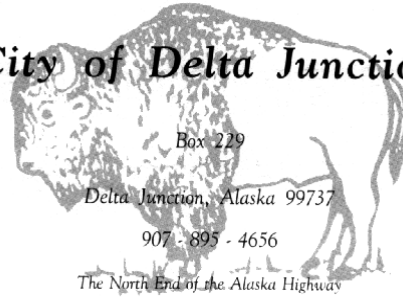


City of Delta Junction



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**City Council Minutes**  
**June 15, 2010 ~ 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 15, 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, JW Musgrove
Dawn Grossmann, Lou Heinbockel (telephonically), Sherman Stebbins, Pablo Martinez (arrived at 5:05)
City employees present: City Administrator Mike Tvenge, Finance Officer Dave Zimmerman
Librarian Joyce McCombs, City Clerk Pat White

Six members from the community were present.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Grossmann moved to approve the June 15, 2010 agenda as presented; Stebbins seconded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Musgrove moved to approve the June 1, 2010 minutes as presented; Hallgren seconded.

CORRESPONDENSE

Liquor License Renewal – Pizza Bella Restaurant

Stebbins moved to show no opposition to the renewal of Pizza Bella's State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board liquor license; Grossmann and Hallgren seconded. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Airport – JW Musgrove referred to Mike Tvenge's comment in the June 1, 2010 minutes regarding leasing city properties to house firefighters (*Park/Recreation Report* on page 2). Musgrove questioned charging the State for use of the airstrip, if it could be justified.

Stebbins asked about policies pertaining to aircraft landing in unauthorized areas, anything other than an improved landing area or runway.

Musgrove said pilots must avail themselves of all information concerning a flight before they begin.

Discussion followed regarding an incident last year involving a helicopter landing on the empty lot next to Interior Building Supply, State Parks restrictions, "casual landings" not being regulated by FAA, local ordinances and enforcing them, and other activities such as two 4-wheelers riding abreast on Rapids Street around blind corners, which would be governed by State laws.

Hallgren said it is difficult to legislate against every potential problem, which he believes is reason why people do not want a borough. They are not looking for rules against issues that do not happen very often.

Musgrove said the Delta Pilot's Association is in the process of collecting money for the airport liability insurance.

Cemetery – Mary Leith-Dowling reported the cemetery is under control. Forrest Seibold, Lawn Maintenance Contractor, said he has difficulty after a lot of rain though.

Mayor – Mary Leith-Dowling reported she and Tvenge met with Lockheed Martin today and they shared their vision of the operation of Missile Defense, in which they are bidding against Boeing for the contract. Lockheed is investigating the area and studying the community. The contract will be awarded in January.

City Administrator – Mike Tvenge reported local igloos of the Pioneers of Alaska are inquiring about insurance for the leased land at Pioneer Park. Tvenge said the City has no coverage for the property through AMLJIA, nor has the contract with the Pioneers been located. The local igloos have asked that the City formulate an agreement.

Mike Murphy, representing the Pioneers, said he was asked to find out if there was insurance coverage on the picnic pavilion at the Pioneer Park (located on the Alaska Highway, opposite the Visitor's Center).

The City has a lease with the State, which requires liability coverage to protect the State.

Tvenge said the lease agreement states the City should provide insurance if required and then an addendum in the agreement details the type of insurance. The City must enter into a land use agreement and spell out the terms of it.

Hallgren said if there is no liability insurance, someone best get it as soon as possible. Otherwise the park should be closed down. Insurance is a good defense so that the City does not take a loss.

Stebbins asked how far the transition was in getting the property deeded to the Pioneers.

Leith-Dowling said the State of Alaska has control.

Tvenge said he last inquired in March 2010.

Leith-Dowling asked Murphy if the Pioneers would reimburse the City for the insurance that covers their structures, especially since a septic system and well have been installed. The lease belongs to the City but the improvements belong to the Pioneers.

Murphy said the Pioneers should be responsible because the covered picnic area is becoming more valuable.

Discussion followed regarding whether or not the City can insure buildings they do not own, including the cost of insurance coverage as part of negotiations with the Pioneers, and the City being responsible for properties that are leased from the State of Alaska.

Tvenge said he would work with Zimmerman to get a quote on liability coverage for the Pioneer Park and draft an agreement with the local Pioneer Igloo.

Musgrove moved to allow Mike Tvenge to proceed in finding insurance coverage; Martinez seconded.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Lands – Pete Hallgren reported Tvenge found an appraiser who is working on the resurveyed lots in the North Delta Townsite (over the counter lots).

Library – Mary Leith-Dowling reported circulation has increased at the library. There were 28,194 circulations as of June 8, 2010 and another 851 in the past week, plus 138 requests for items that come from another library. She said the library is very busy with 5,020 registered patrons.

McCombs said approximately 200 people visit the library each day and there were over 5,000 last week. There were 28,000 items that were checked through the computer in 2009 compared to that same amount in the first six months of 2010. There are currently 1,800 books and DVDs that are checked out and most of them are to children.

Park / Recreation – Lou Heinbockel asked about repairs to the Kiwanis gazebo at the park.

Tvenge said the roof has been lowered, locally milled 12 x 12 replacement posts are being treated, and the gazebo should be back in place this week. Gravel has been brought in from Harper Street to the pavilion to ease some of the swamp area near Kimball Street. Tvenge said the coed league is not active and not maintaining the ball fields. The High School baseball field is not in use so it is also not maintained. Local groups do work on their preferred field, but every year the ball fields are an issue. He asked to allow the summer help to fertilize and maintain the abandoned fields as a means to control the weeds. Discussion followed regarding summer hire and their capabilities with push mowers.

Stebbins moved to purchase a riding (16 or 18 horsepower) lawnmower with a cap of \$1,600, if the money is available, to be used to mow the baseball fields.

Motion failed due to no second.

Hallgren said he has always resisted maintaining the ball fields because of not being able to do it at a level that would be satisfactory to the users. He would agree in using the brush hog to mow the weeds down once or twice a season, but he objects to paying summer hire to maintain the ball fields with a push mower. Other communities have the same problem. Motivated volunteers eventually lose interest because they get tired or old or burned out. The Delta Skating Association is successful because interest is thriving

and the City's support keeps increasing as amenities are added. The motocross group failed and the community did not “get much bang for the buck” (for the money that was invested to install a fence). Stebbins said weeds take over when grass gets too high and too thick. The brush hog does not have turf-saver type tires and the deep lug tires tear up the playing surface. He asked about the grass, weeds, and tree growth in the fence line around the park.

Tvenge said summer help took care of it last year.

Heinbockel said he agreed in getting a mower, but one that can be pulled behind a 4-wheeler or a self-powered machine, similar to the one the Softball Association had. The City needs to knock the fields down two or three times this summer.

Tvenge said one lease agreement with the Division of Forestry Incident Management Team has ended for use of the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena and another one will overlap use of the building for sleeping, showers, and minimal food service.

Public Health & Safety – Pablo Martinez reported Seekins repaired the sensor on Medic III and it is back in service.

Public Works – Lou Heinbockel reported he wished to compliment the landfill operators for the 99% score on the May 18, 2010 landfill inspection.

School Liaison – Sherman Stebbins reported P.J. Ford Slack has taken a job elsewhere in the state and will not return as superintendent for DGSD, the Elementary School is emptying out from firefighters, and the High School premises are roped off for the weatherization construction and replacement of a fuel tank, which will now be an aboveground tank.

Discussion followed regarding condition of the 50-year old fuel tank.

Stebbins said he has started a workout program with the High School football team and it will continue at the City Park for the next month until actual football training begins.

Additional Reports by Council – Pete Hallgren reported he would be out of town for most of the summer and will attend City Council meetings telephonically.

Stebbins said DGSD works with local businesses to employ students, teach them skills, and provide experience. He asked about creating a program to hire students for temporary part-time positions that could expose them to on-the-job training.

Discussion followed regarding services that are intended to provide youth with directions, past experience with court-ordered community service work, lack of City staff to supervise new hire, and expense involved with employment turnover.

Tvenge said the City continues to use summer hire and he encouraged youth to submit job applications to have on file.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

50th Anniversary Celebration Expense Budget

Leith-Dowling said the revised expense budget, dated June 11, 2010, lists some park improvements as in-kind donations toward the 50th festivities.

White said budget amounts will serve 500 people and those food item costs may need to be multiplied to accommodate a larger crowd.

Grossmann said \$2,100 has been received in sponsorships and the Riverboat Discovery donated four gift certificates that will be used for door prizes. T-shirt and hat sales will pay for themselves and to date, about one quarter of them have been sold. She distributed tickets for the picnic with commemorative pins and said the ticket stubs will be used for door prizes and they will also give an idea of the number of people who will attend the picnic. The commemorative pins are limited to one per adult who commit to the picnic. Tickets are for everyone. Grossmann referenced “BYOC” on the tickets and said it stands for bring your own chair.

White said one-month notice is needed to order the meat, so commitment for the picnic is necessary at this time. Public turnout is unknown until the picnic is advertised and tickets are distributed.

Discussion followed regarding the revised budget (\$16,183) and contributions that have been collected.

Grossmann asked for commitment of \$5,000 and if, at a future time, it is clear that more than 500 will be served, it will be brought back before the Council.

Martinez moved to commit \$5,000 to the 50th anniversary celebration; Heinbockel seconded.

Grossmann clarified that, to date, \$13,000 has been committed to order commemorative pins, pay for postage, and to order t-shirts, hats, the 50th banner, and tournament trophies (MVP and championship t-shirts and water bottles). Shirt and hat costs will be recovered. The \$5,000 now is for picnic expenses. Discussion followed regarding delivery of food and the park map on the back of the tickets.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

White said Mike Kingston is restoring the five photos of Delta Junction's first mayors (1960 to 1969) and they will also be part of the DVD of community photos from the past fifty years that will be on display during the fair weekend.

Stebbins said he wished to personally thank Delta Industrial for donating their manlift for the panoramic photo that will be taken at the park. He said he hoped other businesses would support the 50th celebrations also.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing, Second Reading, and Adoption of Ordinance 2011-01, An Ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska Providing for a Budget for the Fiscal Year 2011

Martinez moved to open the public hearing of Ordinance 2011-01; Stebbins seconded.

Zimmerman stated he received a quote from the insurance carrier today that is \$12,000 less than what is in the budget. There were no changes to budget numbers in the last draft, dated June 11, but there were changes to the City's year-to-date costs, which was updated from March to May 31. Income and expenditures were not changed.

Hallgren said the reduction could go toward insurance for Pioneer Park.

Stebbins said he would like it known that the annual \$15,000 to Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department (RDVFD) was not a contractual agreement, but it was a gift and if it is possible, he would like it reinstated in next year's budget.

Martinez said he felt \$15,000 is cheap insurance for the City to rely on RDVFD's assistance.

Hallgren said money has been given to Rural Deltana for the past three years and it has not been intended to become an annual budget item. He said it is absolutely the right thing to do as long as the City can afford it and in doing so, not short the City's Fire Department (DJVFD) volunteers.

Hallgren moved to approve paying \$15,000 to Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department from this year's budget; Martinez seconded.

Tana Wood said she agreed to put it back because of the mutual aid.

Discussion followed regarding reasons why money was initially gifted to RDVFD and using the \$12,000 that was freed up from insurance premiums.

Hallgren said insuring Pioneer Park will cost money and an agreement with Dr. Andreassen to continue sponsoring the ambulance service is still pending.

Hallgren amended the motion to approve paying \$10,000 to RDVFD; Martinez seconded.

Grossmann clarified that mutual aid agreements between RDVFD and DJVFD were intact before any money was given to RDVFD.

Musgrove said the City has received several forms of communication from Mike Paschall, but not much from the City's Fire Department regarding Rural Deltana taking over the City's services. He said it is difficult to separate the needs of the external community or members of RDVFD from Mike Paschall's conversations. Musgrove asked for an explanation of the confusion between departments in the most recent fire incident on Rapids Street. He said he personally feels \$10,000 is reasonable, but there has been no accountability for what money was given to RDVFD in the past.

Heinbockel said he will vote against the motion purely on Deltana's unwillingness to bill for fire services rendered because it indicates they do not need the extra funding and have other means to raise revenue. He said he does not like charging, but most homeowners carry fire insurance. He feels the reason for the initial request to combine the fire departments and the Delta Rescue Squad was to tap into the ambulance revenue.

Fire Chief Carin Bear said money speaks, particularly with the false accusations against DJVFD volunteers, the nasty climate, and lack of communication. Bear said she was the Incident Command at the Rapids Street fire, but Forestry communicated with a Rural Deltana firefighter about the airdrop. That firefighter gave Forestry permission to provide the airdrop and did not communicate with her, so did not

know that she had sent Ft. Greely firefighters into the building. The first water dump resulted in injury. Bear said RDVFD might have had more responders to city fires, but DJVFD responded twice as often to fires in the Deltana district as RDVFD did in the city's district. She said she is unhappy that there is no repercussion of any sort to all the false accusations and continued claims against DJVFD. She asked, "Where is the support for our volunteers?" She said the City Council demands accountability and honesty from DJVFD, but not from Rural Deltana. Bear referenced comments in the last Delta Wind newspaper, stating DJVFD refused to come to the table for discussion. She said they were never approached. She attempted to communicate by calling three different Rural Deltana firefighters who could not come to the phone for different reasons and they did not return the phone calls.

Musgrove asked Bear how she feels about the motion.

Bear said money speaks and it supports the poor conduct from Rural Deltana firefighters.

Leith-Dowling stated she would vote against giving money to Rural Deltana because of the discomfort they have created for the DJVFD volunteers.

Discussion followed regarding fear of volunteers walking away from both fire and rescue squads.

Hallgren said he would not vote to give a nickel to an outside agency if it financially shorted the City's department. 91% of the people said the borough issue is dead, but he believes many problems could have been solved if a borough were created. Hallgren said he is determined to get over people asking for funding and it is the entire community's advantage to have the best fire response possible. If some disagreeable people help, they're still helping. Obviously areas, particularly communication between departments, need fixed. He said he does not want to turn down a trained volunteer who will save a life or a home.

Martinez said it has nothing to do with certain individuals. It has to do with public safety and the people in the community come first. Feelings do not matter. Get along or move along. Volunteers are there to do a job. Rural Deltana needs help and if it is deemed necessary to support them financially, they should be required to provide a breakdown for what they did with last year's money. .

Stebbins asked how often there is joint fire and (ambulance) rescue training.

Bear said, to her knowledge, RDVFD has one EMT I and one ETT that are also members of the Delta Rescue Squad. Joint training between the fire departments has not been possible. DJVFD has trained with Ft. Greely, but not with Rural Deltana. She offered RDVFD to join in Firefighter I training and their response was, "We don't need that stuff." Firefighter I was more than what was needed in Delta Junction because volunteers would do defensive firefighting and not interior attack. Firefighter I would benefit only a city fire department. Bear said she has not been invited for training with RDVFD ever.

Leith-Dowling stated the motion is to approve paying \$10,000 to RDVFD upon receipt of an itemized statement showing where the \$15,000 was spent last year.

Heinbockel said \$60,000 or \$75,000 over the past few years has not been accounted for.

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

Hallgren moved to amend the budget to charge employees 1% of their individual health care premiums; Musgrove seconded.

Musgrove said he pays \$200 to \$300 per month for his own maintenance health care coverage, which amounts to \$2,500 to \$3,000 a year.

Hallgren said the 1% will cost the employee \$5 to \$15 per month. Medical insurance is a godsend to a number of employees, but it is exceedingly hard to explain the benefit to the public in the private sector. 5% was charged in Sitka 35 years ago. Medical insurance has increased so much that it is a real expenditure.

Discussion followed regarding starting the process for employees to pay into their benefits.

Heinbockel said the process was already started when benefits were reduced from the Cadillac plan.

Employees are already paying a co-pay of up to \$2,000, which is significant above and beyond the 1% symbolic requirement. He said he'd vote for the 1% if the employees got back the Cadillac plan.

Musgrove said every plan has a deductible. He questioned if there is any business in town that pays 100% of the premium.

Heinbockel said medical benefits are the best thing the City can give employees that have salaries that are less than what the government sector pays.

Discussion followed regarding comparing wages and union protection.

Stebbins argued about changing the employee benefit package.

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

Musgrove moved to close the public hearing; Hallgren seconded.

Hallgren moved to adopt Ordinance 2011-01, An Ordinance for the City of Delta Junction, Alaska Providing for a Budget for the Fiscal Year 2011 as amended; Musgrove seconded.

Martinez said he believes the 1% is not enough and the \$15,000 should be given to Rural Deltana.

Stebbins said he feels collecting 1% of the health care premiums from the employees should have been discussed in detail before being brought up the day the budget is adopted. He feels it is frivolous and will cause more headache than what it is worth.

Hallgren said it was discussed at the June 1 meeting.

Heinbockel said he has no problem sharing wealth with Deltana because "as volunteers we are to do the best we can for the people of our community and we should not be in pissing matches with each other." Everybody throughout the community should be charged a uniform service fee or no one should be charged. He said he is pleased with the no-growth budget and feels it is a success because of that.

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

Purchase of Recycled Asphalt Product (RAP)

Tvenge said Pruhs Construction would chew up the existing highway to be recycled into future product or sold as RAP. Pruhs offered a quantity of up to 2,000 cubic yards at \$200 a truckload (approximately 18 cubic yards). Tvenge said RAP could be applied to gravel streets and it adds life to roads. It is not as smooth as paved streets, but the firm surfaces help control dust and reduce maintenance. It will also require special equipment (blades) when it comes time in the future to resurface.

Discussion followed regarding cost of RAP compared to gravel, using it on Sandra and Rebecca streets, available grant funding, using it as cover material at the landfill if it were free, good use of RAP for parking lots, and acting on paving projects in town to reduce overall costs while equipment is here because of major contracts with the State (Pruhs Construction on the Richardson Highway and Granite Construction on the Alaska Highway).

Leith-Dowling said she disagrees with buying RAP because there is no plan for a street that is ready.

Heinbockel said he would prefer the \$141,000 grant funds be used for lighting or hard pavement.

Hallgren said he appreciated being educated on the pros and cons of RAP.

Musgrove moved to buy RAP lock, stock, and barrel and let Pruhs put it down; Martinez seconded.

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

Purchase Orders

PO#014340 to ACS in the amount of \$1,507.01 for June '10 telephone services

PO#014341 to Alaska Wildland Support in the amount of \$4,313.62 for June '10 contract mowing

PO#014342 to Raymond Andreassen in the amount of \$2,500.00 for June '10 ambulance sponsor

PO#014343 to Bank of America in the amount of \$12,852.66 for credit card services (50th Anniversary t-shirts and sweatshirts, City Hall office chair replacement and computer mouse, new ambulance billing software and computer for Rescue Squad, vacuum cleaner for Rescue Squad, new computer for Fire Department, 911 mapping training for Letha Burcham, Physician Desk Reference Manual for Rescue Squad, and CPR course for Jeremy Williams)

PO#014344 to Crowley Petroleum in the amount of \$1,938.59 for May '10 equipment and heating oil

PO#014345 to Delta Sanitation in the amount of \$682.34 for June '10 dumpster service

PO#014346 to Gabe's Towing in the amount of \$735.00 to tow Medic I ambulance to Fairbanks

PO#014347 to Gall's Incorporated in the amount of \$1,174.90 for ten emergency blue lights for new member's vehicles

PO#014348 to GVEA in the amount of \$2,865.54 for May '10 electricity

PO#014349 to Alfax Furniture, LLC in the amount of \$9,133.88 for 12'x16' portable stage for Community Center

Stebbins moved to accept purchase orders 014340 through 014349; Martinez seconded.

Grossmann asked about the stage (014349).

Leith-Dowling said the library put \$500 toward it, but it is essentially funded by a Rasmuson grant.

Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

White said Freddy Cook left money to the Pioneers when he passed away because he understood they would be given deed to the property once the State transferred it to the City. Doug Fett told the City Council in March 2009 that the Pioneers had invested \$40,000 in improvements at the Pioneer Park and they wanted ownership of it. Freddy Cook gave the money to the Pioneers. He did not give it to the City of Delta Junction.

Hallgren said the City only approved to pay for insurance on the property.

White agreed and said it was understood that the property would be deeded over to the Pioneers, but now the City is moving toward leasing it, which is the same as owning it.

Leith-Dowling said the State might offer a long-term lease to the City. It is all in their hands.

Tvenge said the property must first be transferred from the State to the City before it could be transferred to the Pioneers, if that is agreed on, and it must remain public.

Musgrove said it was previously discussed to deed the property to the Pioneers with the covenant that if it became something other than a park, it would be returned to the City. He referenced the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) checklist and Tana Wood's comment during the June 1 Council meeting regarding the landfill sinking fund. He said the inspection checklist makes it clear that a sinking fund is a requirement for having a municipal solid waste landfill and it is part of the 99% score. Musgrove said he feels it is responsible to have funds to close the landfill and to open another one, hopefully with smaller rocks. He said he appreciated the public attendance at the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Musgrove moved to adjourn at 7:22pm; Stebbins and Hallgren seconded. Motion carried.

Pat White, CMC

Approved: July 6, 2010