



**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, January 16, 2018 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 Tuesday, January 16, 2018 to order at 7:02 p.m.

There were present:

Avery Thompson – *Mayor Pro Tem*
David Skipps – *Deputy Mayor Pro Tem*
Aino Welch – *Alt Dep Mayor Pro Tem*
Santa Claus
Doug Isaacson
Sharon Hedding

Absent/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 January 16, 2018*

Seconded by Ms. Hedding

DISCUSSION

None

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

New Business:

- a. Request to Approve a Contract with Kohler, Schmitt & Hutchison (KS&H) for the 2017 Audit.
- b. Request for Approval to Extend the Auction Contract with Great North Auction LLC Until June 15, 2018.

- c. Request to Approve the Purchase of 2 Patrol Cars for the Police Department.

Seconded by Mr. Skippis

Discussion

None

On the amendment

PASSED

Yes: 7 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch, Ward
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the Agenda as amended

Discussion

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch, Ward
No: 0
Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Thompson *moved to* approve the Minutes of January 2, 2018

Seconded by Ms. Welch

Discussion

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch, Ward
No: 0
Absent: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- I have been working with Mayor Kassel regarding our EMS contract and how the Borough administers the contracts. The City has advocated for funding to help purchase a new ambulance as about 60% of the miles logged are for the FNSB EMS contract. I am

hopeful that we may be able to add to the fleet fund this year. We also discovered that there was a 1 time appropriation in a grant from the Borough to the City for replacement of the ambulance and it has been sitting in the Economic Development fund for about three years. The paperwork is being processed and that \$10,000 grant will go to the fleet fund to help with replacement of the ambulance, most likely to occur next year.

- Last week Bill Butler, Chief Coon, and Chief Dutra met with Kinney Engineering on the Old Richardson Highway, 5th, and NPHS safety project. They are the firm in charge of developing a remedy for the intersection improvements. They will be having a community meeting this spring and I strongly encourage the community to participate.
- The Richardson Highway MP351 project is being developed as a ½ overpass similar to the one at the Eielson AFB gate. This project is not anticipated to impact the existing businesses in this area and is expandable to meet the need of a full overpass if needed. This project is a HSIP (safety) project.
- There is a community meeting on the 18th at Ryan Middle School from 5:30pm to 7:30pm to go over the community survey regarding preparing our youth for the future. This is a partnership with many in the community to include the construction industry and others on how we can equip our students to be successful through not only higher education, but also training and job opportunities utilizing apprenticeship and job partnerships.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- **Mr. Isaacson** asked if there was a deadline that the \$10k grant for the ambulance would need to be used by. **Mayor Ward** replied that there was no deadline.
- **Mr. Isaacson** asked if the half overpass would be built when funds were available or if funds are already available for the HSIP project. **Mayor Ward** replied that the funds have already been allocated.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Fire Dept., Chief Coon

- The boiler controls have been updated and repaired by Rocky's Heating and everything is working perfectly. Rocky's is going to come back and do a couple more upgrades to our ventilation system sometime in the next month.
- We are expecting our field trial and evaluation of the proposed air packs that will be purchased through a regional grant. Our current air packs built in the late 70's and early 80's will finally be replaced. This will require a match from the City which is expected to be around \$30,000. This money will come from unexpended funds from 2017 and not from general funds. **Ms. Welch** asked where the match would come from. Chief Coon replied that it could come from the fleet fund, as that would be the most appropriate.
- We have one new employee starting tomorrow and are expecting the new Engineer to

come online in early February.

- I will be teaching a Methods of Instruction course for the Police Department and other outside agencies.
- DC Heineken and I will be attending a leadership summit in Juneau next month. Captain Haywood will be the Acting Fire Chief in our absence. While in Juneau the state chiefs will be meeting with our local politicians to discuss the importance of the GEMT (Ground Emergency Medical Transport).

Police Dept., Chief Dutra

- LT advertisement is out and we seem to have a lot of interest. Oral boards are scheduled for the 6th of February and selection should occur shortly after that.
- We are moving ahead with the hiring of an admin assistant. We had 24 applicants and whittled it down to 18 and the top 8 went to oral boards where we selected the top 3 who will now move on to the admin testing and Chief interview. I should have the admin assistant selected by the first of next week.
- Office walls have been torn down and the ceiling reassembled. The desk design is in the works.
- Office Smith had a new baby boy – congratulations to the Smiths!
- Officer Lindhag has returned as a reserve officer.
- Statistical Data for 2017 is provided tonight – concerns with larceny (9) cases are not significant.
- ALiCE Presentation
 - January 22-23rd will be the instructor class at the Carlson Center. There will be 58 instructors.
 - There's been a PSA on the Radio for this – thank you, Mayor Ward.
 - We are driving this event and the FNSB has paid roughly \$18,000 to host this course.
 - We will be paying for supplies and some food.
 - We will sponsor additional instructors to help bolster our footprint with businesses and churches.
 - There will be a community even January 31st at 5:30pm at West Valley High School.
 - There will be another one on February 15th at 5:30 at North Pole High School.
 - **Ms. Welch** asked how effective the program is if it's also training kids who may be the "hooligans." Chief Dutra replied that the program is effective because they sent in trained experts to some of the trainings as the active shooters and they failed.
 - **Mr. Isaacson** asked how this was "free training" when he heard on KJNP that there was a \$525 fee to participate. Chief Dutra replied that there are a lot of options for this program. For this specific training, the FNSB SD paid for 50 individuals to participate. **Mr. Isaacson** asked about training for seniors. Chief Dutra replied that is part of the training and there are different tactics used.

