



Budget Work Session – 6:00 P.M.
Committee of the Whole – 6:30 P.M.
Regular City Council Meeting – 7:00 P.M.

A regular meeting of the North Pole City Council was held on Monday, December 11th, 2023, in the North Pole City Hall Council Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tem Clack called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, December 11th, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Chandra Clack – Mayor Pro Tem
Anton Keller – Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
Larry Terch – Alt. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
Jeffrey Jacobson
Benny Williams
David Skippis

Absent:

Mayor Welch

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Mayor Pro Tem Clack

INVOCATION

Given by Mr. Skippis

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the agenda of December 11th, 2023

Seconded *by* Mr. Skippis

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend the agenda of December 11th, 2023, to move Ordinance 2023-18 on the consent agenda.

New Business

- a. Ordinance 23-18, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Amending the 2023 Year End Budget
- b. Resolution 23-18, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council Establishing the 2023 Bed Tax Grant Distribution
- c. Request to Council – Memorandum of Understanding with FNSB for Imagery Sharing

Minutes

December 11, 2023

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

- d. Request to Council – Strategic Plan Update Contract with Agnew & Beck
- e. Request to Council – Contract Renewal with TecPro for Utilities Services
- f. Request to Council – 2024 Heating Fuel Services Contract
- g. Memo - Request for use of Emergency Fund – Utility Request
- h. Memo – Request for Reimbursement

Seconded *by* Mr. Keller

On the Agenda, as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skipps, Clack, Terch, Williams, Keller, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Welch

On the Agenda

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Jacobson, Williams, Skipps, Terch, Clack, Keller

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Welch

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Keller *moved* to approve the minutes from the November 20th, 2023, meeting.

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

On the Minutes

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Williams, Keller, Skipps, Terch, Jacobson, Clack,

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Welch

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

CITIZENS COMMENTS – (Limited to Five (5) minutes per Citizen)

Howard Rixie gave an update on the events the North Pole Community Chamber of Commerce has on its calendar. Mr. Rixie requested that the Council include the Welcome Center in the City of North Pole's Legislative Priorities.

Minutes

Mr. Jacobson spoke to how fantastic the fireworks show was that took place in the parking lot of the mall. Mr. Rixie thanked Mr. Jacobson for reading *The Night Before Christmas* at the Christmas celebration.

Mr. Terch thanked Mr. Rixie for the excellent fireworks show, sharing it was one of the best fireworks shows he has seen in several years.

Jomo Stewart shared that he is the President of the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDCO) and that he wanted to thank the Council for their consideration on the Bed Tax Grant Funds. Mr. Stewart shared that FEDCO highlighted North Pole's Winter Festival for their Friday Small Business Highlight and that he is happy to hear that the event went so well he shared he hopes the Fairbanks event goes just as well.

Mayor Pro Tem Clack asked when the Fairbanks Winter Festival was, Mr. Stewart stated December 16th at the First Avenue Bridge. Mr. Stewart shared the schedule of events can be found by Google searching Winter Solstice Fairbanks.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty shared that herself and her Deputy went to the AML Conference in Anchorage, and it was informative and nice networking

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- The fire department's annual Christmas Caroling truck has been decorated and will begin its nightly rounds of the city at 6pm December 15th.
- Fireworks vendors will be opening soon. City ordinance allows for winter sales of fireworks between December 15th through December 31st. Winter is a great time to enjoy fireworks due to the longer hours of darkness and the snows protection from ground fires. The largest danger we see from fireworks in the winter months is personal injuries so please use fireworks in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- The North Pole Fire Department is partnering with the Red Cross to make sure residence in our community are protected with Smoke and CO detectors. Red Cross volunteers along with area fire departments will be installing smoke and CO detectors free of charge. If you or anyone you know is in need of detectors you can contact the Red Cross or the Fire Department.
- I will be out of town December 15th through the 26th. Assistant Chief Chambers will be the acting fire chief during my absence. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and hope you take time to be with your family and friends during the holiday.

Chief Heineken introduced Julie Swisher, Ms. Swisher stated she is the Executive Director of the American Red Cross and that she is happy to announce the partnership they have with the Fire Department to install smoke detector in North Pole homes. Ms. Swisher shared they would be installing free smoke alarms the following day as a training program for a bigger kickoff of the National Sound the Alarm Campaign starting in May 2024. Mr. Jacobson asked if it is something that could go on the city website, Chief Heineken shared this is a kickoff for a bigger event in the spring. Chief Heineken shared the Fire Department often responds to kitchen fires where the resident had taken the smoke detector off the wall and spoke to the importance of having a working smoke

Minutes

detector in homes. Ms. Swisher noted that the Red Cross does not install wired in smoke detectors only the 10-year lithium battery operated detectors. Mr. Jacobson asked if the 10-year lithium battery would be marked with the expiration date; Ms. Swisher shared they would all be correctly labeled.

Police Department, Lieutenant Jed Smith

- Lt. Smith shared he is in constant contact with Chief Dutra but that he does not have a return date to report. Lt. Smith reported he attended a conference in Anchorage and that he was proud to report that North Pole Police Department was the only fully staffed police department in attendance at the conference. Lt. Smith thanked the Council for the work they have done on the wage front in order to make the department competitive. Lt. Smith reported the department's new patrol cars are in but does not have a firm arrival date. Mr. Keller asked if the cars would have the ghost emblem; Lt. Smith stated they would be taken to Auto Trim Design for decals. Mr. Jacobson asked what a ghost decal is, Lt. Smith explained it is a reflective decal is stealthier but not what is going on the arriving vehicles.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

Special Topics

- Moose Creek Update – We are continuing to support this project through project management and staff support. Right now, we're continuing to work with minor issues with failing pressure relief valves (PRVs) – these are being replaced in at least 5 residences. Other actions include the replacement of a data display board in the pump house and we're beginning to receive critical parts, which will be catalogued and stored for future use. This project has been extended to March 31, 2024, at no additional cost to the city – this is good as it allows us to continue to test and operate the system under continued funding from the Air Force.
- Building Department - We have received notification from a builder on the old Pizza Hut building – they are doing minor internal remodeling. At this time, we are not sure what will go into that location.
- Public Works - We've been focusing on streetlight maintenance over the past couple of weeks. This includes addressing lights that are currently not working. Additionally, you might notice that the Candy Cane lights are now much brighter and have had their bulbs replaced with LED lights. Our PW supervisor helped finish those installations on Saturday (at -25F). We'll monitor electricity costs to see if this provides appreciable cost savings. This replacement is part of the overall new streetlight project, which includes new streetlights in the downtown area. Those are still pending activation, as they're still receiving needed parts. This is a Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) project, sponsored by FNSB, funded by grants, and installed by Alaska DOT.
PW continues to sand and monitor street safety. We anticipate removing hardpack in the next few weeks (we did this last year during this time and it was useful). The cost for one plowing of the city is \$10,000, while this hardpack removal will cost \$14,500 (almost \$3,000 LESS than last year). We planned for these plowings in our budget (no issues there).
- Utilities - Utilities operations are continuing to go well. Last week included a visit from North Pole High School's Natural Resources class (about 18 students toured the water treatment plant). These types of events are important for both education and awareness of what it takes to provide clean water to this

Minutes

community.

- We continue to find customers that experience undetected water leaks. We always try to work with customers to find equitable solutions, but these incidents reinforce the need to replace older water meter heads with new ones that provide near real time updates on water usage. More to follow on this effort.

Mr. Wallace stated he would be happy to answer any other questions on City Services' operations.

City Clerk, Emily Braniff

- Ms. Braniff stated since the last meeting she attended the Bed Tax Grant Committee meeting. Ms. Braniff reported she attended AML in Anchorage the previous week and learned a lot of things that can be applied to the Clerk's Office, and she thanked the Council for the continued education. Ms. Braniff shared that Maggie Kimmel, the new Deputy Clerk/HR started while she was in Anchorage and that she trained with Melissa during her last week of service. Mr. Jacobson asked when Ms. Kimmel started, Ms. Braniff stated her first day was Monday, December 4th while she was in Anchorage.

Borough Representative, Ms. Clack

- Ms. Clack reported on the issues that were discussed at the Borough Assembly meeting relating to teachers who are dealing with hard issues students are living with. Ms. Clack stated she would have a more thorough update after the next assembly meeting.

ON GOING PROJECTS

NEW BUSINESS

- Resolution 23-18, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council Establishing the 2023 Bed Tax Grant Distribution

Ms. Braniff read the dollar allocation of the 2023 Bed Tax Grant Awards.

On the Resolution

Discussion

APPROVED

Ms. Clack *moved to approve* Resolution 2023-18

Seconded by Mr. Williams

Yes: Keller, Clack, Terch, Skipps, Williams, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch

- Request to Council – Memorandum of Understanding with FNSB for Imagery Sharing

Mr. William *moved to approve* the Request to Council

Minutes

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

On the Request to Council

DISCUSSION

APPROVED

Yes: 6 – Skipps, Williams, Terch, Keller, Clack, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch

- Request to Council – Strategic Plan Update Contract with Agnew & Beck
Mr. Jacobson *moved to approve* the Request for Council

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Request to Council

DISCUSSION

ADVANCED

Yes: Clack, Terch, Skipps, Jacobson, Williams, Keller

No: 0

Absent: Welch

- Request to Council – Contract Renewal with TecPro for Utilities Services

Mr. Jacobson *moved to approve* the Request to Council

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

On the Request to Council

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Keller, Clack, Terch, Skipps, Williams, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch

- a. Request to Council – 2024 Heating Fuel Services Contract

Mr. Skipps *moved to approve* the Request to Council

Seconded by Mr. Terch

On the Request to Council

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Skipps, Clack, Terch, Keller, Williams, Jacobson

Minutes

No: 0

Absent: Welch

Mayor Pro Tem Clack called for a five-minute break

- Memo - Request for use of Emergency Fund – Utility Request

Mr. Jacobson *moved to approve* the Request for use of Emergency Fund

Seconded by Mr. Terch

On the Request to use of Emergency Fund

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Keller, Williams, Terch, Skipps, Clack, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch

- Memo – Request for Reimbursement

Mr. Jacobson *moved to approve* the Request

Seconded by

On the Request for Reimbursement

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Keller, Williams, Terch, Skipps, Clack, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch

COUNCIL COMMENTS

After the break, the audio was reestablished, but it is inaudible. Council member comments are not available for dictation due to the issue with the sound.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Skipps *moved to adjourn*.

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clack

The regular meeting of Monday, December 11, 2023, adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Minutes

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, November 20, 2023.

ATTEST:



Emily Braniff, CMC
City Clerk





Mayor, City of North Pole, Alaska

Minutes