



**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 16, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, May 16, 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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Aino Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Claus *moved to* approve the agenda of May 16, 2022

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Jacobson *moved to* approve the minutes from the 5/2/22 meeting

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Skipps, Cromer, Jacobson, Welch
No: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Welch *moved* to approve the minutes from the 5/9/22 meeting
Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Keller, Skipps, Cromer, Jacobson, Welch
No: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Mayor Welch recognized the student of the month, Lillian Rummer.
- On the 12th of May he was out at Aurora Point, the 354th had a private pre-celebration there prior to the main celebration at Eielson the next day.
- On the 13th he was at the Police Memorial event that the NPPD hosted at the Memorial Park here in North Pole. He was a keynote speaker and was honored to have had that chance to speak about Trooper Gabe Rich, who was previously a NP police officer. Later that day he was out at Eielson at the F35 fighter celebration.
- Last week he hosted Latitude 63, along with Brent Sheets with NETL and Jerry Koerner with Jericho real estate. They were talking land deals at Brookside Park and growth. He will let the Counsel know as plans progress.
- Next week he is supposed to be heading to Wasilla for some medical appointments. The following week he has been asked to speak on a panel for NETL talking about the central heat plant and financial ramifications of that. On the 24-26th if he is able, he will be at the governor's sustainability conference in Anchorage. He will be attending the sections there that he feels will most benefit the city.
- He let everyone know that our new Director of City Services, Danny Wallace, will be here for his first day on the 25th.
- Also the accounting staff is away this week for training for Tyler.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Mr. Jacobson asked about the documents included in the packet from Revize that was included in the packet.

The Mayor let him know that the Clerk will be talking about this quote during her time tonight.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- Police Memorial Day at the Trooper Gabe Rich and Trooper Scott Johnson Memorial Park. Thank you to all that attended. I would also like to mention that APOA paid for the tents and heater and food for the event. The event was well attended by approximately 100+ people. Thank you Mayor Welch, Councilman Claus and Melissa and Elly for coming to support.
- I spoke at the Eielson AFB National Police Week kickoff meeting as their Honorary Commander. It was a privilege and an honor to speak to these fine folks. NPPD also helped escort their ruck sack march from Eielson AFB to the Trooper Gabe Rich and Trooper Scott Johnson Memorial Park.
- Two new vehicles are being delayed due to one item the Watchguard cameras. Delayed manufacturing of 6-8 weeks. Got the cars but can't get cameras...
- Training in Anchorage was amazing. It is some of the most important training a Police Chief could have. Judging UOF by police officers is critical to making sure the community receives an adequate evaluation and the officers receive an educated decision rather than a politically motivated uneducated.
- Hiring – one in final phase and 2 in process
- Kudos to Elly and Melissa for their efforts to organize the archive room and started working on the council chambers. It is amazing to see the energy and enthusiasm for cleaning up and Elly is going full speed on the several critical projects.
- Torch Run is at Chena Lakes at 1000 am. Come run a 5k then go eat a hotdog at NPPD.

The Mayor asked about the torch run and how you can donate money to it.

- Chief Dutra said that you can find details on donating online.

Mr. Keller asked Chief Dutra about the training that he went to and how often the training was offered. He asked if there was a possibility that other officers would have a chance to go to this training

- Chief Dutra said that this training was great and feels like it would even be a good addition to the police academy. He also shared that the APOA Crime conference will be in Fairbanks in 2 years, and he will be encouraging them to add this training to the agenda.
- Chief Dutra also wanted to mention that Senator Meyers forwarded an amendment for the police training facility. It was voted down 6 to 13. He thanked Senator Meyers for bringing it forward and said that they would be focusing their efforts on education and outreach to the senators who voted it down.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- This last week the fire station has had 4 of the 7 new bay doors installed. We ordered seven doors last winter and have been waiting for them to arrive in Fairbanks. The remaining three doors have not arrived in Fairbanks and will be installed once they arrive. The new doors were all installed on the front of the building giving the fire station a clean new look.
- The hiring/promotion process to fill the open Engineer position has concluded. I would like to congratulate Parker Jarvis on his promotion to the rank of Engineer. Parker has been with NPPD for the last year at the rank of firefighter and has been found to be highly qualified and prepared for his new position.
- The firefighter position vacated by Engineer Jarvis has also been filled. I would like to congratulate our resident firefighter Ian Watson; Ian has accepted a conditional offer and upon completion of a firefighter physical will be scheduled to start working sometime around June 1st. Firefighter Watson has

been a resident firefighter with our fire department and has made great progress with becoming EMT and Firefighter certified over the last 18 months.

- One last reminder about the fire department open house this coming Saturday. The weather forecast is looking good, and we hope to have a large turnout for the event. If you have time, please plan to spend part of your day getting to know your fire department.

The Mayor asked Chief Heineken about HB55 and his thoughts on it. The Mayor said that he is pretty sure that it will not pass because the state doesn't know how they will fund it yet.

- Chief Heineken said that he has been a supporter of HB 55 for a while. He gave a brief explanation that it is a bill that would alter PERS for the Police and Fire employees. It would give them a defined benefit retirement system after 25 years, and not the 30-40 years like it is set up now. He said that he personally supports it.

Ellen Glab, HR and Special Assistant to the Mayor

HR Update:

- I am working with Chief Dutra, Chief Heineken, and Melissa on the Policy Manual. We have reviewed and are finishing updates to the first 9 sections. I have finished this revision and am planning a meeting to go over the revisions with them. I have also completed the forms for the different items that needed them in the manual so that tracking is consistent.
- I posted and received many resumes and applications for the Utilities Assistant Position, Summer Hire for Public Works, and Fire Department Admin.
- We have filled all 3 positions authorized for the Summer Hire for Public Works.
- I will be sitting down with Marty and Paul to go over the applications for the Utility assistant position sometime this week.
- The Fire Department Admin Position will close on the 23rd and I will work with Chief Heineken and Deputy Chief Chambers to review the applicants for that position.
- I have met with the different departments to find out what training they are currently receiving and have set up a training platform with RISQ to provide the necessary training for workplace safety. I have sent out the first of the training to all staff members including the council to complete 1 a month most of the training are less than 15 min long. I am notified when each person completes the training. I have also added training for both Utilities and Public works based on discussions with their department supervisors.

Moose Creek Update:

- At the end of last month, I completed the February and March monthly reports that were needed to get the city back on track aft Mr. Butler retired. I will be working on April's monthly report at the end of this week.
- Moose creek has had little construction done through the winter but expects to be picking back up shortly to complete the project before the end of this year.

- I have been sitting in on the meetings for the two months and there are still 3 consideration payments out that have not been cashed. I have gotten the contact information so I can try to reach out to these individuals before the project is complete.
- The new Antennas that are needed have been ordered but looks like it might be August before they get here.
- I am working with Respect Staff to keep this up to date and on time while in transition to the new Director of City Services.

The Mayor thanked Ms. Glab for all of her hard work so far and echoed that she is doing a good job.

Ms. Welch asked which trainings had been sent and said that she received the first and would go check her Spam folder for the rest.

Finance

- Ms. Fogarty is traveling for work this week and will not be here for the meeting.
- The Mayor shared that he did sign the audit contract and they have communicated to him that the audit should be completed by June 30 and he anticipates that will be able to share it with the Council at the July 5th meeting.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch was unavailable to attend the last borough meeting due to another Council conflict that she attended with the Mayor.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne reminded everyone that she would not be here for the next Council meeting and the Ms. Glab would be filling in for her.
- Included in the packet for this meeting were 2 proposals from Revize. The first was the proposal for a basic 'stock' site that we could customize and make our own. Also included was the quote for a fully customized website. Revize gave us a terrific deal in hopes of getting this account and it such a good deal Ms. Dionne didn't want to not share it tonight. She urged the Council to really consider it, that a custom website would be such a strong tool for the city to use for recruitment and tourism even that we should really consider going with it.

Mr. Cromer asked about the ongoing fees associated with the site and if that was a locked in price.

- Ms. Dionne aid that the contract would be for 5 years, so that hosting price dollar that covers updates and security and hosting the site will be locked in for 5 years. But that is the normal price, the part that we got the deal on was the design fee part.

Mr. Jacobson shared that he really believes that the little bit more money for the custom site is well worth it.

- Ms. Dionne said that she also included some additional information on the security that Revize offers. Cyber security has been an issue with the city and she wanted everyone to understand that we really will be covered with this company.

Ms. Welch asked if Ampersand had any say so about the website and how that would work.

- Ms. Dionne said that this site has nothing to do with Ampersand. As soon as you sign into the website it becomes their security that you are remoting into. Nothing is going to live on our servers here.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- Aimee Johnson with RISQ was with us tonight. She had made a presentation to the Council in a workshop before the last Council meeting presenting the Council with the insurance renewal. She was with us tonight to present the decision points that we now needed to make. We made decisions on all the points, and she will put the final contract together for approval at the next Council meeting.
- The Mayor shared that we are getting the chambers painted starting soon. The carpet should arrive soon and said that he would keep everyone updated with the dates for all that. The new sound and video production equipment will be shipping out to us on June 3rd and we hope to be live in chambers by the end of the month or first of July.

* Due to needing to catch an early flight Mr. Jacobson left the meeting a little early at 8:49pm.

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

- Patrice Lee was with us tonight. She recently wrote a letter to the editor of the Newsminer regarding the purchase of the Jack Howard property and wanted to read it to the Council.

Mr. Keller thanked Ms. Lee for participating tonight and let her know that the Council is invested in making a good, well-informed decision regarding land purchases for the city.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. NPPD Tuition Reimbursement for Alison Trubacz

Mr. Claus *moved* to UNANAMOUSLY approve the tuition reimbursement request for Alison Trubacz
Seconded by Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED – No vote

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

Absent: Jacobson

Ms. Trubacz came on briefly to thank the Council for their support and said that she could not have finished these last 2 years with this tuition reimbursement and would not have graduated without it.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Ms. Welch said that school is almost over for the school year. She asked that all the parents out there continue working with their kids over the summer and expanding their minds. And asked that everyone stay safe.
- Mr. Claus reminded everyone that the open house at the fire department and the Special Olympics torch run are this weekend and that he plans to do his best to be at both.
- Mr. Cromer congratulated Alison Trubacz on graduating with her degree.

- Mayor Welch also reminded everyone that Cruising with Santa is also this coming weekend, he said that if he is here this weekend that he will be attending everything that he can. He said that he reached out to the Mayor of Buffalo to offer a word of encouragement and support after the recent shooting. He said that we need to do the best that we can to support our police and local community.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

The regular meeting of Monday, May 16, 2022 adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, May 16, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk