February 2006

Volume 4, Issue 2

McGrath City News

City Council

January Meeting Highlights

NRCS Emergency erosion repair update – 1,100' Takotna Avenue/levee project. Research to identify recorded landowners, then preparing maps and documents is being completed in the city office in order to minimize attorney fees. This identifies who must sign perpetual easements is nearly complete, and will be sent on to City Attorney Gordon Tans, who will order the required title searches on the properties, and will make sure all assurances are met in order for the project to proceed.

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Resolution 06-11 – Morgan Stanley authorizing resolution was passed, as required to change the type of investment account used.

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MOTION PASSED: Employee Handbook Update – A paragraph was added to Section 505 regarding employee use of the city shop. This previously unwritten policy is now stated in the Employee Handbook.

"Personal use of the City Shop is available to employees as long as it does not interfere with space or time requirements of any City department. Work performed on personal equipment must be done during non-working hours"

Vote: 5 yes, 1 no, 1 absent

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MOTION FAILED: The City's personnel and/or equipment not compete with private enterprise. In case of an extraordinary situation, the Council will be consulted and give its approval by majority vote.

Vote: 2 yes, 4 no, 1 absent

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Gaming Permit application – By consensus, the Council agreed that the City should not obtain a gaming permit at this time, since there are other permits in town available for use by community organizations needing a permit for bingo or a raffle.

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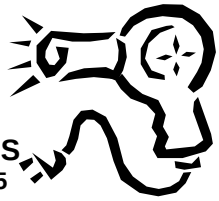
MOTION PASSED Old Schoolhouse "Invitation to Bid" wording addendum: to vacate the building by Feb. 10. If not vacated, a fine of $100.00 per day will be assessed.

Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent

NOTE: Three additional points have been added to the Invitation to Bid at the recommendation of the City Attorney. There is further consideration being made to this Invitation to Bid. Decisions remain to be finalized. (see 02/02/06 Special Meeting highlights)

Reprinted from –



Keeping Your House Operating
During A Cold Alaskan Winter
OVERCOMING UTILITY FREEZEUP PROBLEMS
Developed by Francis Mitchell - CES Publication **EEM-04955**

Wintertime in Alaska can be cold with temperatures of forty, fifty, sixty, even seventy below zero. Severe outside temperatures can cause severe inside problems. When utilities stop functioning because of the cold, it is inconvenient and even dangerous. Knowing how to keep utilities functioning or how to restore them to working order during periods of severe cold weather is very important.

Thawing frozen pipes

• Locate the main water supply valve so you can shut it off if pipes that have broken by freezing start to leak.

• Electric hair dryers are usually very effective for thawing frozen pipes. Flame torches can be used on copper and iron pipes, but be very careful. This method has started some devastating house fires. Sponges or rags dipped in hot water and repeatedly applied to the frozen pipe can thaw accessible pipes.

• Directing heat from a hair dryer or electric space heater toward the wall that contains frozen pipes sometimes works. Of course, more time must be allowed than if the pipes are directly accessible.

If you are unsure where the pipe is frozen, begin by trying to run all water taps. If some taps work and others don't, you have narrowed your search. If no water runs, then chances are the main line is frozen, perhaps where it enters the house through a wall. Determine which part of the frozen line is most exposed to the cold and begin remedies there.

• When you are thawing pipes, even by simply re-warming a cold house, stay in the house and watch the pipes carefully. If a frozen pipe has been cracked by the expanded ice in it, it will gush water through the crack when it thaws. If this happens, shut off the main supply valve immediately.

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Special City Council Meeting February 2, 2006

Resignation from Council Seat F Candy Moeller submitted her resignation from the City Council, stating that she is moving from McGrath and will no longer be able to serve.

If you are a resident of McGrath and are interesting in serving on the City Council until the October 2007 election, please submit a letter of interest to the City Clerk.

Old Schoolhouse Invitation to Bid The sale of the Old Schoolhouse has been postponed. The Invitation to Bid Notice will be posted on August 1, with sealed bids opened August 31.

Boat Launch Renovation The Council selected HDR Alaska, Inc., an Alaskan company with considerable experience working with the ADF&G Division of Sport Fish access program to develop the design and engineering for this project. HDR staff plans to visit McGrath on March 21 to review the actual site and to host a community input meeting, according to HDR's Rosetta Demoski Alcantra, who was raised in McGrath.

City of McGrath

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Planning Commission
Wed. February 8th
7:00pm

Public Safety Comm.
Thursday February 9th
5:00pm

Public Works Comm.
Tuesday February 14th
5:00pm

Volunteer Fire Dept.
Wed. February 15th
7:00pm

KVRS Business Meeting
Thursday February 16th
7:00 pm

KVRS Training
Sat. February 18th
10:00am

Administration & Finance Comm.
Monday February 20th
12 noon

City Council Meeting
Tuesday February 28th
7:00pm

Breakfast Club
To be Announced

Continued from other side –

Highlights of January City Council Meeting

MOTION PASSED that the City no longer plow the Shoppe Right-of-Way Lease
Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent

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MOTIONS PASSED Iditarod items-
(1) to allow use of Cap'n. Snow Building as a checkpoint for the 2006 Iditarod Race.
Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent.
(2) to apply to the BLM for the three lots across F Street from the City Office that have been designated for public use. Some of the land would be used as a city park. Sue Parker could search for grant money to be used to construct a shelter on the property.
Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent.
Shared information: Richard announced that he will be receiving a plaque from National Historic Trails, identifying the Iditarod Trail as a National Historic Trail. The plaque could be displayed at the Captain Snow Building and eventually moved to the park. Through the Historic Trails organization, Richard is also hoping to build a shelter cabin between McGrath and Ruby.

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MOTION PASSED – OIT Training and Exam: To send Dirk to the Wastewater training session.
Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent

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MOTION PASSED - Small Cities Management telecourse To allow Natalie to take the Small Cities Management course, for the City to pay for course materials, and that Natalie take time off of her regular day for hours put in on the course.
Vote: 6 yes, 1 absent

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CONSENSUS By consensus the Council agreed to let the Malone's use the riverbank across from the Washeteria to sell produce.

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To prevent drain freezeup, do not let water drip into the drains. Slow moving and small quantities of water freeze when coming in contact with very cold sections of a drain system. As additional slow dripping runoff reaches that point, it freezes on top; the pipe will eventually be blocked by this "glacier" within. Water which dams up behind the glacier will also freeze, causing a very big problem.
Enclosing and insulating the area under the house where drain pipes are located is highly recommended.

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KEEP SEWER (ROOF) VENT PIPES CLEAR OF SNOW BUILDUP

Frequently, we find that bathroom vent pipes get plugged with snow. This can happen numerous times during a winter, given opportune conditions. Such blockages result in sewer gasses backing up within the living space, creating most unpleasant and hazardous conditions.
Keep you vent pipes clear by preventing buildup by wrapping "ice-dam" heat trace made for roofs, around the pipe or alternatively, clean off snow when you see it building on top of the pipe.

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Notice

HERC Charter BACKHAUL: @ $ .10/# space still available. Call the City Office to get on the list for early February.

CARBON MONOXIDE – A Silent Killer

Highlights from CES Publication RAD-00756

Carbon monoxide (CO) is the number one cause of poisoning in the United States, and Alaska has the highest per capita carbon monoxide death rate in the nation.
Who is at Risk? Everyone is at risk, but some are more sensitive. Pregnant women, infants, the elderly, smokers, persons with heart,
respiratory ailments or anemia are more susceptible.
What are the symptoms?
Different symptoms of poisoning appear as CO blood saturation levels increase. The first symptoms to appear are headache, sleepiness, impaired motor skills and a lowered resistance to disease. As levels increase the headache becomes throbbing at the temples, and fatigue, nausea, and flu-like symptoms appear. When the blood saturation levels reach between 30-40%, confusion, dizziness, vomiting and weakness occur. One of the greatest dangers is that you feel sleepy and confused, which makes you less likely to identify symptoms. When blood saturation levels reach over 40%, death becomes possible.
CO Detectors A few are still available at the McGrath Native Village Council Office or can be purchased elsewhere at reasonable cost.