction's population has increased to 1,128. He reported:

- He was authorized to attend the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) Open House on January 26 at the Alaska Railroad Depot on Johansen Expressway in Fairbanks. One local resident expressed concerns with where the railroad would cross the Delta River because if it crossed above Jarvis Creek it would stop the erosion in the area. Hallgren said he issued a written comment regarding it solving the erosion problem.
- Hallgren, Mike Tvenge, Letha Burcham, and City Attorney Jim DeWitt met with Surveyor Ralph Mathews and FNSB Platting Officer Loriann Quakenbush in Fairbanks on January 27. Musgrove attended the meeting telephonically. Delta Surveyor Sebastian Saarloos was unable to attend. Hallgren said the purpose of the meeting was to rationalize the City's subdivision process. The major power of a second-class borough, like FNSB, is zoning and subdivisions and the meeting was beneficial because of the knowledgeable people involved. Hallgren said progress has been made on the platting authority checklist, which is now in its second draft form. There has not been any major problem in the past ten years, woodstoves would not be outlawed, and it will not be a highly bureaucratic system that is too sophisticated for Delta. The checklist is to avoid

problems and it will come before Council once it is finished. Hallgren said he appreciated the advice and participation from everyone involved. Both Mathews and Quakenbush provided their service as a courtesy. Leith-Dowling said the ordinance would be changed once the checklist is finalized.

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported:

- IRS and PFD forms are available at the library.
- City Attorney Jim DeWitt donated four pieces of art from his mother’s collection for the library.
- The Library Board has started to organize the upcoming Open House, April 24, 2010.
- The Poetry Out Loud competition, normally at the High School, was held at the library on January 19.

It was a big success and will be hosted at the library again next year.

- Library Aid Nancy King will host the traditional “Aurora Greeting Card,” a children’s craft project, during the Festival of Lights, 10:00 to 2:00 on February 13.

Musgrove asked about lifetime membership.

Leith-Dowling said members of the Library Board liked the idea, but a fee has not been decided.

Park / Recreation – Butch Ellis said he would plow the inside of the park to prepare for the Festival of Lights fireworks closer to the event (February 13). Aurora Avenue would be opened also.

Public Works – Butch Ellis reported work on the new D6 dozer shoes would begin this week.

School Liaison – Sherman Stebbins reported a donation for the weatherization project would be on the February 16 agenda and he asked that the City’s finances be reviewed by then. He said the first School Board meeting in March (4th) would be held at the Ft. Greely Middle School.

Discussion followed regarding the school district paying \$20,000/month to heat the Middle School at Ft. Greely, paying those rates since Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC 1995-2002) days, Pogo’s offer to match the community contribution for the weatherization project up to \$70,000, and DGSD possibly having to use their emergency funds to pay the 2% note (\$193,878).

Heinbockel said he wanted to know a number. What amount does DGSD need?

Musgrove said turning over government funds does not represent participation from the public for the match.

Martinez said this community raises \$70,000 each year for the Relay for Life, American Cancer fundraiser, but can’t raise the 2% match to support the \$9.6 million school renovations, which is an equally good cause.

Heinbockel said rural areas of Alaska are comfortable with the State of Alaska paying for education. Prior to pipeline days, every wage earner in Alaska paid a \$10 annual school tax that generated \$700,000.

Discussion followed regarding asking the Legislature to allow bypassing the State and giving the \$50,000 annual prison loan payment directly to the local school, the responsibility of the State of Alaska to provide schools and education in the unorganized borough, and the community’s promise to support education when borough formation was voted down (in August 2007).

Hallgren said according to the new population estimates, \$10,000 could be raised within the city limits alone if everyone contributed \$10 each.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Disclose Reason for December 1, 2009 Executive Session

Hallgren reported an Executive Session was held at the December 1, 2009 City Council meeting to discuss matters, the immediate knowledge of which could harm the municipal finances. It is the only Executive Session that does not require disclosing the topic of discussion and it was done in a lawful and legal manner. Hallgren asked that the topic be disclosed when it is deemed not harmful because in most cases the reason for not disclosing does not last forever.

Hallgren moved to authorize the City Administrator, in his discretion, to publicly disclose the matter under discussion at the December 2009 Executive Session as soon as it is reasonably feasible; Heinbockel seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

NEW BUSINESS

Letter of Support ~ Deltana Community Services Partnership (DCSP) Pre-Development Application for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

Heinbockel moved to authorize the City Administrator to issue the letter of support to Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, dated January 27, 2010, as presented; Martinez seconded.

Hallgren said he supported the application assuming most of the money will be used to hire consultants to prepare a proposal. He said he agrees with comments in the local paper, that the senior housing project is a great idea, but “you have to count the costs.” He would like to see the proposal because at this point, everyone is in support of the project, but will there be five units or three hundred? Will it be subsidized for low-income renters or will the tenants pay full rate? Hallgren said he was pleased that the City could donate the land as a place marker.

Leith-Dowling said community needs must first be clarified. Not only the number of units, but also the level of care and affordability must be determined.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Airport Subdivision – Conceptual Design

See discussion prior to *Reports*.

Purchase of Stick and Flux Cored Welder

Leith-Dowling referenced a January 29 memo from Tvenge explaining purchase of a stick/flux-cored welder. Discussion followed regarding the gasoline engine, keeping the welder mobile when it is not inside the landfill shop, other available light duty welders, needing a more powerful welder to repair the crack in the rib pocket on the dozer, purchasing welding materials on an as-needed basis, and the under-10% local purchase rule.

Heinbockel moved to approve purchase of the recommended welder to Airgas – Nor Pac, Inc. for the apparent low quote, not to exceed \$3,313.00; Hallgren seconded.

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

Purchase Orders

PO#014046 to Aetna WHO-AAS in the amount of \$10,741.88 for Feb '10 group health insurance

PO#014047 to Amazon.com in the amount of \$557.42 for library books

PO#014048 to Audio Editions in the amount of \$530.98 for library binders and audio books

PO#014049 to Buffalo Center Auto Parts in the amount of \$1,081.96 for repair parts (Rescue Squad - 2 amp charger and new battery, Fire Department – 2 new batteries, Landfill - battery acid, 2 boxes latex gloves, and battery tester, Streets - oil, air filters, grease, and light bulb for Ford 4x4 truck, Zamboni – fuel filter, oil filter, oil, bulbs, and antifreeze)

PO#014050 to City of Fairbanks in the amount of \$5,103.63 for January/June dispatch service (half of annual 2009-2010 dispatch service)

PO#014051 to Delta Professional Development in the amount of \$653.83 for Jan '10 vehicle fuel

PO#014052 to NC Machinery in the amount of \$5,944.28 for new tracks for D6 dozer

PO#014053 to Siemens Industry in the amount of \$1,542.00 for retest of all heat zones at library

PO#014054 to L.N. Curtis & Sons in the amount of \$755.00 for firefighter pants

Musgrove moved to approve payment of purchase orders 014046 through 014054 as presented; Martinez seconded.

Zimmerman said a little over \$7,000 has been paid to Siemens to date for work at the library.

Hallgren said heating systems at the library and the Fire Department are incredibly complicated. The library requires not a janitor, but a building superintendent because of the ventilation problems.

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

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS - none

ADJOURNMENT

Martinez moved to adjourn at 7:14pm; Stebbins seconded. Motion carried.