



**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 18th, 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 18th, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

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

Absent:

Mayor Welch
Anton Keller – Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Mayor Pro Tem Clack

INVOCATION

Given by Mr. Williams

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the agenda of December 18th, 2023

Seconded *by* Mr. Terch

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend the agenda of December 18th, 2023, to move new business forward on the Consent Agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance 2023-15, An Ordinance of the North Pole City Council Establishing the 2024 Operating and Capital Budget and Levying the Mill Rate, Third Reading
- b. Ordinance 2023-18, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Amending the 2023 Year End Budget, Second Reading

NEW BUSINESS

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NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

- a. Request to Council – Water Meter Purchase American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- b. Request to Council – City of North Pole Sponsorship of Interior Waste & Recycling Symposium
- c. Request to Council – Grant Writing Contract Renewal – Two Bears Environmental Consulting, LLC
- d. Request for Proposals – Water Main Design
- e. Recommendations for Public Auction Items

Seconded *by* Mr. Williams

On the Agenda, as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: Williams, Clack, Terch, Jacobson, Skipps

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

On the Agenda

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: Jacobson, Williams, Skipps, Terch, Clack

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Clack *moved* to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2023, meeting.

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

On the Minutes

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

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

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

Ms. Fogarty stated she has all the year-end budget documents finalized and that she will have Ms. Braniff send them out to Council. Ms. Fogarty shared that the back-to-back meetings has made getting everything finalized and wrapped up difficult.

Fire Department, Assistant Chief Tod Chambers

Assistant Chief Chambers reported on the current EMS training and shared that the Christmas Fire Truck is out and making its Christmas rounds.

Mr. Terch thanked AC Chambers for the Fire Truck and he shared that it is his favorite time of the evening when it rolls by his house.

Police Department, Lieutenant Jed Smith

Lieutenant Smith stated he does not have a lot to report since there was Council meeting the previous week but that the department had its annual Christmas party out at the VFW. He shared the Officer of the Year was selected by their peers in the department and Hunter Churness was selected. Lieutenant Smith reported the Employee of the Year for 2023 is Rachel Wing, he shared she has stepped up and done two jobs for a long time and that she is deserving of the recognition.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

Special Topics - Employee Evaluations – I finally was able to complete employee evaluations for this year. The evaluation period ended on December 1st. Evaluation discussions have occurred for all employees between the direct supervisor and staff (I directly supervise four individuals – the PW and Utilities Supervisors, the Utilities Accounting and Building Department Specialist, and the Utility Bill Clerk). It took a few months to get the evaluation system in place, and it was done in coordination with the previous HR.

Public Works - We've done our third snow plowing of the year (last Wed, Dec 13th) for City streets and sidewalks. The city continues to get positive comments about those operations, which generally start at 2am and initially focus on access to school roads, emergency services, and critical City facilities. We crosstalk with DOT to try and coordinate efforts, although they tend to focus on Priority 1 roads initially (the Richardson), and then within 18 hours, they should plow the Priority 2 roads in town (Santa Claus Lane and Badger Rd). St. Nicolas Dr., the Old Rich, Buzby and Laurance Road are Priority 3, which are generally cleared 24 hours after the end of a snow event. We anticipate doing hardpack removal in the next few weeks (similar to last year). One other item of note – the DOT snowplows hit and knocked over one of the Candy Cane poles on the Badger Road roundabout, on the north side of the Richardson Hwy. DOT is working on a plan for repair (no word yet), and we will keep you updated.

Building Department - We were contacted by Representative Prax's office about a stop work order that we issued in August. His legislative aide had received a call from the property owner – we had initially contacted this person in July after groundwork had begun on a site within City limits. I personally informed the individual on site and via email about the requirements for building permits – the process is simple, and we go out of our way to help individuals conform to the requirements. There were a number of emails between the City and the property owner, and, on the advice of our legal team, we opted to issue a Stop Work order in early August. We had not heard anything for four months on this issue until they contacted Rep. Prax's office. I discussed the situation with his aide, and they communicated the information to the property owner. As always, we are standing by to help

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individuals and businesses who want to safely build here in North Pole.

Utilities - We are moving forward with efforts to replace all of the older water meter heads (antennas). This includes the needed replacement of over 600 ageing water meter heads and allows for advanced water monitoring by both the city and customers through online and remote monitoring systems.

City Clerk, Emily Braniff

Ms. Braniff stated that since the last Council meeting, she has prepared for the current Council meeting.

ON GOING PROJECTS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ordinance 2023-15, An Ordinance of the North Pole City Council Establishing the 2024 Operating and Capital Budget and Levying the Mill Rate, Third Reading

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to Approve Ordinance 2023-15, as Amended

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to Amend Ordinance 2023-15 to Increase Sales Tax Online, Water Usage Revenue, Sewage Usage Revenue, and the Police Department Grant Fund.

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

On the Ordinance

Discussion

APPROVED

Yes: Clack, Terch, Skipps, Williams, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

APPROVED, as Amended

Yes: Clack, Terch, Skipps, Jacobson, Williams

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

- Ordinance 2023-18, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Amending the 2023 Year End Budget, Second Reading

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to Approve Ordinance 2023-18, as Amended

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

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NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to Amend Ordinance 2023-18 to balance the fiscal note for the Utilities Department

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Williams, Terch, Skipps, Clack, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

PASSED

Yes: Skipps, Clack, Terch, Williams, Jacobson

No: 0

Absent: Welch, Keller

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Terch wished everyone a merry Christmas and asked them to enjoy their family this time of year.

Mr. Williams echoed Mr. Terch's sentiment and shared he loves his new water meter and that everyone else will appreciate them as much as he does.

Mr. Jacobson wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year and reminded everyone to drive safe and arrive alive. Mr. Jacobson shared with the Council the City of Fairbanks legislative priorities. Mr. Jacobson shared that he had printed high school graduation calendars and other important dates from other organizations going forward. Mr. Jacobson spoke of his concern for the haul trucks driving on the highway and that they were not supposed to run before January, but they had already started making runs. Mr. Jacobson stated Department Heads are editing the legislative priorities and sending them to Ms. Braniff and the legislative priorities resolutions will be coming forward at the next Council meeting. Mr. Jacobson stated Ms. Braniff forwarded him three resolutions from the Borough about the Northern Railroad and that language would be added to the list of priorities. Mr. Jacobson stated he is working on a merit pay ordinance that would acknowledge staff for exemplary work done.

Mr. Skipps wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Mayor Pro Tem Clack thanked everyone for the work that they have done and thanked everyone for listening. Mayor Pro Tem Clack wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Skipps *moved* to adjourn.

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clack

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NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

The regular meeting of Monday, December 18, 2023, adjourned at 7:59 p.m.
These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, November 20, 2023.


Mayor, City of North Pole, Alaska

ATTEST:


Emily Braniff, CMC
City Clerk

