



**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 15, 2021 via Zoom.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, November 15, 2021 to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:**

Michael Welch – Mayor  
Santa Claus - Mayor Pro Tem  
DeJohn Cromer - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem  
Aino Welch – Alternate Deputy Mayor Pro Tem  
Thomas McGhee  
Anton Keller  
David Skipps

**Absent/Excused:**

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

Led by Mayor Welch

**INVOCATION**

Given by Mr. McGhee

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Claus *moved to* approve the agenda of November 15, 2021

Seconded *by* Mr. McGhee

Mr. McGhee *moved to* amend the agenda of November 15, 2021 to consent the following items:

Old Business:

- b. Ordinance 21-18, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska Amending the 2021, Operating Budget for the Fire Department.

New Business:

- b. Ordinance 21-20, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska, to amend the Bed Tax Levy & Bed Tax Grant Distribution.

- c. Request for Cancellation of a Bad Debt
- d. Request to Approve New Hire Wage Determination for NP Police Officer
- e. Request to purchase PPE for NPFDF from Sourcewell.

Seconded by Ms. Welch

## On the amendments

### DISCUSSION

None

### PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

## On the agenda as amended

### DISCUSSION

None

### PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. McGhee *moved* to approve the minutes from the 11/1/21 meeting

Seconded by Ms. Welch

### DISCUSSION

None

- A correction to the spelling of Mr. Cromer's last name was noted.

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Noted that there was not as much fan fare for Veteran's Day as there has been in the past. He did entertain Barry Nickelsberg, Chief of Gifts and Endowments for the Jimmy Carter Center in Atlanta Georgia. They went to Chena Hot Springs where Bernie Carl was their host. The Mayor let everyone know that he would be leaving the next day to head to Anchorage for the AML & the Alaska Conference of Mayors. He is presenting a project that he is presenting to them for consideration for capital improvement money from the state of Alaska for the central heat program. On the horizon for the council is going to be committee signups and discussion for possible new committees.
- Included in the Council packet was a letter from Col. David Berkland, USAF Commander, that Eielson AFB

has been selected as the preferred pilot location to host the first Dept of the Air Force nuclear micro-reactor. Construction is estimated at 2025 and public engagement will be available as the project moves on.

## COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

None

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

### Police Dept., Chief Dutra

- Swearing in of new NPPD Office Koerner
- Halloween event – 600 glowsticks – low food turnout – great job employees and volunteers
- New vehicles are largely finished – waiting for final install of trickle charger then will ship.
- I will be out of town Dec 1-10 – half for personal half work in Anchorage.
- ITF – good discussions on range land and possible Usibelli EVOG land.
- Building is coming along. Finished painting in 65% of building. Ceiling grid is in. Tues- Wed finish of sheetrock and painting.
- Mayor authorized ARPA funds for IT infrastructure for new addition. This will cover equipment cabling and cabinets to support critical infrastructure and communications within the new addition.
- Sgt. McBroom gave his notice, he will be retiring his last day will be the 20<sup>th</sup> of November.

### Fire Dept., Chief Heineken

- Does not have a formal report.

### Director of City Services, Bill Butler

#### **Building Department**

- No new building permits issued since November 1, 2021.

#### **Public Works**

- Street light project: Asking Council to add \$163,458 to 2022 General Fund capital projects to augment the \$200,000 already budgeted for the project. The City initially paid \$68,267 in 2017 to get the project started. Without the additional funding, this project is unlikely to proceed.

#### **Utility Department**

##### **Utility**

- Sludge: Sewer budget requires \$150,000 transfer in from Sewer Reserves to remove and

treat balance of remaining sludge in spring 2022.

- Federal infrastructure funding expected to allocate \$55 billion for water & wastewater projects nationally with an anticipated \$180 million for Alaska projects.
  - Utility has “shovel ready” sewer discharge main project.
  - Requested Stantec Consulting to generate a scope of work for replacement of our corroding steel water mains. See that attached picture of a sample of the City’s steel water mains. These water mains serve the core of the City and are almost 50 years old. (high priority).
  - Requested Stantec Consulting to generate a scope of work for replacement of aerators in treatment lagoons at wastewater treatment plant. (medium priority).

### **Moose Creek**

- Last major construction activity is installation of new well pumps.
  - Well B new pump and controls successfully installed and currently feed the water system.
  - Well A new pump and controls successfully installed, but experiencing problems coordinating the well with WTP.
  - Spring 2022 a maximum of 18 additional service line installations and 18 wells to be decommissioned.
  - Road resurfacing work to be completed in spring 2022.
  - Project termination to occur no later than August 31, 2022.
  - Data report for project achievements thru end of October 2021 were sent out to everyone.
- The Mayor asked about the street lights project and what Bill’s advice was on preceding. Bill recommended that we move ahead with the project. The lights that are in the plan are LED’s and we are going to be able to do the project for significantly less then if we paid for the whole thing ourselves. Mr. Cromer asked some clarifying questions on where the new streetlights are going to be going. Bill responded that the new streetlights are going to be installed in the Ford and Morning Star subdivisions and the older streetlights on GVEA poles in town will be replaced with newer lights that are not run through GVEA. Mr. Cromer asked about seeing a map where the lights are going to be. Ms. Welch said that she has been approached by several constituents who are concerned about the light pollution that will potentially be added by the lights. Bill said that the new lights will be the same as the ones around city hall, the LED is a flat light. Bill said that the fixtures and power have already been designed and that it would be difficult to change at this time. Mr. Keller asked if the constituents in those areas had been or could be notified about this project. Bill responded that previous Mayor Ward in 16/17 did a survey in the areas and a public meeting giving people a chance to give their thoughts and that the response was pretty good from the communities. Bill said that if we went back to take more public comments on the project that it would push the installation out by another year.
- The Mayor said that he feels we are ‘shovel ready’ for the replacement piping project and plans on asking for some of the 10 year infrastructure bill money that Alaska will be receiving. He feels we have a good chance at getting the money, the only drawback being that there are communities that are more rural than we are and that they would have preference.

- The Mayor also brought up the idea of the bond bank and that we could potentially borrow the money at a very low interest rate for the replacing meters project. Bill mentioned that there are other loans from the Alaska Clean Water Fund and AK Clean Drinking Water Fund and that would be easier to get and with just of low as an interest rate.
- Mr. McGhee asked if there have been any updates to the Baumgardner request on the lien against their sons' property and if the \$1000 legal fees that we have spent are included in the lien. Bill said that the answer is no, Ms. Baumgardner has not approached the city with a resolution other than having the city forgive the entire debt. They are going to talk to CSG about working out an installment plan for the debt. And yes, the attorneys' fees have been added to the lien.

### Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- She has been working on Tyler with the parallel payroll right now, it is going well. The payrolls for the rest of the year will be done in both systems. They are going live in December. Tricia asked that we give Michelle support in the next few weeks as she just lost her mom, she encouraged Michelle to take time off as she needed. The financials were not included for this meeting due to this and the Mayor asked if they could be available before Thanksgiving.
- The mayor asked how much of the CARES money we still had left. Tricia said that she believes it is around \$480,000, but that not all of the invoices are in. She reminded us that whatever money that we do not spend needs to be returned at the end of the year.
- Mr. McGhee asked if we are moving forward with getting the heat fixed and equipment needed for doing a hybrid city counsel meeting. The Mayor said that he is looking into alternative ideas. Tricia said that she had a link for a camera that could work for us. Mr. Cromer offered a few ideas for a quick fix with a TV and speakers.

### Borough Representative

- None. Ms. Welch did not attend the last meeting, the date had changed and she was not made aware.

### City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Will be gone starting Wednesday through the following Monday. Please email if you need anything from her, she will be checking emails.

## ON GOING PROJECTS

### Bed Tx Committee

- The mayor gave some background on how we chose the members for this committee. There were some issues with schedule the meeting in the allotted timeframe given by the ordinance, so the date of the meeting changed from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>. Council members on the committee are the Mayor, Mr. Keller, Mr. Claus and Ms. Welch. Reminded everyone that the council will still be voting on the final

disbursement of the money.

- Mr. Mc. Ghee expressed concerns that some of the recipients of last years award did not meet all of the requirements based on last years funding. He feels that the requirements were not met for NPCCC in particular. He clarified some directions for the new clerk moving forward. He also wanted to clarify some of the agencies that are on the list asking for an award not being eligible based on the ordinance as written. The clerk and the mayor assured him that the agencies will be correctly vetted before the meeting of the committee. Mr. Cromer was concerned about the clerk making the call of what agencies qualify under the ordinance and felt that the committee as a whole should be making that call.

Mr. McGhee *moved* to approve the bed tax committee as established by the mayor and to have the meeting on November 30, 2021

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

#### **DISCUSSION**

None

#### **PASSED**

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

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

- None

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Ordinance 21-17, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska, Establishing the 2022 Operating and Capital Budget and Levying the Mill Rate

Mr. Claus *moved* to approve 21-17 and move to the third reading

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

#### **DISCUSSION**

Mr. McGhee asked if the corrections that we talked about during the last meeting were made. Tricia sent everyone the spreadsheet with the changes. Mr. McGhee reminded everyone that the new pay scales are going to be introduced soon and except for Bill's are already included in the 2022 budget.

Mr. McGhee *moved* to amend 21-17

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

### On the amendment

#### DISCUSSION

None

#### PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

### NEW BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance 21-19, an Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska, to Amend the 2021 General Fund Budget

Mr. Claus *moved* to Introduce Ordinance 21-19

Seconded *by* Mr. McGhee

#### DISCUSSION

Mr. McGhee asked Bill to share the changes that are being made. The change is moving \$60,000 out of the Public Works Budget to the Capital Projects Budget for the sidewalk project/street maintenance. The fiscal note for this ordinance reads with the wrong accounts to debit as it is written now.

Mr. McGhee *moved* to amend the fiscal note with the amendment to change the accounts to debit to the correct ones.

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

### On the amendment to the amendment

#### DISCUSSION

None

#### PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

### On the amendment

#### DISCUSSION

None

**PASSED**

Yes: 7 – A.Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, McGhee, Skipps, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent: 0

21-19 will advance to the 12/06/21 meeting

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

The council wished everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving holiday.

Mr. McGhee *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

The regular meeting of Monday, November 15, 2021 adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

**These minutes passed and approved** by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, November 15, 2021.

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Michael Welch, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Melissa Dionne, City Clerk