



**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, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, in the North Pole City Hall Council Chambers.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Michael Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:**

Mayor Welch  
Chandra Clack – Mayor Pro Tem  
Anton Keller – Deputy Mayor Pro Tem  
Jeffrey Jacobson  
Benny Williams  
David Skippis

**Absent:**

Larry Terch – Alt. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG**

Led by City Clerk Emily Braniff

**INVOCATION**

Given by Mr. Keller

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the agenda of April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

*Seconded by Mr. Skippis*

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend the agenda to move item a. Ordinance 2024-05 – Amending the 2024 Budget Acceptance of Grant Funds and b. Request to Council – Acceptance of Grant Funds from DHS&EM SHSP23-GY-23 - \$115,692.00 to the consent agenda.

*Seconded by Ms. Clack*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Ordinance 2024-05 – Amending the 2024 Budget Acceptance of Grant Funds

- b. Request to Council – Acceptance of Grant Funds from DHS&EM SHSP23-GY-23 - \$115,692.00

### **On the Agenda, as Amended**

#### **DISCUSSION**

None

#### **PASSED**

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

No: 0

Absent: Terch

### **On the Agenda**

#### **DISCUSSION**

None

#### **PASSED**

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

No: 0

Absent: Terch

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Keller *moved to approve* the minutes from the April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, meeting.

Seconded *by* Ms. Clack

### **On the Minutes**

#### **DISCUSSION**

None

#### **PASSED**

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

No: 0

Absent: Terch

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

Mayor Welch spoke on the state of where the nation sharing it is a dangerous world that we are living in. Mayor Welch spoke to the \$2.5 million grant that was awarded by Lisa Murkowski and shared that Two Bears Consulting has helped the City of North Pole be awarded grant funds. Mayor Welch reported that Danny Wallace would give an update about the grants during his department report.

Mayor Welch invited everyone to attend the annual Police Torch Run for the Special Olympics and said that Chief Steve Dutra would give a report about it during his department report.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR**

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

Juile Swisher introduced herself to the Council and invited them to participate in the National Sound the Alarm event that will be happening in North Pole May 10th and 11th, 2024. Ms. Swisher shared that North Pole is the highlighted city for the Sound the Alarm Campaign and requested Council members volunteer to install smoke detectors. Ms. Swisher stated she is available for questions but that she would first like to pass out the Sound the Alarm flyer.

Mayor Welch reported he had smoke detectors installed a few years back, Ms. Swisher stated they can install up to four moving forward. Ms. Swisher stated they would like to have some training for installers, so they are not showing up to people's houses having never used a drill before.

Ms. Clack asked if they also needed people for more secretarial responsibilities if some are not comfortable using a drill. Ms. Swisher stated all help will be welcome but that she would love any Council members to attend the kickoff event.

Mr. Williams stated he had smoke detectors installed last time they came to town, and they work well.

Clint Summers reported to the Council that the City of North Pole should invest in a trolley that would take visitors and citizens around the city. He reported he found some grants that would help the community and that he was available if anyone had questions.

## **COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE**

### **Finance Department, Tricia Fogarty**

Trisha Fogarty reported she had sent out financials but that it was missing a column so she did not send it out, she stated she would send it out before the end of the week. Ms. Fogarty reported they are working with the auditors and gathering all the items that they have requested.

### **City Services, Danny Wallace**

Mr. Wallace stated he received word that they received a grant for \$752,000 that was written by Two Bears Consulting, Mr. Wallace reported he did not know the match requirements but that it may be 20%. He reported he will keep the Council advised on the particulars as they evolved.

Mr. Wallace spoke to the many grants that his department has applied for but not yet heard word on. Mr. Wallace reported he found a Fire Station grant that will be submitted at the next Council meeting. Mr. Wallace spoke to PFAS contamination and how to deal with it going forward, he shared the new changes are significant. Mr. Wallace spoke about the water backup at the Police Department reporting they even called the Fire Department for response. Mr. Wallace stated a pipe froze and water was backed up into the department as a result and he is working to ensure that the project is covered by building insurance. Mr. Wallace spoke of the need for a new boiler in the Police Department and that he is trying to be as efficient as possible with the project. Mr. Wallace stated they are onboarding their second new employee for Public Works and summer hire applications are being received actively. Mr. Wallace stated there is an increase in building permits with summer approaching.

### **Fire Department, Chief Chad Heineken**

Chief Heineken reported since the last meeting his department has passed State testing and shared his excitement for how effective the training went due to having 24 evaluators present. He shared that they have

seven quality applicants for the open position in his department.

**Police Department, Chief Steve Dutra**

Chief Dutra stated his department has had two large drug busts recently and are doing a good job getting bad drugs off the streets. Chief Dutra congratulated Detective Cash for digging deep and researching suspects and finding a sex predator, he thanked the Council for allowing his department to have a detective. Chief Dutra state the City of North Pole went in and thanked the first responders that work at Fairbanks Emergency Communication Center. Chief Dutra reminded everyone that on May 18 at 10:00 a.m. the Special Olympic Torch Run will take place and asked for everyone to come and support them. He reported the Trooper Memorial Park memorial will take place the day before, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Chief Dutra reminded the Council of the murder of five-year-old girl in North Pole in 2006 and shared that her murderer has been convicted in Alabama. Chief Dutra recommended upgrading the boiler at the police station.

**City Clerk, Emily Braniff**

Ms. Braniff shared that the AML-JAI training that is required of employees is due by the end of June and will save the city \$27,000 if we fully comply. Ms. Braniff asked department heads to prioritize getting their employees' required training to Human Resource Administrator/Deputy Clerk Maggie Kimmel. Ms. Braniff reported there are only 253 shopping days left until Christmas.

**Borough Representative, Benny Williams**

Mr. Williams reported he attended the Borough Assembly meeting and the Assembly seemed intrigued by the Fire Fighter Apprenticeship program.

**ON GOING PROJECTS**

Mr. Jacobson stated the North Pole Economic Development Committee will be meeting on Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers. Mr. Jacobson stated that they would be discussing ways to make North Pole better and that he is excited about the committee's potential.

**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Skippis thanked the employees of the City of North Pole for the jobs that they do.

Mr. Jacobson stated he had nothing to report.

Mr. Williams asked for everyone to play on a team and to work together and to treat everyone the same. Mr. Williams welcomed anyone who may see him doing something wrong to please point it out so he can do better in the future.

Mr. Keller shared his excitement and echoed Mr. Williams' comments to be better as people. Mr. Keller stated he is excited about the direction that the city is headed in and for all the quality employees that work here.

Ms. Clack thanked the employees for the support they provide and gave a reminder of some of the events that will be happening before the next Council meeting.

Mr. Jacobson asked Ms. Braniff to notice the events on the website, Ms. Braniff stated she would get it taken care of.

Mayor Welch stated the Council has a wonderful opportunity to share who they are on the city website and asked if anyone would like their information changed on the website to let the clerk know.

### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Skipps *moved* to adjourn.

Seconded *by* Mr. Terch

The regular meeting of Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

**These minutes passed and approved** by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Emily Braniff, CMC  
City Clerk



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, City of North Pole, Alaska