



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, March 7, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, March 7, 2022, 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
Anton Keller
David Skipps
Jeffrey Jacobson (sworn in during this meeting)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Mayor Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Claus *moved to* approve the agenda of March 7, 2022

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Claus *moved to* amend the agenda of March 7, 2022 to consent the following items:

Old Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-04, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Fund Preliminary Investigations and Design for the Replacement of Steel Water Mains
- b. Ordinance 22-05, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Fund Updating the North Pole Utility Water and Sewer Standards of Construction

New Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-07, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Amend the 2022 Operating Budget to Award the 2022 Snow Hauling Bid.
- b. Request to Purchase a 2022 Wheeled Coach Ambulance from Rocky Mountain Emergency

Vehicles.

- c. Resolution 22-08, A Resolution of the City of North Pole in Support of Alaska Industrial Development Export Authority (AIDEA) to Identify Lands for Development.

Seconded by Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, Skipps, Welch

No: 0

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, Skipps, Welch

No: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Claus *moved* to approve the minutes from the 2/22/22 meeting

Seconded by Ms. Welch

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, Skipps, Welch

No: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Council Member Jeffrey Jacobson
 - Melissa Dionne, City Clerk, gave Mr. Jacobson his oath.
 - Mr. Jacobson thanked the Council and expressed his gratitude to come onboard.
- The Mayor talked about the party that the City had in Bill Butlers' honor. Former Mayor's Isaacson and Jacobson were there, and Mayor Ward came a little later.
- We did have our number one candidate, Robert Rouse, to replace Mr. Butler as the Director of City Services with us last week as well. He spent some time with the public works employees and took a tour of the city facilities. The Mayor had given Mr. Rouse had until Friday, March 4 to decide if he was going to accept the position. Mr. Rouse ended up declining it stating that he didn't feel like it would be a good fit.
- The Mayor spent Saturday morning at KJNP, along with a few other local politicians, from 8-10am.
- Later the same day he was on with the Alaska State Legislative Finance Committee. He talked to them

about PERS, which the City spends approximately 11% of its budget on. He also spoke to them about capitalizing the Community Assistance program and fully funding it this year. He said that many of the other communities that were there all spoke towards needing the same things.

- He will be meeting at Pagoda with 3 Star General Jacobson in a few days to talk about the housing need from Eielson.
- Mayor Welch told the Council that we had hired an HR Generalist and that she will be starting on Monday, March 21st. He hopes she will be a big asset to the admin staff, providing support to the mayor and other staff.
- Mayor Welch told the Council that he will be working with Ampersand in the next few weeks regarding the security breach from October 2021 and the new contract for the next year.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Mr. Claus asked about adding the Zoom link for the Council meetings onto the website.

The mayor and the city clerk agreed to investigate that.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- New addition has not had a water backup since weather has warmed up.
- New Gym equipment is in and being used.
- Tearing down the wrecked patrol car getting ready for auction.
- Stats – Traffic enforcement is down, and he is addressing this with patrol.
- The new recruit is in his final week of FTO – ready to go on his own.
- No new applicants in the final phases of hiring. Expected more traffic after raises. Video production has been extended to get more summer videos.

The Mayor ask Chief Dutra to let him know how his meeting with Ampersand goes.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- Chief Heineken was with us tonight from the Hotel Captain Cook at the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association Leadership Summit. This is the first time they have been able meet in 2 years. This year it had to be changed from Juneau to Anchorage. He said that after a great day of meetings that he is looking forward to the rest of the week.
- He was pleased to announce that the Operations Training Officer position has been accepted by Todd Chambers. Mr Chambers started his fire fighting career here at North Pole back in the 90's and has been the fire chief for the City of Fairbanks. He has a ton of experience and is a welcomed addition to NPFD.

Mayor Welch asked the Chief to talk about the PERS change that we are going to make for the hiring of Mr. Chambers.

- Chief Heineken said that we will be bringing Mr. Chamber's on as a temporary employee until we can work out the PERS issue. Mr. Chambers has already had a full career with PERS and retired from that system. He does not want to start that again. So Chief Heineken will be writing a resolution to amend the PERS agreement for such exceptions.

Mayor Welch spoke to the Chief about the personnel review board that they have coming up March 22 at 5:30. The mayor is putting together a panel, it will include Chief Dutra, a citizen that has already agreed and now he needs a council member to be there as well. He asked the Council to let him know if they were available.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty gave an update on the Tyler conversion. The utility billing module will be going live at the end of the end of the month. Again, they will be running the numbers in both systems for this time. Assuming they are fine, all future billings will be completed only in Tyler. The utility clerk spent 4 afternoons last week training and feels confident with it.
- Ms. Fogarty also said they will be training on the cashiering module next week. They need that module to go live at the same time as the utility one, as they work together.
- Ms. Fogarty apologized to the council that their pay this next time will not include the workshops that the city had in February. They will be on the following paychecks.

Mr. Jacobson asked about paperwork that he needs to be complete with the city as a new council member.

- Ms. Fogarty said that she would send the paperwork to him.

The Mayor asked Mr. Jacobson and the rest of the council about their APOC paperwork that is due by March 15th. He also told Mr. Jacobson to email Melanie Swanson about business cards.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch shared that there was a borough meeting on the 24th of February. There was a lot of comments on the Resolution 2022-06, requesting the Army Corps of Engineers to extend the time for public comments and to hold for a public hearing for the Mancho Project. They want to put a road through some wetlands that was pretty far out, and she didn't feel like it had much bearing on the borough. The resolution passed.
- She said that Mayor Ward spoke about COVID and the impact it is still having on buses and lifeguards.
- Ms. Welch also let everyone know that the shooting range at the end of Cushman will be closed till the end of the summer to add upgrades and bathrooms.
- The borough will be having budget workshops that will be available to the public.
- It is music in our schools' month and Ms. Welch shared with everyone that there are lots of spring break activities that will be happening an to check the school district website.
- The borough created a new code enforcement position that passed.
- The Capital Improvement list passed as well. The list should be available online soon.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne is just back vacation. She apologized that the council packet was a little incomplete this time around. She did send a completed packet to everyone before the meeting.
- Ms. Dionne shared that Chief Dutra sent her the details for an upcoming training in Wasilla this summer, it is a media and public relations training. She will be looking into attending that.

- She said that she has a training happening next week on Thursday and Friday.

The Mayor asked Ms. Dionne for an update on her education credits towards her municipal clerk certification.

- Ms. Dionne said that she has been doing quiet a few little trainings and has the academy coming up in June.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- None

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

- None

OLD BUSINESS

- d. Ordinance 22-06, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Fund Preliminary Assessment and Design for the Remodel of the Old Water Treatment Plant as Office Space for the City Services Departments

On Ordinance 22-06

Mr. Claus *moved* to introduce 22-06

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

No: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Cromer, Skippis, Jacobson, Welch

NEW BUSINESS

- None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jacobson thanked everyone for a great and quick meeting and said he is looking forward to working with everyone.
- Mr. Keller said that he was excited to start seeing and feeling the sun again after a long winter.
- Mr. Claus welcomed Mr. Jacobson and told everyone to drive safe.
- Ms. Welch welcomed Mr. Jacobson as well and said she looked forward to the expertise that he brings with him. She cautioned everyone to be safe on the roads and to remember that there are other people on the roads.
- Mr. Cromer welcomed Mr. Jacobson and said that he has picked up his laptop from City Hall
- Mayor Welch also gave a shout out to Mr. Jacobson and said that he will be a good resource for some of the past things that have happened in the city. He talked about the record-breaking snowfall that the Interior has had so far and reminded everyone that there could be more snow coming. We have exceeded the average snowfall by over 2 feet so far. He also shared that the military is lifting their mask mandates,

with masks only needing to be worn in childcare facilities and clinics/hospitals or when you are working closely with someone who is health compromised. Mayor Welch talked a bit about the contaminated dirt that covers EAFB. The Air Force received \$44 million dollars to remove 20% of the topsoil at Eielson.

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

The regular meeting of Tuesday, March 7, 2022 adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, March 7, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk