



NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 03, 2019
NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
125 SNOWMAN LANE, NORTH POLE, ALASKA

Mayor Michael Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Tuesday, September 03, 2019 to order at 7:00 p.m with the following Council Members in attendance:

Council Members Present: Avery Thompson, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
Aino Welch
David Skipps
DeJohn Cromer

Council Members Excused: Doug Isaacson, Mayor Pro Tem
Perry Walley, Alt Dep Mayor Pro Tem

Also Present: Judy Binkley, City Clerk/HR Manager
William Butler, Director of City Services
Tricia Fogarty, Chief Financial Officer
Steve Dutra, Police Chief
Chad Heineken, Deputy Fire Chief

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Mayor Welch asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by City Council Member Welch.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Thompson *moved to* approve the agenda of September 03, 2019.

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch.

Discussion

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

Old Business:

- a. Ordinance 19-15, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend the 2019 General Fund Operating Budget.

New Business:

- a. Approval Request for the Election Judges and Canvass Board Members for the October 1, 2019 Regular Municipal Election.
- b. Request to Approve the DEA Task Force Officer Agreement.

Seconded by Ms. Welch.

Discussion

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 03, 2019 AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skippis, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch
NO: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

Discussion on the agenda as amended

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDED AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 03, 2019 AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skippis, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch
NO: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Thompson *moved to* **approve the Minutes of August 19, 2019.**

Seconded by Mr. Cromer.

Discussion

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2019 AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skippis, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR (Audio 3:30)

- August 19 – Participated in the SOA roundtable discussion concerning environmental issues (PM 2.5, PFOS/PFOA, water, etc.) Chaired by U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan to include U.S. EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and ADEC Commissioner Jason Brune.
- August 19 – Attended and represented the CNP with testimony at the FNSB Public Commentary before Administrator Wheeler and Commissioner Brune. Meeting was co-chaired by Senators Murkowski and Sullivan.
- August 20 – Attended and participated in the CNP Finance Committee at NPCH.
- August 21 – The 3 Mayors Conference 1100-1200 followed by the FAST Policy Board meeting at Fairbanks City Hall to 1400.
- August 21 – Dedication/tour of the Buzz Otis Pump House on 2000 Peridot from 1730-1830.
- August 23 – Tiger Team Meeting at FNSB Salcha Room 1030-1200.
- August 27 – Explore Fairbanks with Deb Hickock, Dawn Murphy and Amy Geiger to discuss marketing and promotion for North Pole in 2020.
- August 28 – Visit and briefing at FEDCO 1220-1550 from Jim Dodson and Jomo Stewart regarding Port Authority ANC Airport & FNSB Housing Task Force, Part III.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Finance, Tricia Fogarty (Audio 11:17)

- The finance committee met and reviewed the user fee schedule that is before you tonight. Those are recommendations from the committee.
- We also took a look at the pay schedule and are working on that.

Police Department, Chief Dutra (Audio 13:27)

- Pizza with a PoPo at FPD on Saturday 1-3. Come and enjoy some free pizza.
- Only a few more applications since last meeting and nobody has made it past 4th phase.
- Met with Finance Committee and we have drafted a new pay scale and are vetting ideas on recruitment and retention changes with the Mayor.
- Sgt. Binkley has resigned effective September 11, 2019. Wish him the best.

- This places us exactly 3 positions down and 1 in academy and 1 injured. This could take years to recover from, but we will. We are preparing for a likelihood of 2 additional losses by the end of the year or early next year. We must fix the pay issue or we are going to be looking at huge overtime costs.

Fire Department, Deputy Chief Heineken (Audio 18:47)

- Chief Coon is on leave this week.
- Every fall, we do a joint firefighter 1 academy with the University CTC program and North Star volunteer fire department. For the next 2.5 months, we will be heavily involved with 30 recruits.
- We have an engineer's position that has been posted to the website. Engineer Rossow has given notice and his last day is the 13th of September.
- August 24th, we participated in the MDA fill the boot in the roundabouts. We were very successful and brought in over \$4000. That afternoon, we also had personnel at the Carlson Center participating in the Youth Safety Day.
- Our new employee, Lt. Sam Sanders has started.

Director of City Services, Bill Butler (Audio 21:02)

Building Department

- Since the August 19 Council meeting, two building permit applications were submitted for construction of single family homes in the Ford Subdivision.
- IGU has re-released invitations to bid to construct the regasification plant in North Pole. Site work is proposed for this fall with construction to begin in spring 2020.

Public Works

- Two temporary hires still on staff as we enter fall.
- Large dump truck in for hydraulic pump replacement and electrical work.
- We are investigating the purchase of two small parcels of land to address drainage issues on Cross Way.
- Plan to release an invitation to bid for heating fuel contract for calendar year 2020. Expect to make a recommendation of the preferred contractor at the October 7 Council meeting.

Utility Department

- Sulfolane settlement.
 - 161 new customers have been connected to the system to date. Project has begun installing customer connections in Zone 4.
 - All the gaskets of concern were replaced on the ductile iron pipe in Zone 3 and Zone 3 is going through bacterial testing that proceeds application for an approval to operate the water mains.
 - Project Steering Team has approved installing pipe insulation at a cost of approximately \$94,000 at the Peridot Pump House – an item that was missed in the original design.

- Utility hire a new Utility Assistant, Randy Binkley, who will start with the Utility Monday, September 16.
- Moose Creek Water System Expansion Project.
 - PDC delivered the 65% design documents and is proceeding with engineering and design for the 95% design documents.
 - On August 27, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska publicly noticed in the News-Miner the City's request for an expanded service area to encompass the community of Moose Creek.

Borough Representative, Council Member Welch (Audio 31:10)

- Everything seemed to have been consented except for one thing – pertaining to flooding and flooding maps.

City Clerk, Judy Binkley (Audio 32:12)

- In-person absentee voting will begin by September 17th here at City Hall. Our notice of elections was published in the News-Miner this past weekend.
- I will be taking a week off after the meeting tonight but can be reached by email or phone.

ONGOING PROJECTS

None

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – (Limited to Five (5) minutes per Citizen) (Audio 32:40)

- **Thomas McGhee**, 1152 North Star Drive, North Pole: Stated he was disappointed in the Council and the fact that he emailed everyone concerns over public records request about department heads and elected officials ignoring City ordinance. Also stated he has never seen a Mayor try to publicly out a Council Member. Finally, stated he recommends before Council increases the pay scales of any employees in any department, they speak to employees under anonymity so they can speak freely and may learn that the departments are not as happy as everyone thinks.
- **Howard Rixie**, 5631 Old Valdez Trail, Salcha: Spoke on behalf of the North Pole Lions and the community events marquee that has been put up on the North Pole Safeway Mall property.
- **Jerry Koerner**, 1141 Lake Drive, North Pole: Spoke to the completion of 2 major corridors, Blanket Boulevard and Psalms Boulevard. Clearwater Court has been upgraded and last fall, Glory Court was completed.
- **Laura White**, PO Box 58743, Fairbanks: Spoke to the low turnout for applications for the US Census this year in North Pole. Wanted to touch base and see if the Council had any ideas or suggestions on how to get out there and start informing North Pole residents how important it is.
- **Santa Claus**, PO Box 55122, North Pole: Spoke to being a candidate for City Council.

OLD BUSINESS

Consented

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 19-16, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA TO AMEND THE 2019 PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITY OPERATING BUDGETS AND OTHER FUNDS. (Audio 1:00:00)

Mr. Butler introduced the ordinance.

Public Comment

None

Mr. Thompson *moved to* Introduce and Advance Ordinance 19-16, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Amend the 2019 Public Works and Utility Operating Budgets and Other Funds.

Seconded by Ms. Welch.

Discussion

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO INTRODUCE AND ADVANCE ORDINANCE 19-16, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA TO AMEND THE 2019 PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITY OPERATING BUDGETS AND OTHER FUNDS AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skipps, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

ORDINANCE 19-17, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA AMENDING TITLE 4, CHAPTER 10. (Audio 1:09:00)

Ms. Fogarty introduced the ordinance.

Public Comment (Audio 1:17:49)

- **Santa Claus**, PO Box 55122, North Pole: Spoke to the benefits for businesses who get a business license and their option to be included in the City's business directory.

Mr. Thompson moved to Introduce and Advance Ordinance 19-17, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska Amending Title 4, Chapter 10.

Seconded by Ms. Welch.

Discussion (Audio 1:18:55)

Mr. Thompson moved to Amend Ordinance 19-17, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska Amending Title 4, Chapter 10 by Leaving the Current City Annual Business License Fee at \$50.00.

Seconded by Ms. Welch.

Discussion on the amendment (Audio 1:19:37)

Mr. Thompson stated we can address increases to City business license fees at a later time when we have more information as to what other municipalities are doing.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO AMEND ORDINANCE 19-17, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA AMENDING TITLE 4, CHAPTER 10 BY LEAVING THE CURRENT CITY ANNUAL BUSINESS LICENSE FEE AT \$50.00 AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skippis, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

Discussion on the motion as amended

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO INTRODUCE AND ADVANCE ORDINANCE 19-17, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH POLE, ALASKA AMENDING TITLE 4, CHAPTER 10 AS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

YES: 5 – Skippis, Thompson, Cromer, Welch, Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Mayor Welch declared the MOTION CARRIED

COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

Ms. Welch moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Thompson.

The regular meeting of Tuesday, September 03, 2019 adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, September 16, 2019.

Michael W. Welch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Judy L. Binkley, City Clerk