



**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, June 20, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, June 20, 2022, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Michael Welch – Mayor
Santa Claus - Mayor Pro Tem
Aino Welch – Alternate Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
Anton Keller
Jeffrey Jacobson
David Skipps

Absent/Excused:

DeJohn Cromer - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Jeffrey Jacobson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Welch *moved to* approve the agenda of June 20, 2022

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

Ms. Welch *moved to* amend the agenda of June 20, 2022 to consent the following items:

New Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-13 An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Fund Shannon & Wilson’s Proposal for the PFAS Clean Up Described in the 2022 Work Plan
- b. Request to Accept the 22/23 EMS Contract with the Fairbanks Northstar Borough
- c. Request for Back Compensation for Employees’ Use of Bridge Health

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Cromer

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Cromer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Claus *moved* to approve the minutes from the 6/6/22 meeting

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No:

Absent: 1 - Cromer

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- The Mayor reported that on June 7th he was a guest out at Eielson AFB, along with Ms. Welch. Also that day he, along with Ms. Welch met with Deputy Counsel General Vincent and the Senior Economic Advisor Walters from the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Mr. Bernie Karl hosted them at the hot springs to talk and tour the ice hotel and greenhouse facilities. They were in City Hall the next day along with Mr. Wallace and later at the Pagoda talking greenhouse technologies.
- On June 14th, he met with the principal investors at A2Z Inc. (a2zreinc.com) to talk about Brookside Park and the City of North Pole. They were here at the request of 3 Bears, they represent restaurants like IHop and Krispy Kreme donuts, as well as stores like Dollar General as well as some extended stay hotels. They are looking at a few businesses that could work with 3 Bears and share the land lot in a landlord/tenant situation.
- During that meeting they received a call from the principal at Latitude 63, they are moving forward to taking over the developers agreement for tracks D and E. He thanked the borough community planning employees Kellen Spillman, Melissa Killner and George Stephan for showing Chip Anderson with Latitude 63 what he can and cannot do on those lots. Latitude 63 is anxious to get moving on the project and was buying new equipment to start on the project. Latitude 63 has been working with Mr. Wallace and the Utilities department closely on the project.

- On June 19th, he was out at the restaurant at the golf course in Fairbanks, the Greens, meeting with the Executive Observers Program with about 15 foreign duty officers hosted by the Pacific Air Forces in recognition of their participation of Red Flag.
- We have been getting a lot of phone calls from citizens and now Veterans groups about the state of the flag that is flying at the McKinley Orthopedic building. The mechanism inside the pole to take the flag down is broken and parts are on order for it, they are aware of the issue and are going to remedy it as soon as possible. The flag does not belong to the city and there is nothing that the City can do against private property owners in cases like this.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Mr. Jacobson asked about the duplexes that are being built in Brookside park and how big they are.

The Mayor said that he believes that the duplex in track E will be 2 bedrooms, the 14 or so houses in track D will be single family homes and then there will be 2 and 3 bedroom townhomes.

Mr. Wallace also spoke about Latitude 63 and the project. There are a very details to be worked out as far as the infrastructure impacts (services and traffic), but that Latitude 63 is all on board with the project and the borough was very supportive in the project.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- Chief Dutra was traveling tonight and couldn't be with us.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- Chief Heineken could not be with us tonight.

Finance

- Ms. Fogarty gave an update to the Council on the audit. Things are getting wrapped up, they have a meeting on Wednesday with the representatives to discuss it. Because things couldn't be wrapped up by this meeting that she will get the Council the financials by the end of the month and then have the presentation of the audit at the next meeting on July 5th.

The Mayor asked for financials for the next meeting, specifically the sales tax info and the AMLLP account and the rate of return that we are getting.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

- Mr. Wallace let everyone know that he did attend the PFAS talks that were hosted at the Two Rivers Fire dept. he said that the News Miner had a good article about it.
- He has been working with Moose Creek reporting requirements for the water expansion getting them turned in. He met with Respect (formerly PDC) and HC Contractors today and talked about the project and concerns. The project is on track, but there have been some delays on acquiring some of the hardware.

- He has been conducting interviews with the Utility Supervisor and Ms. Glab for the Utility Assistant position that they are hiring for. They hope to decide this week.
- Mr. Wallace said that he is feeling more and more comfortable with the position and is learning more everyday and things are becoming less new.

The Mayor asked Mr. Wallace to relay to Council what they resolved to do about the snow removal contract with HC.

