



**City Council Minutes**  
**May 18, 2010 ~ 5:00PM**

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

The regular meeting of the Delta Junction City Council was held on Tuesday, May 18, 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, Lou Heinbockel  
Dawn Grossmann, JW Musgrove, Sherman Stebbins, Martinez (arrived at 5:07pm)

City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman  
Facility Maintenance Foreman Jeremy Williams, City Clerk Pat White

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

#### **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Leith-Dowling wished Heinbockel a Happy Birthday and Musgrove presented him with a candle-lit chocolate cake.

Heinbockel moved to approve the May 18, 2010 agenda as presented; Grossmann seconded.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Heinbockel referenced his comment about repairs on 4th Street, under *Additional Council Reports* on page 3 of the May 4, 2010 draft minutes, which read, "\$4,000 or \$5,000 in the past." It was actually "\$8,000 in 2004." Delta Industrial Services had created the problem, but did not help in paying the costs to repair the damages to the street.

Musgrove reported the "Arctic Noise" exercise, under the *Airport Report* on page one, is "Arctic Edge."

Heinbockel moved to approve the May 4, 2010 minutes as amended; Grossmann seconded.

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

Tana Wood reported the Delta-Greely High School Baccalaureate is scheduled on May 19 at the Assembly of God Church and Delta High School Graduation is May 21.

Doris Fales said forty-four students were listed in the 2010 graduating class.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Heinbockel referred to a May 12, 2010 request from Michael Paschall, President of the Board of Directors of the Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD), to combine Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD), Delta Rescue Squad, and RDVFD. He proposed discussion and negotiations because he felt combining the fire departments is worth exploring.

Hallgren said he wanted to hear from Rescue Squad and DJVFD volunteers first and agreed in combining the fire departments into one agency that covers the entire Delta/Deltana area, but is uncertain that it can be accomplished. He questioned if it would provide better emergency services to the community and said he would also appreciate hearing suggestions to improve the quality of service, particularly response time of volunteers.

Musgrove said he felt combining them is a terrible idea.

Martinez said he would reserve comment until all sides are considered.

Grossmann said she agreed, would speak with the volunteers, and report back to the Council.

Tvenge said DJVFD Fire Chief Carin Bear is presently out of town.

Mike Nuckols, Acting Squad Chief, introduced Angela Lentz, the new Emergency Medical Services Assistant. He said combining EMS services is basically a good concept because of all the challenges the

ambulance squad faces, but he could not offer an opinion regarding the fire departments. Nuckols said the membership would have to vote on whatever decision is made and he feels the request to combine the three agencies is not a "take-over," as much as it is creation of a new EMS organization that would have to remain under the City's umbrella. Nuckols said the easiest way to handle the issue is to expand the City limits and develop a brand new charter. He explained a possible scenario of better response time as long as there is sufficient membership, each station had a dedicated cadre of people, and the call is dispatched without confusion. Nuckols said many squad members reside in the Deltana area.

Lynn Robertson said the problem is still lack of daytime responders and the need to rely on Ft. Greely, who has helped out so much in the past year.

Hallgren said one reason for the two-bedroom apartment in the new fire station was for volunteers to sleep at the station to cut down on response time.

Nuckols said one EMT does stay at the fire station two nights each week.

Stebbins suggested a co-agreement of lock combinations and equipment so various people could respond out of the station that they are closest to.

Robertson said it is partially in place because some volunteers serve both the Rescue Squad and the Fire Department. She said it would be a whole lot easier if the city limits could be reconsidered.

Leith-Dowling said the population of Delta Junction and Deltana could not have been predicted fifty years ago when the boundaries were established.

Musgrove said Paschall's letter does not say anything about cooperation. The proposal is for the Deltana Fire Department to absorb the City Fire Department and the Delta Rescue Squad.

Williams said he believes it would be quite an expense for the City to insure and maintain Rural Deltana's equipment, not to mention other hidden costs.

Discussion followed regarding a requirement of firefighters in the Anchorage municipality to be EMT-certified, charging for *both* medical and fire services, and legislation, which ended in negotiations, for municipalities to collect contributions that are not deemed insurance.

Hallgren said State legislation is needed to provide more help rather than more complexity. The costs to accommodate Paschall's request could be fairly staggering and input is needed from the people involved before decisions can be made.

Leith-Dowling asked that the department chiefs recommend a date for a work session once Chief Bear returns.

## **REQUEST TO SPEAK**

**Doris Fales**, President of the Delta Lions Club, expressed appreciation for the City Council. She said she is fully aware of the many hours of hard work and dedication because of having served on the School Board for twenty-some years and that it is very rare that anyone says thank you. Fales said the Delta Lions Motocross Branch Club would be officially disbanded, effective immediately. The Delta Junction Motocross (DJMX) started out as a wonderful dream, the youth enjoyed it, and they received educational training, but it has become a matter of community safety and imminent liability to the Delta Lions Club and possibly the City of Delta Junction. The City furnished \$40,000 to install a fence for the motocross area, but it has been vandalized numerous times and the Lions have replaced signs four or five times. It is evident that heavy equipment was used during the last incident to pull up the fences and run them over. The remaining sharp pieces protruding from the ground and the unsecured hills and racetrack are bigger safety issues. Fales said the Lions will also inform the Deltana Fair Association of their decision and Mr. Hall has volunteered to bulldoze and flatten the motocross track. She questioned what to do with the fence and who has ownership of it, DJMX, Deltana Fair, or the City of Delta Junction.

Hallgren said there is at least one hundred yards of fence that has been destroyed, which is about one-quarter of it in several places, and the main gate was drug out with possibly a winch. There is no top rail, but most of the fence is in good condition. He said the motocross property, that belongs to the Deltana Fair Association, is otherwise well designed and a very nice, well built facility. He suggested closing off the gate so that the area cannot be accessed.

Stebbins said big landfill boulders could be used.

Grossmann said the Fair's goal is to finish fencing the perimeter of the fairgrounds. She was on the Fair Board when the track was established and the agreement was that any permanent improvements would

belong to the Fair. She suggested using the fence in other areas of the fairgrounds, possibly through the wood line where it cannot be mowed down entirely.

**Bill Baker**, Lions District Governor 49B and former Delta resident, said the Delta Lions has a responsibility to the community. He offered to make arrangements to contact their legal department if it becomes necessary.

Heinbockel asked about the DJMX Club.

Fales said the agreement has been in default over the last two years.

Grossmann said Scottie Brown, one of the DJMX founders, is in total agreement with the Lions Club. He said the first three years were exciting and there were fifty or sixty active participants, but he is frustrated with the vandalism and some members that were unwilling to pay the minimal amount to participate. Grossmann asked that an article be put in the local paper so that the people who paid their dues, acted responsibly, and obeyed the rules understand why the program has been ruined.

Stebbins said he competed in cross-country racing as a member of the Ft. Hood, Texas Off-road Riders Association in the early 1990s. The track was on the military installation, where it could be patrolled occasionally by military police. Sometimes trespassers were arrested. Everyone was forced to trailer motorcycles, dirt bikes, and four-wheelers to the track and wheels did not touch the track by anyone that was not a member. Stebbins suggested investigating a small section of land on post. He said unauthorized users create unrealized damage and dirt displacement, which takes hardcore riders one to two days to fix and prepare them for an event.

Hallgren said the vandalism was not against DJMX and it is an understatement because damages are well into felony levels, enough that it should put people in prison.

Tvenge said he would locate the agreement from when the \$40,000 was given to DJMX.

## REPORTS

**City Administrator** – Mike Tvenge reported:

- Governor Sean Parnell has begun review of the State's \$3.16 billion capital project requests.
- Dave Castor, KTVF Director of Engineering, worked on equipment at the transmission tower today and better reception is expected on Channel 7 (KTVF) and Channel 2 (KATN).

Discussion followed regarding Channel 17 (ARCS) being off the air for almost a year and it being broadcast on Dish Network, Channel 70.

- Dave Zimmerman released the FY2011 budget today.

Discussion followed regarding a work session at 5:00pm on May 24, 2010 to review the new budget.

Hallgren said he is concerned about running a \$600,000 deficit on an annual basis and feels exceedingly dramatic cuts must be made no later than 3 years from now. He asked for two work sessions, one to address health care benefits that have increased another 6%, which he feels employees should be required to contribute toward, and a second work session to cover specific items of concerns.

- Discussion followed regarding trimming a budget after it is presented in a first draft, introducing it on June 1, and past history when the Mayor and City Clerk/Treasurer prepared the budget proposal.

- Community Clean Up is scheduled for Saturday, May 22, 2010, 9:00am to 5:00pm. All yellow-bagged trash can be deposited at the Visitor's Center, but any garbage taken to the landfill will be charged the regular rate. There will be no discount on trash received at the landfill. Landfill hours will be extended an extra 2 hours for the Chamber of Commerce's Community Clean Up and garbage from the roll-offs at the Visitor's Center will be accepted at the landfill by Delta Sanitation at no charge.

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

- It is field trip week at the library and kindergarten through third grade children learn about the summer reading program.
- The new "funded in part by the United States Army Garrison, Fort Greely, Alaska" sign was installed on the existing Community Library sign on May 14.

**Park / Recreation** – Lou Heinbockel reported there is a lot of trash accumulating inside the perimeter of the park fence and he asked if a group from the school could patrol the area with yellow bags. He said in the past when Earth Day was celebrated at the High School, students cleaned up the ditch lines from the Cherokee Lodge on the Alaska Highway, to the Tanana Bridge in Big Delta, the Clearwater Lodge on Remington Road, and on the Richardson Highway to Ft. Greely.

Tvenge said the Middle School is scheduled to work on a list of chores at the park on May 24.

**Personnel** – Mary Leith-Dowling reported Angela Lentz, the new EMS Assistant, is already organizing the Rescue Squad.

Discussion followed regarding reducing payment to Dr. Andreassen as ambulance sponsor now that the EMS Assistant position has been filled.

Tvenge said he would send a letter to Dr. Andreassen.

**Public Works** – Lou Heinbockel reported:

- The annual DEC inspection was completed today at the landfill and a good report is expected.
- JW Musgrove covered the mess at the rifle range on May 5 and dragged the gate back in place to prevent people from accessing the area.

Musgrove said the gate was still in place as of May 17 and the covered trash can be hauled off in a dump truck once load restrictions are off.

Heinbockel requested replacing the piped fence with boulders. He reported a fellow is cleaning Wike's Trailer Park and is interested in collecting scrap metal and old batteries from other areas of town. People can drop off old lead acid batteries at two palletes that are located across the Alaska Highway from the Nistler buildings.

Discussion followed regarding the need for the landfill to accept lead acid batteries and liquid paint, NAPA having palletes to accept batteries, Delta Sanitation accepting used motor oil, and fly-by-night operations that collected metal in coastal communities.

Williams said he completed safety inspections in April. He has been working on the litter-control fence, is refitting Brush 5 as a flatbed/work truck for summer projects, will complete a CPR Instructor course on May 19 to be able to train city employees, and has repaired damages at the park pavilion.

**School Liaison** – Sherman Stebbins reported P.J. Ford-Slack intends to speak at a future City Council meeting about the school district, school facilities will have intermittent closures to finish construction this summer, and because of school closure, the Buffalo Wallow will not have a place to meet for their annual event.

Discussion followed regarding having everything under one roof at the school, use of the skating rink if it had been concreted, the Loretta Building at the fairgrounds that is concreted, Buffalo Wallow dancers entertaining at the Triangle, and the latest report on community contributions for the weatherization 2% match.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **50th Anniversary Celebration**

Grossmann said commemorative pins have been ordered and advertisement will come out in the May 20 Delta Wind. She said the initial expense budget was reduced from \$34,000 to \$14,900 (because the weeklong portable outhouses were eliminated). She said t-shirts and hats need to be ordered so that they can be sold at the same time pins and tickets are given out. Money will be recovered on the t-shirt and hat sales, which is why they are not included in the expense budget, and selling them will provide a better idea of community turnout for the picnic on July 25. T-shirts, hats, and water bottles that are on the budget list will be given to tournament champions and MVP players instead of trophies.

Discussion followed regarding fronting money, not waiting on potential sponsors, placing an order for 450 t-shirts/sweatshirts and 300 baseball caps, and up to one month turnaround in getting the order.

Heinbockel moved to advance \$10,000 from the FY10 budget; Martinez seconded.

Hallgren said he is bothered that people are unhappy with the response time of volunteer EMTs and he feels too much is spent on recreation instead of providing service. He said he is happy to contribute out of his own pocket, but will vote against a party at this point because it is too expensive.

Musgrove questioned a contingency plan for t-shirts that do not sell.

Heinbockel said there are some risks, the same as with other services, such as library and motocross. When the money goes away, the services will go away. There will be only one 50th anniversary to celebrate.

Stebbins said he would vote against the 50th celebration also because what he envisioned has snowballed and even though the budget was trimmed, the City may eat the whole thing.

Grossmann said the motion is not to approve the 50th anniversary budget. It is to order t-shirts in which the money will be recovered. If the picnic never happens, the t-shirts will serve as memorabilia.

Martinez suggested looking over the expense sheet to pursue the celebration or cancel it out.

Motion passed on a roll call vote with five (Grossmann, Musgrove, Heinbockel, Martinez, Leith-Dowling) voting in favor and two (Stebbins, Hallgren) voting against.

Heinbockel said there has been no attempt to solicit support from local businesses and he would like to think that there are some folks that would want to help, out of good will.

White stated she would make inquiries.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Pliska Subdivision - Final Approval**

Sebastian Saarloos referenced the final plat for the Pliska Subdivision and review letters from GVEA and ADOTPF. GVEA recommended placing a PUE (public utility easement) along the south boundary of the subdivision within lots 2, 3, and 4. A driveway permit must be obtained from DOT prior to constructing the Richardson Highway approach. Saarloos said the re-plat has been recorded.

Heinbockel moved to approve the final plat of the Pliska Subdivision; Hallgren seconded.

Musgrove asked to fix #4 in the upper left corner of the plat where it appears to be a problem with the font and/or printer.

Saarloos said he would double check the typing before the Mylar is printed.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

### **Purchase Orders**

PO#014272 to Raymond Andreassen in the amount of \$2,500.00 for April '10 ambulance sponsorship

PO#014273 to ACS in the amount of \$1,509.08 for May '10 telephone services

PO#014274 to ATT & Alascom in the amount of \$661.92 for May '10 911 phones and power

PO#014275 to Bank of America in the amount of \$871.85 for credit card charges (Medic III fuel to travel back from Fairbanks after motor repair and Letha Burcham airline and hotel to attend ESRI GIS mapping training in Anchorage)

PO#014276 to Crowley Petroleum in the amount of \$7,531.10 for May '10 heating oil

PO#014277 to Delta Sanitation in the amount of \$657.34 for May '10 dumpster service

PO#014278 to Delta Surveys Associates in the amount of \$2,125.00 for final replat of Delta Junction Townsite, North Addition

PO#014279 to Family Medical Center in the amount of \$935.25 for medical services for Richard Mitchell (hit by flying metal fragment while working on loader bucket)

PO#014280 to GVEA in the amount of \$3,643.52 for April '10 electricity

PO#014281 to Interior Region EMS Council in the amount of \$2,387.47 for EMT training books

Musgrove moved to approve payment of purchase orders 014272 through 014281; Martinez seconded.

Discussion followed regarding minimal use of a hot water heater at the landfill, safety measures to prevent work injuries, basic fees for phone lines, and the timing of Crowley fuel deliveries.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

## **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Flower Cole said she appreciated being a part of the City Slickers team for the Relay for Life (American Cancer Society Fundraiser, May 14 and 15) and offered to act as a spokesperson. She said she could run for a seat on the City Council also, if the city boundaries were moved. Cole said the Farmer's Market opens on May 22 at 10:00am and Friendly Frontier Days is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend.

White stated City Hall would be closed Monday, May 31, for Memorial Day.

Stebbins talked about Sgt. Halftrack and how soldiers were rewarded for contributing ideas that saved large sums of money. He suggested city employees to do something similar.

Martinez thanked Flower Cole for offering her services. He said he believes t-shirts and hats will sell.

Musgrove said it is pretty obvious what Mike Nuckols and Carin Bear think about consolidating the fire departments because of their confidential correspondence regarding it.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Stebbins moved to adjourn at 7:12pm; Martinez seconded. Motion carried.