- Memorial Park
 - The cameras are finally going up this week if the weather holds.
 - Working on the granite memorials.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Thanks to the Council for consenting the KS&H contract.
- The 2017 Administrative Amendments are before you tonight. There are a couple more that still need to be completed.
- Employee W2's will be mailed out tomorrow.
- Full financials were emailed to Council earlier this evening. The property tax figures are in and they came in higher than expected.
- Hope to have sales tax available online in February.
- Also hope to have online time cards in February. **Ms. Welch** asked about the online time card system because the program that they use for the school district is extremely cumbersome. Ms. Fogarty replied that the City saw a demo of the Caselle program and it isn't cumbersome at all.

Director of City Services, Bill Butler

None

Borough Representative

- The Borough referred back to the land use committee an effort to change code on how the Borough sells land. Currently the Borough has over 80,000 acres of land it could sell or lease.
- The Borough assembly referred back to the committee the ordinance that would allow for Electrostatic Precipitators to be used in Stage 2 burn ban.
- There is also a community meeting January 30th at the North Pole Library at 6pm to discuss the air quality regulations and how it is impacting the community. All are welcome to attend.

City Clerk's Office, Judy Binkley

- I will be emailing Council the Assembly meeting schedule this week. Mr. Isaacson is scheduled to attend the January 25th meeting.
- I have inputted the annual step increase for our employees so they should see that pay bump on the next paycheck.
- I recently met with the City's 2 newest employees – Grant Galvin with the Fire Department and Eric Sonnenburg with the Utility Department. I enjoyed getting to know them and go over the benefits the City offers to employees.

ONGOING PROJECTS

None

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

- **Floyd Terry**, PO Box 73514: Mr. Terry spoke about bringing a roller rink back to the Fairbanks area. He stated how he believed it would help bring more businesses in. Roller rinks are family oriented and fun for all ages. Mr. Terry stated that if there was a roller rink in North Pole, Fairbanks would come.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 17-28, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA TO AMEND TITLE 2, ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL CHAPTER 36 PERSONNEL SYSTEM, SECTION 110 AND 190 REGARDING THE CITY HIRING AND PROMOTION PROCESS.

Mayor Ward introduced the ordinance.

Public Comment

- **Geoffrey Coon**, 110 Lewis St: Mr. Coon spoke in support of this ordinance and stated it was in line with what he wants for his department because it streamlines the hiring process and if there was a tie, the employee would get the position. He also wanted to give Council a chance to ask him any questions about this ordinance. **Mr. Isaacson** asked about the promotion section of the current code and how it was being interpreted. Is it a 2 step process because you need to survey your current employees first to see if there is someone qualified? Mr. Coon replied that with the current code, it is a 2 step process and this ordinance allows the City to make it a 1 step process where everyone applies at the same time, whether they are an employee or not and the most qualified individual will be the one to receive the position.

Mr. Thompson *moved to adopt Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36 Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process.*

Seconded by Ms. Hedding

Discussion

Mr. Thompson *moved to amend Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36 Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process by substituting it with Ordinance 17-28A.*

Seconded by Ms. Welch

Mr. Thompson spoke to how streamlining the hiring process isn't always the best. It's important to consider the dedicated employees who have developed their skills and worked on their leadership because they have knowledge of the City and department that someone from outside wouldn't have. He also stated how he thought line 57 was not well written.

Mr. Isaacson stated he appreciated what Mr. Thompson had to say. He stated that line 57 could use some work and felt that the word "only" was a sticking point.

Ms. Welch spoke to the "qualifications" and said she thought each chief was able to define the qualifications for each job description. She also talked about a "point system" she has seen used with other employers, such as the FAA.

Mayor Ward apologized for not being able to get the substitute amendment out to employees earlier. However, the substance of the substitute hasn't changed. So if Council would like to send this back and have employees take another look, that is fine, but reiterated that he feels this is the way we need to move forward and that a lot of thought went into this. The intention behind this ordinance was that all positions are open to everyone at the same time.

Mr. Isaacson stated he agreed with Mayor Ward. He also stated he believed this should be postponed so that employees can take another look.

Mr. Isaacson *moved to amend line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A by striking the word "only."*

Seconded by Ms. Welch

Mr. Isaacson stated that he agreed with Mr. Thompson and that we need to incentivize employees. He believes this change helps to remove some of the anxiety.

Mayor Ward stated he doesn't think makes it stronger by removing the word "only."

Mr. Skipps stated he agreed with Mayor Ward and that by removing the word "only" you can have employee preference anytime.

On the amendment to strike the word "only" on line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A

PASSED

Yes: 5 – Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch

No: 2 – Skipp, Ward

Absent: 0

Mr. Thompson *moved to amend line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A by replacing "Employee*

preference will only be considered if a current employee has equal qualifications as compared to other applications.” with “Concurrent with recruitment action, department heads will survey the immediate work force for possible promotion potential. Employee preference will be considered if a current employee has similar qualifications as compared to other applicants.”

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

Mr. Thompson stated that if you look on line 59, it states that if 2 employees with similar qualifications are up for a promotion, seniority will play a role in the decision. However, if it's a current employee up against an “outside” individual, the employee preference will only be given if the qualifications are equal.

Mr. Isaacson stated he wants to make sure we aren't making this a 2 step process. Agrees that we need to take a closer look at the words “equal” and “similar.”

Ms. Welch stated that she agrees with changing the word “equal” to “similar.”

Mr. Claus stated that he agrees as well and would like to see this postponed.

Mr. Thompson stated he doesn't think this is a 2 step process. He's just asking that department heads look within first to see if any employee is under-utilized and could take a leadership role. But that doesn't mean you have to promote them. All that needs to be done is a department head just has to take a look within so it's not an additional step.

Mr. Thompson *called to vote.*

No objection

On the amendment to replace line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A with “Concurrent with recruitment action, department heads will survey the immediate work force for possible promotion potential. Employee preference will be considered if a current employee has similar qualifications as compared to other applicants.”

FAILED

Yes: 2 – Thompson, Claus

No: 5 – Skipps, Hedding, Isaacson, Welch, Ward

Absent: 0

Mr. Isaacson *moved to postpone the amendment of Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36 Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process by substituting it with Ordinance 17-28A.*

Seconded by Mr. Thompson

Mayor Ward stated he would postpone if Council is done discussing but wants to make sure that we are done vetting this. He stated he did not believe this should be postponed and that Council should continue discussing because there is a lack of direction for where Council would like to go with this.

Mr. Isaacson *moved to withdraw the motion to postpone the amendment of Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36 Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process by substituting it with Ordinance 17-28A.*

Seconded by Mr. Thompson

Mr. Isaacson stated we need to consider whether department heads are going to look internally for qualified employees before looking outside.

Mayor Ward stated the big question is “do we give employees preference or not?” Originally, the intent was the City does not want to give preference to employees and wants to hire the best qualified, whether that is a current employee or not. Stated he does like changing the word “equal” to “similar.”

Ms. Hedding stated that the way she reads it, it says employee preference will be considered but that other applicants will be compared with the employees. Stated she also prefers the word “similar.”

Mr. Thompson *moved to amend line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A by changing the word “equal” to “similar.”*

Seconded by Mr. Skippis

Ms. Welch stated she is for changing the word “equal” to “similar.”

On the amendment to change the word “equal” to “similar” on line 57 of Ordinance 17-28A

PASSED

Yes: 7 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 0

Mr. Isaacson *moved to postpone the amendment of Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36*

Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process by substituting it with Ordinance 17-28A.

Seconded by Mr. Thompson

Mr. Thompson asked what the process was now that this has been postponed.

Mayor Ward stated that he would make the changes from tonight, forward it on to the City Attorney, and have the City Clerk send it to all employees.

On the postponement of the amendment of Ordinance 17-28, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend Title 2, Administration and Personnel Chapter 36 Personnel System, Section 110 and 190 Regarding the City Hiring and Promotion Process by substituting it with Ordinance 17-28A.

PASSED

Yes: 7 – Skippis, Hedding, Thompson, Claus, Isaacson, Welch, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 0

NEW BUSINESS

Consented

Public Comment

None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Welch – be careful out there as the roads are not very nice. Look forward to the next meeting.

Mr. Isaacson – make sure you don't take the delinquent reports with you. There are quite a few long standing names on here but I know the City employees are working on this.

Mr. Claus – please drive safely and pay special attention to the pedestrians.

Mr. Thompson – there has been lots of discussion about Sam's Club closing and I'm hoping we can look at options for the City and that someone will see there is an opportunity here. Also, it's been raining so please drive safely.

Ms. Hedding – stay safe.

Mr. Skippis – none

Mayor Ward – make sure you leave the delinquent reports and we will see you next time.

Mr. Isaacson *moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m.*

Seconded by Mr. Skipps

The regular meeting of Tuesday, January 16, 2018 adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, February 5, 2018.

Bryce J. Ward, Mayor

ATTEST:

Judy Binkley, North Pole City Clerk