



**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, November 6, 2017 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, November 6, 2017 to order at 7:00 p.m.

There were present:

**Ms. Hedding
Mr. Isaacson
Mr. Thompson
Ms. Welch
Mr. Claus
Mr. Skipps
Mayor Ward**

Absent/Excused

Excused

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Mayor Ward

INVOCATION

Invocation was given by Ms. Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Thompson *moved to* approve the agenda of November 6, 2017

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

DISCUSSION

None

Mr. Thompson *moved to* consent the following items:

New Business:

- a. Resolution 17-18, Authorization for the Mayor to approve the purchase of utility easements for the water system extension project where the purchase of the easements is at no cost to the City of North Pole when the funding to

- purchase the easements is provided by the settlement agreement between Flint Hills Resources Alaska, the State of Alaska, and the City of North Pole.
- b. Resolution 17-19, Acceptance of variances to the utility standards of construction in support of the North Pole 2018 water system expansion project.
 - d. Ordinance 17-25, An ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska amending Title 4, Chapter 10.
 - e. Letter of Support for Brown Field Grant Application.

Seconded by Mr. Skippis

Discussion

None

On the amendment

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Isaacson

On the Agenda as amended

Discussion

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Isaacson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Thompson *moved to* approve the Minutes of October 16, 2017

Seconded by Ms. Welch

Discussion

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Isaacson

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Rezone meeting will be here at City Hall on Wednesday, November 8th at 6pm. There will be a presentation from the FNSB.
- Small Business Saturday Proclamation
- Re-organization of Council
 - Mayor Pro Tem – Avery Thompson
 - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem – David Skipps
 - Alt Dep Mayor Pro Tem – Aino Welch
 - Borough Rep – Alternating Council Members

Mr. Thompson *moved to designate the Borough Rep on a rotating schedule so that all Council Members would attend 3-5 Borough Assembly meetings*

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

Discussion

- **Ms. Welch** asked if the Mayor would be able to provide a report of the Assembly meeting and **Mayor Ward** indicated he would.
- **Ms. Hedding** asked what the Assembly meeting schedule was. **Mayor Ward** replied that meetings are typically on Thursdays and begin at 6:00 pm and that he would provide a schedule at the next Council meeting.

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skipps, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Isaacson

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- **Ms. Welch** asked about the boundaries for the rezone. **Mayor Ward** replied that they would extend from City Hall and extend down Badger Road to the Allstate office and the school, and then actually go all the way to City limits.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Fire Dept., Chief Coon

- Deputy Chief Heineken filled in for Chief Coon
- Captain Raby is leaving us for higher ambitions and education. Promoted Lt. Hamlin into the Captain position.
- Busy this fall with recruit training in both EMS and the fire side.

- Reminder to drive safely with the current weather. Roads are very slick with the mild weather we have had.
- Expecting chimney fires and attic fires once the temperatures drop and we have our first cold snap. So this is your reminder to take care of your homes and clean your chimneys!

Police Dept., Chief Dutra

- Mr. Stevenson was here for Chief Dutra to answer any questions and had nothing to report.
- There were no questions.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- AGFOA conference is next week so I will be doing payroll on Saturday.

Director of City Services, Bill Butler

Building Department

- No new building permits issued since October 4th Council Meeting.
- Santa Claus House submitted an application for Phase 2 of its retail expansion.

Public Works

- First snow plowing conducted this past weekend.
 - Started snowing halfway through the plowing.
 - Contractor is using a wing gate to help clear driveways and it appears to be helping to expedite the snowplowing effort.
 - Received no calls or complaints – a positive achievement with a new contractor.
 - **Mr. Skipps** asked what the contractor did once he had started plowing and then halfway through, it started snowing. Mr. Butler replied that the contractor just continued on so half the City is a little better than the other half.
 - **Ms. Welch** wanted to note that she was impressed with the job the contractor performed. There were no issues at her house and Mr. Butler stated he would pass that along.
- Candy Can streetlight issue on Snowman Lane from Pizza Hut South.
 - Expect replacement part to fix the light outage Tuesday.

Utility Department

- North Pole Utility wins wastewater system award.
 - **City of North Pole Wins Wastewater System Award**
Staff Report newsroom@newsminer.com Nov 5, 2017
FAIRBANKS – North Pole received the Wastewater System of the Year award from the Alaska Rural Association for cities with populations of more than 1,000 people.

The Alaska Rural Water Association held its annual meeting Monday through Thursday in Wasilla.

North Pole's wastewater system includes four aerated lagoons, disinfection and de-chlorination, and a level 2 wastewater collection system with 520 connections and 13 lift stations. The plant was upgraded in January 2015.

- The quality of the North Pole Utility is due wholly to the quality and commitment of its field staff.
- **Mr. Thompson** wanted to note that he appreciated how Mr. Butler gave credit for the Wastewater System award to his employees. Mr. Butler replied that he's just the "paper pusher" and the guys are the ones out there "pushing the other stuff."
- Sulfolane settlement.
 - Request for Proposals released on October 23rd for the Water System Expansion Project.
 - Proposals due November 28th.
 - Review team will begin reviewing the proposal 1st week of December and expect to make a recommendation to Council on January 2nd.
 - Payment of \$79,000 made to University of Alaska for land for new pump house.
 - Final paperwork to transfer land to City being prepared by UA.
 - Project engineer is preparing a request for quotes to pre-purchase HDPE pipe for winter construction.
 - Need to pre-purchase pip to ensure contractor will be able to begin planned winter installation in wetlands.

Natural Gas Utility Board

- IGU Board to meet Tuesday, November 7th to discuss Purchase and Sales Agreement for IGU to purchase Fairbanks Natural Gas (Pentex) from ADIEA.
 - Meeting begins at 4:00 pm at the IGU office in the Key Bank Building at 100 Cushman Street.
 - Analogy to a football game, it appears IGU is in the last two minutes of the game and the outcome depends upon decisions made in the next few weeks after a long drawn-out five year process.
 - ADIEA wants a response – yea or nay – from IGU by November 30th on the Purchase and Sales Agreement.

Borough Representative

- Mr. Shefchik was appointed to the IGU board to serve until Ms. Lee takes over her seat in January. Mr. Shefchik was appointed by the seat vacated by Mr. Lojewski when he was elected to the Borough Assembly.
- Attended the Borough Mayor Sandbox meeting. Some of the takeaways are regarding deferred maintenance of buildings. This is something we should think about.

City Clerk's Office, Judy Binkley

- AML and AAMC are next week. I will be out of the office all next week. Jamie Duncan and I will be at AAMC Sunday – Tuesday. I will be at a HR conference from Wednesday – Friday where I will be learning about some of the latest compliance updates. I will have access to my email and will be checking that multiple times throughout the day. Ms. Duncan will be back in the office on Wednesday.
- I am amending my regular office hours to 7am – 4pm so that I may be available to all employees regardless of what shift they are working. This way, there are no employees that will need to hold over after a shift or come in early before a shift if they need to meet with the HR manager.

ONGOING PROJECTS

None

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

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

Public Comment

None

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 17-24, AN ORDINANCE OF THE NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL ESTABLISHING THE 2018 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET AND LEVYING THE MILL RATE.

Mayor Ward introduced the ordinance.

Public Comment

None

Mr. Thompson *moved to introduce and advance Ordinance 17-24, an Ordinance of the North Pole City Council establishing the 2018 operating and capital budget and levying the mill rate.*

Seconded by Mr. Skippis

Discussion

- **Mr. Thompson** thanked Mayor Ward for putting together a really good budget. He stated he was looking at some of the requests from department heads, such as the new admin assistant position for the Police department and the fleet fund for the Fire department. He stated he was interested to see the revenue figures if we increased the mill rate from 1.499 to 2.499. **Mr. Claus** stated he thought this was a good idea. **Mayor Ward** calculated that the increase of the mill rate from 1.499 to 2.499 would bring in about \$120,000 in additional revenue. **Mr. Thompson** stated that from his conversation with Chief Dutra, the estimated total cost of hiring an admin assistant would be about \$73,000 so the increase in the mill rate could cover that and leave a decent amount in the fleet fund for the Fire department. **Ms. Welch** stated she felt it was important for Chief Dutra to utilize his time on more “important” tasks rather than the more “menial” tasks an admin assistant could take care of. She also stated she did not feel the increase in the mill rate would create a hardship for homeowners.
- **Mayor Ward** talked about the amount of work and methodology that goes into creating a balanced budget. He stated he has a hesitation to increase the mill rate because we have been trying to capture revenue not just from the residents of the City, but the many non-residents who travel through the City. This is part of the reason why the sales tax was increased last year. We are trying to create an environment of growth and don’t want to increase the mill rate back to where it was prior to increasing the sales tax. We have high personnel costs so historically, we have cut from our operational costs in order to balance the budget. That’s where we are maybe feeling some of the “pinch” now. He agreed that Chief Dutra had some great points and that an admin assistant would be helpful, but we have to pay for it and that’s the big challenge now and with the state of our economy, this may not be the most prudent thing to do.
- **Ms. Welch** asked if there was anywhere else the monies could come from if we didn’t increase the mill rate. **Mayor Ward** replied that it depends on what the City brings in with the sales tax revenue. That figure is usually an educated guess but with the increased construction in the City, that stream of revenue has the potential to increase. He also stated that Council has the authority to pull from the Fund Balance but he would speak against that, especially for funding personnel. **Ms. Welch** asked if maybe we could look at funding a part-time position as an option. This would give Chief Dutra some relief and maybe not impact the budget as much.
- **Mr. Thompson** reiterated that he really thought this was a good budget.

PASSED

Yes: 6 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Isaacson

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Claus – Hoping everyone has safe travels as it’s icy outside.

Mr. Thompson – none

Ms. Welch – Thank the Council for being “#3” in line and be safe outside and use your headlights!

Ms. Hedding – none

Mr. Isaacson - absent

Mr. Skippis – Would like to welcome the 2 new Council members.

Mr. Thompson *moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.*

Seconded by Mr. Claus

The regular meeting of Monday, November 6, 2017 adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, November 20, 2017.

Bryce J. Ward, Mayor

ATTEST:

Judy Binkley, North Pole City Clerk