

**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, May 19, 2014 in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 125 Snowman Lane, North Pole, Alaska.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Ward called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, May 19, 2014 to order at 7:00 p.m.

***There were present:***

**Ms. Holm  
Ms. Hunter  
Mr. McCarthy  
Mr. McGhee  
Mr. Smith  
Mr. Welch  
Mayor Ward**

***Absent/Excused***

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

Led by Mayor Ward

**INVOCATION**

Invocation was given by Councilman McGhee

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. McGhee *moved to Approve the Agenda of May 19, 2014***

**Seconded by Mr. Welch**

**Discussion**

None

Mr. McGhee moved to amend the agenda to consent the following items:

Old Business

- a. Ordinance 14-06, An ordinance amending Title 1, Section 1.12.010, Altering Code

New Business

- b. Recommendation to award Wastewater Treatment Plant Renovation to Ghemm Company in the amount of \$2,275,000

**Discussion**

None

On the amendment

**PASSED**

YES – 7 –Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Holm, Hunter, Ward

NO – 0 –

Absent – 0 –

On the main motion as amended

**PASSED**

YES – 7 –Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Holm, Hunter, Ward

NO – 0 –

Absent – 0 –

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. Welch *moved to Approve the minutes of May 5, 2014***

**Seconded by Mr. McGhee**

**Discussion**

None

**PASSED**

YES – 7 –Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Holm, Hunter, Ward

NO – 0 –

Absent – 0 –

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

The City is in need of volunteers for the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and picnic. If you are interested please call City hall and sign up! The meetings are set for the following dates at 6pm here at city hall. The Festival is slated to start at 10am and run till 5pm. For vending information please contact North Pole City Hall. Meetings are as follows  
Wednesday May 28<sup>th</sup>, Monday June 9<sup>th</sup>, Monday June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Monday June 30<sup>th</sup>

The North Pole Lions have agreed to partner with the City of North Pole to host the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade this year. We look forward to partnership with the North Pole Lions. Parade entry information will be available through the lions.

We are moving forward with design of the memorial park located off of the Beaver Spring slough in the Morning Star Subdivision. The property was donated to the City by Augie Hebert almost 10 years ago to be turned into a park. I will be bringing a resolution to the next meeting stating a name for the park and establishing a committee to oversee design and construction. If you would like to be a part please contact me (Mayor Ward) or if you would like to donate to the cause.

The North Pole sulfolane surveys have been tallied. We were able to get over a 26% return rate on the surveys (not including Return to senders) some of the highlights 52% wanted a water system, 25% did not and 23% were unsure. Also out of the total 34% wanted a private water system and 32% wanted the municipal option. We will send out the raw data and a synopsis later this week.

As part of the efforts to bring awareness to the potential for F-35 aircraft to be based here at Eielson AFB I am helping build a mock F-35. This (roughly 1/3<sup>rd</sup>) model will be towed behind a vehicle and be at many of the events around town. The cockpit will be designed to sit in and we even have a line on a helmet for people to dawn. Construction has been completed and we are ready to paint.

I will be taking some time off this summer (Thursdays and Fridays) If you would like to stop in please call and make an appointment to ensure I am here at City Hall. I do always carry my phone if there is a need to immediately reach me.

The Mayors Art Awards will be this Friday at 7pm at the Pioneer Park cake building.

I have been putting together a budget workshop for the council and would like to meet sometime during the week of the 27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>. I have outlined the challenges we face and projected changes to our budget as well as policy decisions for the council to determine. Please let me know what day works and if there are any items of particular interest I should include.



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

Mr. McGhee informed the Mayor that there was a community member who had been trying to get ahold of him to volunteer for the July 4th celebration.

Mr. Welch asked if there could be another workshop to meet with council members because of the many issues the City is facing.

Ms. Holm asked if there were tickets for the Mayor's Art Awards.

Mr. McGhee asked about the North Pole Mayor's Art Show. He also asked if they needed any donations for the F-35 mock-up.

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK**

#### **City Accountant**

None

#### **Police Department, Chief Dutra**

- I attended the 2014 Crime Conference sponsored by the Farthest North APOA chapter. Excellent speakers covering topics related to officer survival, active shooter lessons learned and leadership.
- Some of the officers attended Emergency Vehicle Operations course and Firearm courses. Each class had excellent feedback.
- Our department has been grieving the loss of our fellow officers and has attended vigils, services and police memorial ceremony. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families. I also want to remind everyone that in America we lose a police officer every 52 hours. It is a dangerous profession and we send out prayers to all those affected.
- We had the Alaska State Troopers inside the city over the weekend conducting exercises. I know we received some calls on this but it was just annual cert training.
- Chena Lakes contract is being filled by Officer Fisher.
- We have received the final plans for the HVAC system at the PD. It involves 3 phases 1<sup>st</sup> being the repairs to the heating system and 2<sup>nd</sup> is the HRV, and last the cooling.

- The estimates for the entire project have come in well above what we were granted by the legislative grant so we will choose those parts we can complete.
- I rode the department motorcycle in the procession for our fallen Officers and the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. Everyone loved the bike and many people came up to me and wanted to see the bike. It gave us great PR and people are excited to see us participating in community events.
- We received 2 more checks from Asset Forfeiture in the amount of \$854.83 and \$1,542.33. These cases were related to drug seizures.

### **Fire Department, Chief Lane**

- Scheduling Open House for June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Hose testing started and the live in project is also started.
- Going down on June 9<sup>th</sup> for the last inspection on the ladder truck.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Preparedness Expo will be held October 4<sup>th</sup>
- Grant paid 50% of Chiefs payroll for Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- June 30 – Jul 2<sup>nd</sup> will be with FNSB
- Chief Dutra, Lt. Rathbun, and Deputy Chief Coon will travel to Anchorage for the after EOP discussion.
- Chief Dutra, Chief Lane, and Kathy Weber talked about annual employee day have softball game and potluck.

### **Director of City Services, Bill Butler**

#### **Building Department**

- No new permits issued since last council meeting

#### **Public Works**

- Exercise trail and dog park article in Saturday newspaper
  - Article spawned an offer from REI to contribute volunteer labor to help develop the exercise trail
  - Working with the contractor for the Saint Nicholas Drive pedestrian project (Great Northwest) to donate clean fill for the exercise trail and dog park
- Street sweeping on city streets was completed on Saturday
- Exploring development of park off of Doughchee Avenue on donated land

- Soil and Water Conservation Service has expressed interest in applying some of a \$50,000 legislative award help develop the park
- Fish and Game has also expressed interested in supporting development of the park
- In 2004 the FNSB transferred park authority for the site to the City
- Plan to start installing the benches on Santa Claus Lane this week and next
- Will be replacing street lamp bulbs in candy cane lights along Santa Claus Lane this week

### **Utility Department**

- Request to approve Ghemm Company as the construction contractor for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Renovation project is before the Council this evening
- City's application for a Municipal Matching Grant for lift station rehabilitation missed the funding cut in this year's state budget due to less money in the budget for utility capital projects (missed the cut by 25 points)
- City's request for a ACWF loan for the sewer outfall was eligible for funding, but the Utility should not need the loan because \$500,000 is in the capital budget for this project
- ADEC encouraged the City to make a special request for an ACWF loan for lift station rehabilitation to capture the \$500,000 ACWF that the Utility will not need for the sewer outfall
- ADEC reopened the application process for 24 hours so the City could submit this revised application
- Concept is if we are approved as eligible for the ACWF loan for lift station rehabilitation, the City can get additional points on its next grant application for lift station rehabilitation making the City more competitive next year—could have earned between 50 and 75 additional points last year
- Flow has not yet returned to the sewer outfall channel

### **Natural Gas Utility Board**

I missed the last IGU meeting to attend the community meeting on sulfolane held at City Hall on May 6.

### **Borough Representative, Mayor Ward**

- The FNSB last meeting was final reading of their budget. They will see a 10,000 grant to the fire department for vehicle replacement and a 3% increase for the EMS contract.

### **City Clerk**

- Lots of interesting things happening at City Hall.

