



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 Tuesday, March 4th, 2024, in the North Pole City Hall Council Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, March 4th, 2024, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by City Clerk Emily Braniff

INVOCATION

Given by Mr. Terch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Keller *moved to approve* the agenda of March 4th, 2024

Seconded by Ms. Clack

Mr. Jacobson *moved to amend* the agenda to place item d. Recommendation to Council – Skid Steer for Public Works e. Request to Council – Utility Accounts Write-Off Request to the Consent Agenda

Seconded by Mr. Keller

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance 2024-02 an Ordinance Amending NPMC Title 2, Chapter 36, Section 050 Categories of Employees, Apprentice

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance 2024-03 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Compensation for

Minutes

March 4, 2024

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Council Members

- b. Request to Council – Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Assistance to Firefighters Grant
- c. Request to Council – Paint Old City Water Plant
- d. Recommendation to Council – Skid Steer for Public Works
- e. Request to Council – Utility Accounts Write-Off Request

On the Agenda, as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

On the Agenda

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Skipps *moved to approve* the minutes of the February 20, 2024, meeting.

Seconded by Ms. Clack

On the Minutes

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Welch stated he has been out since December 18th and has now been released by his doctor to return to part time work the past week. Mayor Welch reported he attended the Pacific Air Force Commander update at Eielson Air Force Base (EAFB) the past Thursday and it was incredibly informative. He reported Mayor Pruhs and Mayor Ward attended the dinner with him as well as many other important partners. Mayor Welch stated he would like for everyone to have a command brief at Howard Hall on EAFB. Mayor Welch spoke to the importance

Minutes

of those kind of briefings. Mayor Welch thanked Mayor Pro Tem Clack for Acting as Mayor while he was out recovering.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

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

Brigette Vaughn asked the Council for help that she is having with her neighbor who continues to throw items at her home. Ms. Vaughn brought examples of what had been thrown at her house. Ms. Vaughn reported he has threatened her service dog, and he is a continued problem that she would like to have the property noticed as a nuisance property.

Mayor Welch asked how long it has been a problem, Ms. Vaughn reported three years and his property is just a junk yard.

Greg Corbett introduced himself to the Council and shared that he will be meeting his commitment with the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Planning Commission and that he will bring updates to the Council as he attends meetings.

Mr. Jacobson thanked Mr. Corbett for his service to the City of North Pole.

Mayor Welch thanked Mr. Corbett for serving on the FNSB Planning Commission as well as for his service as an instructor for the Air Force ROTC program.

Ms. Clack thanked Mr. Corbett for volunteering to serve.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE

City Utilities Director/Danny Wallace

Mr. Wallace stated this month is the close out of the Air Force's involvement in the Moose Creek project, they will close on March 31st for construction and the City of North Pole will assume the infrastructure for the \$45 million project. He shared he is confident that the city is where they need to be to take over the project and now that Mayor Welch is back, he will attend those meetings with him. Mr. Wallace reported that Public Works has an open position, and they will begin interviewing for them the following week. Mr. Wallace shared he is trying to build a list for the position like the Fire Department does, he also shared that they are under budget on snow removal for the year. Mr. Wallace shared that the old Pizza Hut building is under construction and they continue to follow Building Code.

Mr. Wallace stated there was a water leak in the city the previous week and those kinds of digs can be very expensive this time of year. Mr. Wallace reported there is a Utilities Department opening with an application deadline pending.

Mr. Terch asked who pays for the water meters, Mr. Wallace stated the city has bought extra water meters on the shelf and it is being worked out. He stated after March 31st it would be the homeowner's responsibility but that he is always willing to work with people to be fair.

Minutes

March 4, 2024

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Mr. Jacobson asked if any of the properties are not hooked up to city water in the area, Mr. Wallace reported there are still two wells in the area he stated everyone that can be hooked up has been hooked up.

Ms. Clack asked if the meeting on the 28th of March would be held in his office, Mr. Wallace stated it would be, he stated he would send her an invitation to the meeting.

Mayor Welch asked Mr. Wallace to update the Council on PFOS/PFOA, he shared EAFB is doing rigorous testing and right now the city is in a monitoring stage. He stated he is in contact with EAFB regularly, he met with them the week previous at the water plant in fact. Mayor Welch spoke of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) changing their standards and how it would affect people on private wells. Mayor Welch spoke of the Vector Analysis of the PFOS/PFOA plum, Mr. Wallace reported as soon as he knew more, he would share it.

Tricia Fogarty, Finance Director

Ms. Fogarty reported her department has been working on the audit and gathering all the information the auditors are asking for, for review. Mayor Welch asked how it is going with the new auditors, Ms. Fogarty stated it is going well, they are asking for a lot of historical information, but they are just getting to know the city. Ms. Fogarty stated she would get the financials sent out to the Council soon but that they are very busy with the audit.

