



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 15, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, March 15, 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
Jeffrey Jacobson

David Skipps - Excused

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 15, 2022

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Claus *moved to* amend the agenda of March 15, 2022 to consent the following items:

Old 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

New Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-08 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Amend the 2022 General Operating Budget to Expense the Final Encumbered COVID 19 Grant Funds
- b. Resolution 22-09 A Resolution of the North Pole City Council Designating City Officials Authorization to Sign on City of North Pole Accounts
- c. Resolution 22-10 A Resolution Authoring an Amendment to the City of North Pole’s Participation

Agreement “Public Employees’ Retirement System” with the State of Alaska Department of Administration Dated January 1, 1981

d. NPPD Request for Approval of Agreement for AXON Taser Use and Beta Testing

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the minutes from the 3/15/22 meeting

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- The Mayor read the proclamation for the Student of the Month, Andrea Chara Keiya.
- Last Wednesday, March 9th, the Mayor was with Lt General and Vice Commander of the Pacific Air Forces talking housing for the Air Forces incoming troops.
- The last F-35’s are due at EAFB on April 14th. On Friday, the 13th of May, they will be hosting a celebration of the arrival of the F-35s into the community.
- Regarding the central heat project, that the mayor has been working on he will be submitting the proposal to the Department of Energy soon and he is expecting to get the green light. It is a \$115 million dollar project and will be an added utility to the city. The project was one of the cities legislative priorities this

year.

- Tonight, the Council consented the go ahead for HC Contractors to start the snow removal from the city. The project is going to cost the city around \$630,000.
- Mayor Welch shared that he will be heading down to Anchorage on April 11 and 12 to attend an obligation bond briefing and a workshop to outline infrastructure money.
- On June 22-24 he will be trying to meet with our congressional delegation to talk to them about the central heat/power project.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Mr. Jacobson asked about the snow hauling contract with HC and if they will be updating the city daily as far as how many cubic tons of snow, they are moving each day.

The Mayor said that yes, he will be talking to HC regarding updates from them as well as how they are getting the word out to the public and the priority of neighborhoods.

- Mr. Cromer asked for an update regarding the HR and Director of City Services position.

The Mayor replied that the City Clerk will respond to that question during her time this evening.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- Chief Dutra said that he has finalized the list of questions to send to Ampersand regarding the security breach last year. They hope to have a meeting with them within the next week and a half.
- They got estimates for the final pieces for the data gear for the new police station expansion.
- They are going to be seeking companies to do any evaluation on the new edition contamination due to the sewer backups.
- They met last week with the local FBI agents and the SAC from Anchorage to give them a tour of the new edition.
- AMLJIA toured the city facilities today, there were a few little issues that were noted during the walk thru. They are easy fixes and those should get buttoned up quickly.
- Evaluations for the entire department were finalized and will sent over to the new HR person that will be starting next week.
- The Chief is putting together a response to Representative Prax who reached out to him about HB256, which has to do with additional reporting of use of force data and is heavily opposed by law enforcement.

The Mayor ask Chief Dutra if he has had any feedback from any of the representatives reading the shooting range.

- Chief Dutra said that he has heard from Representative Kawasaki's office, but nothing concrete yet.

Mayor Welch also asked if he has heard anything regarding HB55.

- Chief replied that no he has heard nothing.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- We received notification today from the Department of Natural Resources that NPFD has received a \$5000 Volunteer Fire Assistance grant for the purchase of new wildland firefighting hose. This Grant has a \$1000 required match, these funds are currently available within the Fire Department equipment outlay budget. Wildland firefighting hose is very different than hose used for fighting structure fires. Wild land hose is very light and is designed to weep through the outer jacket protecting itself from being burned. Due to the light nature of this type of hose we see an annual attrition rate each season, resulting in a depleted inventory. Our current inventory of wildland hose is very low, this grant will allow us to purchase enough hose to serve the community for many years to come.

Mayor Welch asked the Chief if he had any information to share at what they are trying to do out in Two Rivers.

- Chief Heineken said that he does not have lot of information right now, other then what he has read in the newspaper. Two Rivers had a huge fire problem last year due to the arsonist in the area. There has been discussion about starting a volunteer fire department for the Two Rivers Community and it seems that the plan for that is moving forward. Chief Heineken said that he will be reaching out to them about how NPFD can help them out with however they can. Chief Heineken said that engine 24 is turning 30 years old next year and we are replacing it, with Council approval he will be bringing it up to donate the engine. If the Two Rivers fire department is registered with the State by then, they would have a great chance at receiving the engine.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty said that she does not have much to share since we just met a week ago.
- They are continuing to work on the Tyler conversion and will have financials to share at the next meeting.
- The budget is not completely loaded into Tyler at this point, she is working on it and will try to have that done in time for the next meeting as well.
- Utility billing and cashiering are the next things that will be added in Tyler.

The Mayor asked when she thought we would be finished with the Tyler conversion.

- Ms. Fogarty said after utility part they still need to do sales tax and business licenses and they have not been giving a date for those modules.

Mayor Welch asked about the audit and how it was going.

- Ms. Fogarty said that they are working at getting them everything they need by April 1st, but due to the increased workload that Tyler has caused the 15th of April is a more doable deadline for us.

CITY SERVICES

- Mayor Welch filled in here in the absence of a Director of City Services.
- He has been working with Respect, formerly PDC, on the continuing Moose Creek Expansion project. Change orders are coming to the mayor now and he will be taking questions to Zane Wilson if he needs to.
- We have reposted the Director position on Indeed and on the website.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch shared that there was a borough meeting last Thursday. Mayor Bryce Ward was out of town for the meeting, he was in DC to talk to the Alaska delegation and the borough's legislative priorities.
- The Transit Administration and Maintenance Facility project costing \$1.2 million passed.
- The South Cushman extension going to the shooting range also passed.
- Also passing was a Resolution urging the State to give a full dividend this year.
- Failing was a resolution adding an unlimited broadband utility power as a legislative priority. They did an immediate reconsideration on the resolution and that also failed.
- She was working with Assembly member Lewjeski on a resolution to urge the US and the State of Alaska and the European Stakeholders to facilitate the development of natural gas for export to Democratic European Nations to reduce their dependence on Russian Natural Gas and that passed unanimously.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne thanked the Council members who responded back to her about the trainings that she is interested in attending this year. She apologized for not including budget information along with the flyers. She said that both trainings are going to be great trainings, and both are going to be right around \$2000, which is going to be most of her travel budget for the year.
- She said that she is excited that we are now zooming our meetings live on Facebook and onto our new YouTube channel and the idea of bringing our meetings to more people in the community.

The Mayor asked Ms. Dionne for an update on the HR position.

- Ms. Dionne said that she is very excited that our new Human Resources person accepted the position and will be starting the week after next.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- None

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

- None

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- e. NPPD Request to Purchase 3 Fleet Vehicles

On The NPPD Request to Purchase 3 Fleet Vehicles

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to modify the request, to change the request from 3 fleet vehicles to 2
Seconded by Ms. Welch

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jacobson thanked Madam Clerk for her efforts to go live with the City Council Meetings and allowing more residents and community members access to our meeting. He also told her that he fully supports the trainings that she requested to take.
- Mr. Claus seconded Councilman Jacobson’s comments.
- Ms. Welch also seconded Mr. Jacobson’s comments and she said that she appreciates our new contractors’ efforts to saving our citizens from drowning hen the snow melts soon. She also requested that everyone out there listening please slow it down on the roads out there.
- Mr. Cromer also seconded the comments about the Clerk and gave a shout out to everyone in the Ukraine to stay safe.
- Mayor Welch also thanked the Clerk for her efforts and sticking with the ‘trial by fire’ that she walked into.
- Tomorrow the Mayor will be giving a representative from AIDA, Angela Keast, a driving tour of the Howard property that AIDA has their eye one for development. They are talking about building approximately 144 units for development to help address the housing need in the area.

Ms. Welch *moved to adjourn*

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

The regular meeting of Monday, March 15, 2022 adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, March 15, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk