

July 2008

Volume 7, Issue 1

McGrath City News

City Council

June Meeting Highlights

REGULAR MEETING – June 24, 2008

- **Special Guests:**

Sean DeWalt, Risk Manager from AML/JIA discussed his visit with city staff and the Loss Control Incentive Program in which the city participates. Meeting the education and other mandates can save the city 5% of the annual insurance fee.

Bill Wall of Alaska Village Initiatives (AVI) was introduced next. He and Forester, Peter Olsen are in McGrath to meet with the city and MTNT as they continue development of a plan that would make a significant dent in the amount of heating fuel burned in McGrath, by burning wood (biomass). He calculates that utilization of woody biomass could replace 125,000 gallons of diesel fuel annually.

Resolution 08-12 – Request for Bulk Fuel Loan Application

- **Motion:** To approve Resolution 08-12.

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed.**

Resolution 08-13 – Participation in the AMLJIA Loss Control Incentive Program

- **Motion:** To approve Res 08-13, approving participation in the AMLJIA loss Control Incentive Program

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed.**

- **Motion:** To allow the City of McGrath to compete with private enterprise

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

- **Motion:** To approve the recommendation that the City Council appoint Clara Demientieff as the City Clerk-Treasurer.

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

Clara Demientieff took the Oath of Office as the City Clerk Treasurer.

- **Motion:** To allow the Transient House to be rented to the Village Safe Water contractors. (This can be used as part of our in-kind Local Contribution to this project.)

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

- **Ordinance 08-04 FY09 Budget**

Introduction and First Reading.

A Special Meeting is scheduled for the **Public Hearing** and Second Reading on June 30, 2008.

- **Motion:** To allow Southcentral Foundation to extend its offices into the alcove adjacent to (Fire truck) Garage Bay 3 (increasing SCF rental space)

VOTE: 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

Special Meeting Highlights - June 30, 2008

- **Motion:** To approve the wage for the new Public Works Foreman.

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

- **Motion:** Ordinance 08-04 FY09 Budget

Public Hearing and adoption

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

- **Motion:** Ordinance 08-05 Road Use Fee amendment requiring copy of log or invoice if income is generated from material hauled.

VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. **Motion passed**

McGrath Celebrates the 4th of July



The Fourth of July festivities were coordinated by Samantha Holmberg and the Teen Center crew. They had much assistance from families and individuals who took on the responsibility for different events. The entire community thanks Samantha and each person who worked hard to make this a holiday to remember. The fact that the weather was perfect for a parade, softball game, and a picnic along with fun games and activities for all ages was icing on the cake!



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All city meetings are held at the Cap'n Snow Center, upstairs in the Assembly Room and are open to the public. Everyone is encouraged to attend and participate.

Public Works Comm.
Tuesday July 8th
5:00pm

Planning Commission
Wednesday July 9th
7:00pm

Public Safety Comm.
Thursday July 10th
5:00pm

**Volunteer Fire Dept. and
KVRS Joint meeting**
Wed. July 16th
7:00pm

Administration & Finance
Monday July 21st
7:00pm

City Council Meeting
Tuesday July 22nd
7:00pm

Current and past issues of McGrath *City News* are published online at www.mcgrathalaska.net

Click on the *City Newsletter* tab in left column

Highlights of current projects

NRCS 1,100'erosion project: The contract is scheduled to be awarded on July 11th and that project will get underway this summer and winter in preparation for construction during the summer of 2009.

Dishna Subdivision: Doug Lyman and Natalie Baumgartner met with DNR staff members assigned to this project. During the winter, DNR had completely scrapped the Dishna subdivision project, as it was not financially feasible to them, as designed. The working group came up with an alternative plan that will put that land into the hands of McGrath residents and the city. DNR will not be putting roads in and this change will require a variance from the Planning Commission. Six tracts have been identified access to each tract currently exists. Two of the tracts are wetlands and will be held by the city or DNR as "green space". One tract is being conveyed to the city. It backs Anderson Park and is a potential site for a new water source and Water Treatment Plant. Further action by the Planning Commission is required and then DNR will draw up the papers to offer at least one of the tracts at an "outcry auction" in McGrath in the near future. Others of the tracts will be auctioned in a DNR Spring land Sale Brochure in the future. Drawings are available at the city office if you'd like to see what is being proposed.

VSW Project contractor selection Doug Lyman and I participated in two days of proposal reviews, scoring and oral presentations by the 3 "short-listed" contractors. **Kuskokwim Architects and Engineers** was chosen to identify a new water source and to design a new water treatment plant. They will begin working in July and have this phase completed by the end of the year. This is the first phase of a nearly \$10 million water and sewer project.

Soaring energy related costs The operational costs are going to continue to increase at rates that only several years ago were never thought likely. Seeing how the impact of a **43% increase in heating/vehicle fuel** will impact the city's budget and what it costs to provide city services causes concern. Conservation will become increasingly important for everyone and especially the city. An Energy Conservation Plan will be developed which will help to keep costs down and reduce consumption.

Wood Fired Heat for Public Facilities - The full preliminary feasibility report is available to read at the city office. This report will be a valuable resource should the city and IASD decide to seek grants to have additional engineering work completed and to purchase Garn boilers. Local, sustainable biomass fuel sources would be used for heating their buildings at substantial savings in heating costs.

Comings and Goings at the City

Phil Graham, who came back to city employment to fill in as City Clerk on an interim basis has gone on vacation and will be back to provide further training for new City Clerk **Clara Demientieff**.

Welcome Clara! The first week working in the office has been hectic. Phil and former City Clerk Sue Parker will provide ongoing training at various times.

Public Works Foreman Stan Magnuson leaves his position and is moving from McGrath to go to college in Hawaii. Stan's innovative and dependable work will be missed greatly. Thank you Stan!

Tom Parker has been hired as the Public Works Foreman beginning mid-July. We look forward to Tom being back at the city. He and Duane make an experienced team in the Public Works Dept.

Promoting McGrath – Twenty-five percent of the Hotel & Motel Fee collected by the B&Bs in McGrath is spent on getting the word out that McGrath is a great place to visit and live. Currently, the city is promoting McGrath through various means. Use of the www.mcgrathalaska.net website to make copies of the *City News* available online and in color has been appreciated by a number of people. Having links to the **Employment and Entrepreneurial Opportunities** and **Land & Housing** information **Message Boards** on that same website for the community to utilize as well as those who are browsing the web looking for opportunities in McGrath. A **full-color brochure** promoting McGrath as a destination for adventure is also available by clicking a photo icon on the right side of the page that says "**Experience McGrath, Alaska**" on that website. Printed copies will be available for distribution soon. Another web resource used by travelers and agents that also promotes McGrath is the **Travel Alaska** website. The McGrath information can be seen at www.travelalaska.com Choose "**Destinations**" at the top of the page and then click on **Cities & Towns** on the left side, followed by clicking on **McGrath**. McGrath information is being updated this week.

Two groups of **Army Corps of Engineers** staff working on financial justification of the **overall erosion control** and a feasibility study for a **Barge Landing and Boat Launch** were here recently to gather further information.