Fire Department, Assistant Chief Tod Chambers

AC Chambers reported they continue to work on training in the department and that they are pleased about the amount of interest that is being generated in the apprenticeship program at the Fire Department.

City Clerk, Emily Braniff

Ms. Braniff reported that the City of North Pole will host early voting and be a polling location for the FNSB Special Election on May 7th. Ms. Braniff shared there is a change to the Borough Assembly meeting due to the Special Election and shared revised calendars for all Council members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ordinance 2024-02 an Ordinance Amending NPMC Title 2, Chapter 36, Section 050 Categories of Employees, Apprentice

Mr. Jacobson *moved to adopt* Ordinance 2024-02 an Ordinance Amending NPMC Title 2, Chapter 36, Section 050 Categories of Employees, Apprentice

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Minutes

Absent: 0

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance 2024-03 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Compensation for Council Members

Mr. Jacobson *moved to advance* Ordinance 2024-03 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Compensation for Council Members

Seconded by Ms. Clack

Mr. Jacobson *moved to amend* Ordinance 2024-03 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Compensation for Council Members to allow for in person or virtually to meeting requirements

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Ordinance, as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: Terch

Absent: 0

- Request to Council – Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Assistance to Firefighters Grant

AC Chambers stated this is an Alaska Fire Chief's Association Grant and it provides radios for the department as well as many other departments. He shared it is a wonderful program because it is a 10% match for a 90% funded grant and the radios are upwards of \$8000 each.

Mr. Jacobson moved to approve the Request to Council – Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Assistance to Firefighters Grant

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Request to Council

Minutes

March 4, 2024

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

- Request to Council – Paint Old City Water Plant

Rochelle Velez-Miller stated she is present to answer any questions or concerns the Council may have on the project.

Mayor Welch asked if she was hearing negative feedback about the painting, she reported she had not.

Mr. Jacobson thanked Ms. Velez-Miller for her interest in the community and for planning a public art event, he asked what kind of paint she intended to use. Ms. Velez-Miller stated she had not researched the building enough to know which kind of paint to use yet and if spray painting was a concern she knew which students would be capable. Mr. Jacobson stated paint adheres to the building but that the awning peels everything that they put on it. Ms. Velez-Miller said it may just have to be left blank if that is the case.

Ms. Clack asked which painting they were going to paint, and she shared that they had not decided which design they would be moving forward with yet.

Mayor Welch asked how the Art Club is being funded and if they have enough funds to paint the building, Ms. Velez-Miller stated each student pays \$20 per semester or \$8.50 per quarter for Art Club. Mr. Wallace stated from the floor that he has the funds to cover the painting needs for the project in his budget.

Ms. Clack moved to approve the Request to Council – Paint Old City Water Plant

Seconded by Mr. Williams

On the Request to Council

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Skipps welcomed Mayor Welch back to the Council and thanked Ms. Clack for the amazing job she did in his absence. Mr. Skipps shared information on the upcoming High School basketball games in advance of the state tournament. Mr. Skipps stated he continues to pray for warmer weather.

Ms. Clack thanked Ms. Velez-Miller for coming up with the painting project and shared she too prays for warmer

Minutes

March 4, 2024

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

weather.

Mr. Jacobson welcomed Mayor Welch back and commended Ms. Clack for all the work that she did in his absence, he shared she spent a lot of time working with staff in a hands-on manner. Mr. Jacobson reported on the upcoming Arctic Winter Games and his excitement that it is coming to Alaska again this year.

Mayor Welch stated he has the 2014 Arctic Winter Games program and that Mr. Jacobson presided over it and did an amazing job.

Mr. Jacobson shared his concern about the testimony Ms. Vaughn brought to the Council and suggested it be investigated further.

Mr. Keller shared it is nice to be back, that he has been out on family issues. He drew attention to the third annual North Pole Community Food Drive and asked Ms. Braniff if she would hang in somewhere in City Hall for support. Mr. Keller spoke about the small pantry in Terry Miller Park and the need for homeless youth that go without, he shared it hurts his heart to think about kids who have no food at home on the weekend.

Mr. Williams welcomed Mayor Welch back and shared that he has missed him on the Council. Mr. Williams shared inspirational quotes that would help everyone deal with the times.

Mr. Terch wished everyone a happy Easter.

Mayor Welch stated he had been out for 90 days but that he is glad to be back and spoke well of Neurologist Dr. Martino who has lived in Fairbanks for several years. Mayor Welch thanked everyone for their prayers while he was out. He spoke of the importance of the military and having the Council getting a Command update like he received. Mayor Welch spoke of the need for local elected officials to be non-partisan.

ADJOURNMENT


Mr. Jacobson *moved* to adjourn.

Seconded *by* Mayor Pro Tem Clack

The regular meeting of Monday, March 4th, 2024, adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, March 18, 2024.

ATTEST:


Emily Braniff, CMC
City Clerk




Mayor, City of North Pole, Alaska

Minutes

March 4, 2024

NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT