



NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES, January 19, 2021  
NORTH POLE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
125 SNOWMAN LANE, NORTH POLE, ALASKA

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Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, January 19, 2021 to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following Council Members in attendance:

Council Members Present: Mayor Welch – Zooming In  
Santa Claus - Zooming In  
Thomas McGhee - Zooming In  
David Skipps - Zooming In  
Aino Welch - Zooming In  
DeJohn Cromer - Zooming In  
Perry Walley – Zooming In

Absent:

Excused:

Also Present: Steve Dutra, Police Chief – Zooming In  
Chad Heineken, Fire Chief – Zooming In  
William Butler, Director of City Services– Zooming In  
Tricia Fogarty, Chief Financial Officer – Zooming In  
Aaron M. Rhoades, City Clerk/HR Manager – Zooming In

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Clerk Rhoades asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by Mr. McGhee.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. McGhee moved to approve the agenda of January 19, 2021.**

**Seconded by Mr. Skipps**

**Discussion**

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

**New Business:**

- a. Resolution 21-01 A Resolution Establishing The City of North Pole Legislative Priorities for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Legislature 2021 Regular Session.
- b. Request to Approve Professional Service agreement with Shannon & Wilson for \$44,612 to conduct next phase of PFAS site characterization associated with the Fire Department.

**Remove:**

- d. Request Salary Increase for CFO from Step 14 to Step 19

**Seconded by Mr. Skippis**

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO CONSENT NEW BUSINESS ITEMS A AND B AND REMOVE ITEM D:

YES: 7 – Mr. McGhee, Mr. Skippis, Mr. Claus, Mrs. Welch, Mr. Cromer, Mr. Walley, Mayor Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN:

**Mayor Welch** declared the MOTION CARRIED

*On the Agenda as amended.*

**Discussion**

None

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMMENDED:

YES: 7 – Mr. McGhee, Mr. Skippis, Mr. Claus, Mrs. Welch, Mr. Cromer, Mr. Walley, Mayor Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN:

**Mayor Welch** declared the MOTION CARRIED

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. McGhee moved to approve the Minutes of January 19, 2020.**

**Seconded by Mrs. Welch**

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 4, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING:

YES: 7 – Mr. McGhee, Mr. Skipps, Mr. Claus, Mrs. Welch, Mr. Cromer, Mr. Walley, Mayor Welch

NO: 0

ABSTAIN:

**Mayor Welch** declared the MOTION CARRIED

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

- Student of the Month Lucy Reese
- What do we do as a Nation? Commenting on the Capitol Riot.

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

- None

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

#### **City Services, Bill Butler**

##### **Building Department**

- No building permits issued since January 4, 2021.
- IGU project is nearing completion-beginning start-up testing.
- Permit applications anticipate in spring 2021:
  - O'Reilly's Auto Parts.
  - Alaska USA Credit Union.

##### **Public Works**

- Clearing berms and sidewalks, and graveling intersections as necessary.
- Equipment and vehicle maintenance.
- Working with Fish & Wildlife Service for funding to manage stormwater runoff on Doughchee Road
  - Would supplement the \$100,000 included in 2021 budget for work on Doughchee.
  - Managing stormwater will protect bridge and roadbed.
- Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District is interested in helping City to extend Beaver Springs Nature trail along the slough.
  - First step will be site assessment and design.

##### **Utility Department**

- Activities focusing on routine operation of water and sewer processes; keeping sewer mains flowing and equipment and vehicle maintenance.
- North Pole Expansion only remaining work is transfer of two Road Service Area Permits to Rolling Stone.
  - Several service line installations lacked compaction data as is required in FNSB permit with City.
  - I will not allow City to bear the risk for installations so Rolling Stone is required to accept the risk and permits to receive their final payments.

Moose Creek Water System Expansion Project.

- Substantial completion of the transmission main, pump house, storage tank and northern loop not expected to occur until early February.
  - Electronic control issues remain as the major outstanding items.
- 69% of possible water system customers have submitted utility account applications.
  - Deadline to receive sign-up compensation is March 31, 2021.

**Police Department, Chief Dutra**

- Officer Bryan Dikeman was sworn in today.
- New APSC proposed regulations out for public comment
- New vehicle has arrived from California. Saving and quality are superior.
- Sgt. Ben Wages has official been promoted.
- We have completed our DOJ registration for the federal Safe Community and safe policing requirements. We are in compliance.

**Fire Department, Chief Heineken**

- COVID update.
  - When COVID arrived last spring the Fire Department developed plans to protect and maintain staffing in the event employees became ill with the virus. Fire Department Staff had an exposure to COVID the last week of December. Four shift personnel and I (Chief Heineken) tested positive for COVID. Immediate steps were taken using the developed plan to Isolate the known positive employees and separate and quarantine all remaining employees while still maintaining minimum staffing to respond to emergencies. In total we had 6 full time and 1 part time employee test positive. Currently the Fire Department is back to full staffing with exception to one employee that finishes Isolation this week and will be back to work on Friday. I am very proud of the hard work and dedication that all my staff put in to get us through this COVID outbreak. This was a very difficult time for all fire department staff and as always, they rose above and beyond expectations.

- AFG grant, New Fire Hose.
  - The grant funded fire hose we ordered last fall arrived today, we will be completing inventory of the new hose immediately. In April when weather permits, we will be acceptance testing the new hose and placing it into service on our fire apparatus.
- Fire station ventilation system.
  - We are continuing to investigate options to repair or replace the ventilation system in the Fire Station. In November we received a quote from GRS Controls to replace the system, today Holaday Parks Inc. looked at the system and will be providing recommendations and cost estimates. Once we have multiple estimates, I will work with the Mayor to find the appropriate financial plans for the project. The current ventilation system is in operable and has not functioned since the 1990's, with the current out break of COVID with in our department I feel that making repairs or replacing the ventilation system with a modern system with proper filtration will provide a healthier environment for our employees.
- Apparatus report
  - I am starting to look at specifications and pricing to purchasing a new Fire Engine. Our goal is to have an apparatus specification in place and go out to bid no later than the Fall of this year, with apparatus delivery in the spring of 2022.
- EMS Contract with the Fairbanks North Star Borough Update.
  - It is that time of year again and we are working with the Fairbanks North Star Borough to renew our EMS contract for providing ambulance service to the greater North Pole areas outside of our City. I am happy with the changes that Mayor Ward has made with the negotiation process, this year Mayor Ward, Emergency Management personnel and all Fire Chiefs involved came together and met via zoom to discuss Mayor Wards new formula for dividing and paying the multiple EMS contracts. I did receive a proposed contract in December and this proposed contract increases the City of North Poles funding by approximately \$100,000 compared to last years contract. The new formula is a welcomed attempt to bring a fair and equitable method for the FNSB to distribute the EMS funds. Although the proposed increase is appreciated, I did explain to Mayor Ward and all of those in attendance, that this new formula did not take into consideration that the City of North Pole is the only contractor that must purchase their own ambulances. Mayor Ward stated he is working on a solution for compensating North Pole for ambulance purchases. I should be hearing back from Mayor Ward or Borough staff this week with any changes they intend to make to the proposed contract.
- 1347 Emergency calls in 2020

**Finance, Tricia Fogarty**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting with Tyler Technology – How we conduct business with current system.

- Met with Gary Hutchinson (Alliance CPA) about upcoming Financial Audit.

### **Borough Representative**

- Moved certain powers from the Service Area
- Pass through Grant for emergency preparedness.
- Working on this Quasi-Judicial Appeal Board.

### **City Clerk**

- Verizon Phone Problems continue but working on getting it solved.
- PIO - 65+ Covid 19 shot appointments took an hour to fill.
- New Officer Oriented and Sworn in Bryan Dikeman.
- RISQ Consultants Insurance Broker for Flexible Spending Accounts
- Remember to fill out POFD

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- CARES Act Update – Cooling Off Period until End of Feb.
- Discuss North Pole Police Department Construction Project
- Total Compensation Project 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting

### **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – (Limited to Five (5) minutes per Citizen)**

- Lisa Lewis – Petrostar

### **REQUEST TO APPEAL WATER UTILITY CHARGES FROM CITIZEN CHRISTIAN J. MCCAIN.**

**Mr. McGhee *moved to Deny Appeal from Christian J. McCain***

**Seconded *by Mrs. Welch***

#### **Discussion**

A lengthy discussion took place on Mr. McCain's circumstances and what parts of his water bill were given consideration and forgiven and what the remaining bill was.

**A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO DENY MR. CHRISTIAN J. MCCAIN APPEAL:**

YES: 7 – Mr. McGhee, Mr. Skipps, Mr. Claus, Mr. Walley, Mrs. Welch, Mr. Cromer, and Mayor Welch

NO: 2 –

ABSTAIN:

**Mayor Welch** declared the MOTION CARRIED

**Mr. McGhee** *moved to Adjourn*

The regular meeting of Tuesday, January 19, 2020 adjourned at 9:09p.m.

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Michael Welch, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Aaron M. Rhoades, City Clerk