- ACS will be here tomorrow to install jacks for telephone, computer & internet for the new workstation. TekMate will be out on Thursday to put the computer together with the scanner which will then in turn allow Laserfiche to remotely install the scanning program.
- Laserfiche software is installed on the server and we are in the process of developing the database for our documents.
- Training for Laserfiche will take place the week of June 10th.
- Ad has gone out for the position of Records Preparation Clerk. This is a temporary position and is fully funded by the North Pole Archival Grant. I hope to have this position hired soon.
- Last week Renee, Tricia, and I went into spring cleaning mode and cleaned out the records room in City Hall and re-organized files. We then moved on the archive room located in the Police Station and made strides there as well. Shredway came out on Tuesday and took the canisters and other boxes that we had. There is still a lot of work to do and we hope to be able to finish it up by the end of the month.
- I will be actively looking to upgrade the sound system in the council chambers and would welcome any advice from those who have some knowledge with this issue.
- I will be out of the office on Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> and Friday May 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- None

## **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

- None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **RENEWAL OF THE AW REHN HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THE CITY OF NORTH POLE EMPLOYEES**

Mayor Ward gave an overview of the healthcare renewal.

#### **Public Comment**

Chief Dutra – spoke in favor of the healthcare renewal and urged council to pass it. He spoke against any increase to employees and that this is the last good benefit the City offers.

Chief Lane – spoke in favor of the healthcare renewal and urged council to pass it. He also spoke against any increase to employees.

**Mr. McGhee *moved to* Approve the Renewal Of The AW Rehn Health Insurance For The City Of North Pole Employees**

**Seconded by Mr. Welch**

**Discussion**

Mr. McGhee said he didn't feel this was something that could be done in one meeting. His biggest concern is that council will stick with this benefit for City employees and not change it. He wants to keep the healthcare plan as it is. As a council they have to be sure that there is no change.

Mr. Welch thanked Mr. Kestran for putting together a great package. He said after listening to Chief Dutra and Chief Lane, he could vote for this plan.

Ms. Hunter appreciated the fact that it was postponed to make sure the council could vote on this as a whole and that she felt it was important to support the employees.. She is in favor of approving this.

Mr. McCarthy said there is solidarity here and employees are the City's greatest asset and hopes council will toe the line when we have financial issues like this in the future.

Ms. Holm spoke about employees and the country's crisis with health care. She was in favor of raising the deductible to \$360 will vote no on this. She felt the council should investigate more and that the City may be looking at job losses and apologized if it hurt their feelings.

Mayor Ward said that it is the administrations job to bring forth a plan and maintaining grandfather rights is in the best interests of the City. He said that we do have lower wages and makes it challenging for our employees and that they may move on to where they could make more money and have salary increases. He felt that it Alaska USA Insurance did a very good job at coming in at 3.5% and there is a \$10,000 savings to the City in the budget.

**PASSED**

YES – 6–Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Hunter, Ward

NO – 1 – Holm

Absent – 0 –

**REQUEST FROM CHRISTMAS IN ICE FOR BED TAX FROM CITY OF NORTH POLE FOR 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER 2013 AND 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER 2014**

Rikki Homchick updated the council on Christmas in Ice and requested 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2013 and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2014 bed tax.

On behalf of Christmas In Ice, Inc. (CII), I formally request 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2013 and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2014 Bed Tax from the City of North Pole.

See attached fiscal year-to-date detailed financial reports for the organization.

Bed tax revenue for the 3rd quarter 2013 was received near the end of November 2013.



It was a welcome infusion of funds to get our ice park finished and ready for guests. These funds allowed us to have chainsaw chains sharpened for use at the ice harvest. We also increased our supply of light boxes located around the park to beautify the sculptures and illuminate the slides. The remaining funds were used to pay an independent contractor for an ice slide in the kid's park, re-order CII postcards, and place a down payment on dumpster rental. We also purchased Flex One folding chairs and indoor floor mats for the comfort and safety of our park guests. In previous years, we relied on volunteers to haul garbage to the dump, and we borrowed cold, metal folding chairs from the North Pole Grange. We were able to keep the park looking much cleaner this past season with an on-site dumpster, and we heard many compliments about our new chairs used in the warm-up area of the building.

Bed tax revenue received for 4th quarter 2013 and 1st quarter 2014 will be used by our organization to continue to rent storage space for supplies and equipment. That is our largest summer expense. We also have at least two summer projects lined up: build additional light boxes, and design and build more permanent and weather-resistant ice sculpture display boards.

Our board of directors plans to meet regularly throughout the summer. We are using social media, especially Facebook, to keep the public informed of activities, ice harvests, opening dates, etc. Our website is dormant for now, although we have added a Donate button for prospective donors. We will be personally soliciting for donations throughout the summer, adopting our fiscal year budget, and looking ahead to the park's opening day, November 30<sup>th</sup>.

As always, we welcome volunteers from near and far. The 3th annual ice park is still six months away, but we know that North Pole is always *where the Spirit of Christmas lives year 'round*.

### **Public Comment**

None

**Mr. McGhee moved to Approve Request From Christmas in Ice for the Bed Tax From City of North Pole For 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2013 and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2014**

**Seconded by Mr. McCarthy**

### **Discussion**

None

### **PASSED**

YES – 7 –Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Holm, Hunter, Ward

NO – 0 –

Absent – 0 –

**ORDINANCE 14-07, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE AMENDING TITLE 4, REVENUE AND FINANCE, ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES TO COLLECT DELINQUENT DEBTS OWED TO THE CITY**

Mr. Welch and Mr. Butler presented this to council and updated them on the ordinance and the need for it.

**Public Comment**

Chief Lane needed clarification as to how this would affect the ambulance billing.

**Mr. Welch *moved to* Introduce and advance Ordinance 14-07, an ordinance of the City Of North Pole amending Title 4, Revenue and Finance, establishing procedures to collect delinquent debts owed to the city**

**Seconded by Mr. McGhee**

**Discussion**

Mr. Welch spoke to the ordinance and the need for this ordinance to collect a debt from users.

Ms. Holm asked if there should be additional wording and that there should be an amendment.

**Ms. Holm *moved to* Amend Ordinance 14-07 to strike out on line 33“via US mail”**

**Failed for lack of a second**

Mayor Ward said he had difficulty with the 30 days.

**Mayor Ward *moved to* Amend Ordinance 14-07, line 37, strike to 60 to 90 to read, debts 90 days delinquent.**

**Seconded by Ms. Holm**

**Discussion**

None

On the amendment

**Failed**

YES – 2 –Holm, Ward

NO – 5 – McCarthy, Smith, Hunter, Welch, McGhee

Absent – 0

**On the main motion**

**PASSED**

YES – 7 –Smith, McGhee, Welch, McCarthy, Holm, Hunter, Ward

NO – 0 –

Absent – 0 –

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Welch – spoke about the Trooper memorial last weekend. He said it was surreal to see the casket lowered to the ground and was too much for some. He felt that most of the council sees what the cost is for the healthcare and that it costs everyone. He is leaving for Savannah, Georgia and won't be back for the next council meeting.

Mr. McGhee - Goodnight

Mr. McCarthy – congratulated the Mayor on keeping his cool on KFAR with the sulfolane plume and some of the callers. He told the Mayor that he does well on the air, is well spoken and represents the City well.

Mr. Smith – watch for kids out in the streets.

Ms. Hunter – she agreed with supporting employees and Councilman McCarthy's remarks about not wanting to make changes in the insurance. She said our employees, the fire and police department in particular, put their life on the line and that is what a City does, provide services through its employees and it should be our highest priority in budget and support employees whenever possible. It has been brought home what that price can ultimately be and important for Council to act on behalf of the employees. Ms. Hunter Congratulated the graduating class of 2014 and reminded everyone that tonight is graduation at North Pole High School.

Ms. Holm – invited anyone interested to help in the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration and to contact her by email or cell phone.

Mayor Ward – said 10 years ago he graduated from high school. He said if a councilmember is passionate about something come forward with an ordinance. There are lots of projects going on this summer and we need volunteers. Last year City Hall was painted by volunteers and if you are interested in helping please contact us.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. McGhee adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.**

**Seconded by Mr. Welch**

The regular meeting of May 19, 2014 adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

**These minutes passed and approved** by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, June 2, 2014.

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Bryce J. Ward, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Kathryn M. Weber, MMC  
North Pole City Clerk