



**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, May 2, 2022, via Zoom.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, May 2, 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

**Absent/Excused:**

David Skipps

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

Led by Melissa Dionne

**INVOCATION**

Given by Anton Keller

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Claus *moved to* approve the agenda of May 2, 2022

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Claus *moved to* amend the agenda of May 2, 2022 to consent the following items:

**Old Business:**

- b. Ordinance 22-10, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Leave Policy and Pay Scale for City of North Pole Employees
- c. Ordinance 22-11, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Amend Title 4, Chapter 4, Purchasing

**New Business:**

- a. Resolution 22-12 A Resolution of the North Pole City Council to Establish the Rate of Tax Levy for 2022 Real Property Taxes of the City of North Pole
- b. NPPD Request for Approval of Proposal for the Chena Law Enforcement Services

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 4/18/22 meeting

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

### DISCUSSION

None

### PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Eric Burton was with us tonight to talk the Fire on the Ice Revival the is being hosted in North Pole on July 18-23. At the Grange.
- The Mayor shared that he's been out with Cody Lougee looking at the snow removal from around the city. There are a lot of areas around the Ford Subdivision past Perimeter Rd that are having flooding issues. He feels like we have a good handle around Patriot Dr and the high school. DOT and Public Works have been working hard on getting the culverts open and the PW crew has been working a lot of overtime hours.
- Mr. Danny Wallace was online with us tonight, Mr. Wallace came on and said a quick hello to everyone. He said that he is excited about coming on and looks forward to meeting and working with everyone.
- He let everyone know that the invite for the EAFB celebration was sent to all of the Council. Mr. Keller said that he will be attending the festivities.

## COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Mr. Jacobson asked for some clarification on the Executive Session that the Council was asked to attend on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Jacobson said that he will be out of the State traveling during that time, but will be happy to Zoom in.

The Mayor asked if the Monday or Tuesday would work better for everyone.

- Mr. Keller and Ms. Welch said that Monday would work. And Mr. Cromer said that he would also be traveling, but could Zoom into the meeting as well.

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

### **Police Department, Chief Dutra**

- Chief Dutra was having connection issues, he is down in Anchorage at a Peace Officers Conference.
- He said he hopes that he sees everyone at the Police Memorial on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 11am.
- The new door was installed in the garage and the others will be going in today.
- The new blood drying equipment that was approved and bought last year is finally on the way here.

### **Fire Department, Chief Heineken**

- Chief Heineken reminded everyone of the Open House on May 21<sup>st</sup>. It is the same day as Cruising for Santa and a bazaar in the Mall. It will be a great Saturday for North Pole.

### **Finance**

- Ms. Fogarty gave an update to the Council that the audit was completed and sent in on Thursday. The firm will start in with the field work soon.
- During the last meeting the Council accepted a Resolution to replace the signatures with the bank for check signers. She said to this date there were only a few signatures on the paper so far, and she really needs everyone else to come in and sign it.
- She said that she would have financials at the next meeting.
- She will also not be here for the next meeting, as she will be traveling for a conference.
- They are hiring a temporary worker to help them with the Tyler conversion and that she starts next Monday.

### **Borough Representative**

- Ms. Welch attended a meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup> via Zoom.
- The school board is still working on their budget. At this point it looks like they will be losing the music program for 4<sup>th</sup> grade up thru middle school.
- The next year school calendar is out for the next school year, they are looking for public feedback, please go to the website and vote on which one that you would like to.
- The borough is adding additional funding to the John Weaver Memorial Skate Park Renovation from the general fund. The skate park draws a good crowd even in the winter for snow skating.

- Some additional rezoning has been going on around the city to further address the housing shortage in the area.
- An ordinance amending the definition of an election office also passed. Allowing youth to volunteer in local elections under the supervision of an adult.
- The ordinance allowing a tax break for housing, a 10-year abatement for new construction inside the military zone as long as they were connected to local water.
- They appropriated \$100,000 from the 911 fund for the implementation of redundant public safety answering point (PSAP) which interconnects lapsing internet connections. So, if one goes down, they still have the 911 access.

#### City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne reminded everyone that she will be gone to a training the first week in June and will be back in the office June 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Glab will be sitting in for her for the meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup>.
- She will send out the information on the Special meeting next week just as soon as the details are finalized. She reminded everyone to please make sure that they are opening and reading everything that is being provided to them.
- Code publishing seems to be good to go on the Code updates and we should start seeing the online version updated soon.

The Mayor asked if Ms. Dionne if she has been getting calls concerning the Special Election that the State is doing now.

- Ms. Dionne responded that yes she has been getting calls and educating people that this is a mail in only election.

The Mayor shared that the Borough is talking about consolidating local elections with the State/Federal ones to the same day in November. He has been talking to people and educating himself about the ramifications of doing this.

Mr. Cromer asked about the website redesign and if we had made any decisions.

- Ms. Dionne responded that no, the final choice has not been made but that it will go back on the agenda soon. She said that she still feels strongly about the first-choice company and feels like the Council was onboard with the choice and considering the process is a long one that we should go ahead and move forward on it.

#### ON GOING PROJECTS

- The Mayor started by talking about the housing projects. He confirmed with Jerry Koerner who said that track D in the Brookside Park area did close, Latitude 63 was the purchaser. They will be building luxury homes on the property. Some of the small parcels on the other side of Busby have also sold. Stepping Stones is working on building 6 8 plex's in the area as well.

- He said that on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> he will be down talking to 3 Bears on the property they purchased her in the city.
- He was recently at the BIL (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) briefing that was hosted by the governor and senator Murkowski and the Alaska Municipal League. He has been asked to go back on May 23 and 24<sup>th</sup> for Arctic X to participate on a panel about the central heat plant.
- The Phase 1 environmental survey on the Howard property has been provided to the Clerk and will be forwarded to the Council. The assessment is not complete yet, the snow is keeping him from getting to the abandoned vehicles as soon as the rest of that assessment is provided to the city we will pass it along to the Council. Dr. Packee will be with us for the next Council meeting to speak about the Phase 1 survey.

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

- Dr. Jeanne Olson (not a citizen in the City of North Pole) was on the line tonight to talk to the Council against moving forward on the Howard property purchase due to the contamination. She also wanted to speak about the online sales tax and the issue of people in the 99705 being lumped together and being charged sales tax, no matter where in the area they were, city or not. Also of people having a PO box here in the city and being charged the sales despite their physical address being outside the city limits. She feels that the City is taking in additional taxes that are not due to them and reminded people listening to use the zip plus 4 area code to differentiate the City vs non.

The Mayor extended an invite to Dr. Olson to return for the next Council meeting to listen to Dr. Packee speak about the Environmental Phase 1 survey that he completed on the Howard property.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Ordinance 22-09, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Personnel System Code

Ms. Welch *moved* to adopt Ordinance 22-09

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend Ordinance 22-09 to change section 2.36.323 paragraph B (page 26) to change the wording of 'clerk' to 'secretary'. Also Section D, 2.36.415 to remove the 'and' every time 'City Clerk' is crossed out.

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 ordinance as amended

### DISCUSSION

None

### PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: Skippis

### COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jacobson let everyone that he will be traveling May 5<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup>. He asked the Clerk to send his Zoom link for the special meeting to his personal email, as he will not be traveling with his city laptop. He apologized that he would miss the celebration at EAFB and the Police Memorial event. He also addressed the new housing that will be going into the Stillmeyer estates and the additional traffic in the morning coming out of Patriot and suggested that the city do a traffic study on the area to try and mitigate potential issues. He also told everyone that he forwarded a study from the FAST-planning group to the Clerk and the Mayor regarding the use of the Richardson Hwy for Mine traffic and asked that it get forwarded to the Council for their information and in case we would like to address the issue in a Resolution. Mr. Jacobson also gave a congrats to Mr. Wallace on the Director of City Services position.

The Mayor let Mr. Jacobson know that he believes that the builders for that project had to do a traffic study as part of the approval process, but that he would check. He also shared that both he and Mayor Matherly were both left off the committee that is discussing the Mine issue and have now been included and they will meet May 9<sup>th</sup>.

- Mr. Keller also welcomed Mr. Wallace to the City. He apologized that he will not be able to attend the Police Memorial on the 13<sup>th</sup> as he will be out at EAFB for the celebration out there. He said that he was thankful for all the additional sun and is looking forward to more BBQing.
- Mr. Cromer asked if the HR Manager would be reporting regularly at the Council meetings.

The mayor let everyone know that as a regular occurrence no that she would not be, but that he will be asking her to speak when she has special projects and updates to share.

- Mr. Claus welcomed Mr. Wallace and told everyone to enjoy the nice weather that we are having.
- Mayor Welch spoke of the nice weather and hopes that the fire season is not much of an issue this year. He thanked Mr. Jacobson for meeting with him this week to talk public works, he feels that there is a lot that we do not get from DOT. He shared that he feels if so much of the work is going to get done at the local level that the current State administration needs to start supporting us more with more equipment and more people. He asked everyone to keep in mind the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and what we can do to help with the festivities. He will be at the meeting for the NPCCC to talk to them about it later this week.

### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

The regular meeting of Monday, May 2, 2022 adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

**These minutes passed and approved** by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, May 2, 2022.

**ATTEST:**

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Melissa Dionne, City Clerk