

City Council

June Meeting Highlights

REGULAR MEETING – June 26, 2007

Minutes of the regular meeting of May 22, 2007 were approved unanimously.

- **Boat Launch – AC Slip and the Log Haul-out Boat Launch zones** are often being blocked by boats and vehicles, making it difficult or impossible to launch and/or haul boats out of the river. By Consensus, the administrator was directed to write letters to those blocking the launch zones, asking them to be courteous of others and to keep the area clear.
- **Ordinance 07-09** - to amend MMC Chapter 1.20.30 Table B. Schedule of Civil Penalties and Chapter 06.04.090 Dogs, Introduction and first reading.
MOTION: Moved to have the City Administrator separate the two penalties of Ordinance 07-09 and make two different ordinances.
VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. Motion carried.
- **City Administrator's Annual Evaluation**
Following the report and review of each written evaluation completed by council members, the council went into executive session 8:23pm and came out of executive session at 9:36pm.
MOTION: Moved to increase the Administrator's salary over the next 4 years, reflected by a very good evaluation
VOTE: Yes, 4 of 4 present. Motion carried



Fourth of July in McGrath ~ Fun for all

Many volunteers made the community's 4th of July a great success. The bikes and "floats" were decorated and led by the McGrath Volunteer Fire Department's Fire Truck, paraded to the Anderson Ball Park, kicking off the festivities for the day.

Kid's games, food concessions, the "greased pole" challenge and a softball game gave everyone the opportunity to watch, visit, eat and have a great afternoon in the scorching sun.



The kiddies had a special treat this year, when Dawn Taylor brought the inflatable wading pool (above) and a huge inflatable water slide to the park for the young ones to play in and keep cool. Older kids got a chance to cool off with water sprayed by the fire truck.

The softball game was a hit, of course. Then, the ominous dark clouds began to build.... giving plenty of warning to the crowd, who did not pay the least bit of attention to the obvious signs as they squeezed in the last possible moments of a "perfect 4th of July".

The grand finale to the afternoon featuring thunder, lightning, strong wind and pelting rain sent everyone running for shelter and transportation home. We even had an "air show", as the DNR retardant "bombers" and other planes made their repeated landings and take-offs to deal with the fires caused by lightning strikes.

An enormous THANK YOU to the many, many volunteers that made this a 4th of July to remember!



Wildfire Information web links

<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/forestry/fire/current.htm>

Current lightning strike map link is under "Weather". Keep clicking on the area you're interested in, to zoom in and see if your property is in danger!



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All meetings are held in the Assembly Room of the Cap'n Snow Center unless otherwise noted.



Special City Council Mtg.
July 9th
7:00pm

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

Planning Commission
Wednesday, July 11th
7:00pm

Public Safety Comm.
Thursday July 12th
5:00pm

Administration & Finance
Monday July 16th
7:00pm

Volunteer Fire Dept & KVRS
Wed. 18th
7:00p

City Council Meeting
Tuesday July 24th
7:00pm

A full-color version of City News is online at:

www.mcgrathalaska.net



Water & Sewer Rates

Ordinance 07-11

The amended water rates in Ordinance 07-11 will increase the **“per gallon” water rate to \$.015 and maintain the current \$60 month service fee.** These water rate changes, and sewer rates shown below, come after extensive research, calculations and comparison of many different “scenarios” to assure the required annual revenue of \$180,000 that it takes to provide water to the community. State of AK, DCCED RUBA (Rural Utility Business Advisor) Tammy Helms and TCC Office of Environmental Health Engineer Trevor White worked with the city staff to determine the most “equitable and fair” rate adjustment for each usage group, from the group using the least amount of water to those few who use huge amounts on a more seasonal basis. Rates should be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, on an annual basis so that there are not large increases. To date, McGrath has only seen three adjustments, reflecting one major increase, since the water system was installed in 1984. An aging system requiring considerable maintenance and replacement, extremely cold weather caused maintenance issues and the huge increases in fuel to heat the water mains and other unavoidable overhead increases has resulted in budget deficits.

Additional water service wording and sewer rate amendments are as follows: Water Service discontinuance-Request by owner.

A. On a form provided by the city, the property owner may request that service be discontinued on a short-term basis of up to six months or on a longer-term basis. The method of service discontinuance shall be at the sole discretion of the city's water plant operator. The monthly Service Fee shall accrue during the period of discontinuance. Reinstatement of water service shall be billed in accordance with Section 13.04.360(C) and (D).

Sewer Service Rates and Charges shall be amended to read as follows:

B. Public sanitary sewer usage charges shall be the responsibility of the property owner and billed at the following monthly rates:

--- **0 - 2000 gallons, at \$45.00 per month minimum rate;**

--- **2001 gallons and over, at \$.022 per gallon**
Sewer Service Rates and Charges shall be amended by adding H. to read as follows:

H. **The minimum rate of \$45.00 per month will accrue during all periods of absence.**

A Public Hearing is set for the July 9th Special City Council meeting at 7pm in the Cap'n Snow Center. This ordinance shall become effective on the first of the month following its passage by the McGrath City Council and following a 5-day posting at the Post Office, Alaska Commercial Company and the Washeteria.

FY08 Budget

Ordinance 07-10

Although there are greatly appreciated increases in the General Fund *Intergovernmental Revenue* from the State and by pass-through from McGrath Native Village Council's Tribal shares for road maintenance and landfill improvements, we are far short of replenishing the checking account and making up for several years of not having state Revenue Sharing and other funding previously counted on prior to 2003. Revenue Sharing ceased at the same time that operating expenses, electricity (due to PCE decline), insurance rates & fuel prices, etc. skyrocketed.

Currently, the only source of locally generated revenue is the Hotel-Motel Bed Fee (Accommodations Tax) of 10% added to the room rate and paid for by visitors. 25% of that amount is earmarked to “promote McGrath” to potential new residents, new entrepreneurial businesses, industry and others who would boost the economy. Presently, there are four B&B's and each is compensated for their extra bookkeeping time.



Careful effort has been made to keep the “balanced” FY08 Budget as streamlined as possible, but at the same time, maintain

services and provide for future development and growth through good planning. This is a process that never ends. Currently, the city operates with a very small staff of four employees making it an exceptional challenge to keep up with day-to-day operations involving buildings & facilities, roads & equipment, the self-supporting non-profit enterprises; (Showers & Washeteria, Landfill, Water and Sewer) as well as carry out the work involved with numerous grants that McGrath has been awarded in recent years. Each of those grants requires the city to expend funds from the General Fund and be reimbursed on a quarterly basis. This also puts a great strain on the available General Funds. **A Public Hearing is set for the July 9th Special City Council meeting at 7pm in the Cap'n Snow Center.**