- Mr. Wallace said that he had a conversation with HC Contractors and they settled at a total for the bill at \$413,280.

The Mayor thanked Councilmen Skippy and Jacobson for the information that they provided him to help them come up with a total of snow removed and work through this issue with HC.

Human Resources, Ellen Glab

- Interviews went well for the utilities assistant position. We had four interviews last week. I expect to hear back from the utility department later this week on their choices for the next step in the process.
- Open enrollment finished up last week and I will have a report from Risk sometime in the next week on how that went.
- She is working with Ms. Dionne on fine-tuning the rewards for the Healthy Merits program so that we can have that ready for rollout on July 1st.
- I have continued to work on updating the Job Descriptions and working on the policy manual as time allows, we are planning on having another meeting shortly. Once everyone has a moment to catch up from the summer events and it is coming along nicely, I believe.
- I have also been working on updating forms as needed for different areas and trying to make them capable of being fully digital without changing too much from what everyone has become used to.

The Mayor asked if Ms. Glab if the procedures for interviews are getting more streamlined and effective and efficient.

- Ms. Glab said that yes she believes so. She said that the department heads have been encouraged in the way that the process has been set up. Everyone is now working on a similar process, instead of everyone doing their own thing.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch attended the meeting via zoom on the 9th of June.
- Mayor Ward reported on the meeting regarding the Two Rivers Volunteer Fire Dept on June 29th in Two Rivers, the start of the summer reading program, challenges the borough is facing with hiring for summer hires, the new skate park ground breaking, the Moose Creek Dam tour set for July 29th, the complete road plan is almost ready for public comment and let everyone know that the van-tran and busses are limited due to staffing issues.

- Mayor Ward wrote a memorandum for appointments to Karen Fox to the Historic Preservation Commission and for Patrick Burda to the Parks & Rec Commission.
- There will be a lot of open elected official position in the borough and Cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, as well as open commission positions, please contact your local City Hall for additional information.
- The school district is working on their budget and reassigning staff and students after school closures.
- The borough will be leasing a space to set up a more efficient recycling program as well.
- An Ordinance passed authorizing waiving of fees for animal boarding during operational closures.

The Mayor asked if the idea of having a dedicated bus service (outside of van-tran) to North Pole or the beautification project had come up at the meeting.

- Ms. Welch said that no it did not.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne thanked the Council for the Professional Development training that she just returned from, as well as for accepting the website proposal with Revize. She shared that she is excited to implement a few changes that she learned at the training as well as to get going on the website.
- She said that she has been working with Ms. Glab with the new Healthy Merits program roll out.

Th Mayor asked if we had heard from Mr. Packee on the PFAS soil samples from the Jack Howard property.

- Ms. Dionne said that she has not heard anything.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- Howard Rixie, with the NPCCC, was with us to talk about the Firecracker Run over the 4th of July weekend, as well as about the details/ideas of the new Visitor Center that the North Pole Community Chamber of Commerce is working on.
- Jennifer Hughes, with the Grange, was with us to talk about the 4th of July Fesitval. There will be venders and food trucks, as well as fun things for kids along with live music and door prize drawings.

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to Suspend the Rules until 8:30pm to take a break

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to reconvene at 8:31pm

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

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

- Elizabeth Holm was with us to thank the Mayor and NPPD for their help recently.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jacobson let everyone know that he struggled a little with the new bill pay system that the city is using for water bills. He was 2 months late before he caught up with it and wondered how many others got caught up in the same thing. He welcomed Mr. Wallace is happy he is on board and knows that he has

been very busy and thanked him for helping with the solution with HC and the snow removal that was done in April. He thanked everyone for the hard work on updating codes and policies and feels that it is positive that we are retroactively giving employees money as a thank you for saving the city money. He believes that it speaks that we value our employees and feels that it will go a long way to retaining employees and attracting good people to the city. He wished everyone a happy 4th of July.

- Mr. Keller said that he did the same thing with his water bill as Mr. Jacobson so he understood. He said that Ms. Holm's testimony tonight struck a chord with him tonight. North Pole is small community, and he is privileged and humbled to a part of the community. He said he feels that the leaders that we have in the city aren't just the ones shining out in front, they also have their boots on the ground getting stuff done. He wished everyone a happy Fourth of July. He said he feels like it is a great time to celebrate our freedoms and everything that has happened in the past and what is upcoming in the future for the City of North Pole.
- Ms. Welch talked about the situation with the vagrant that the NPPD dealt with recently. She said that she appreciates everything that the employees do for the city and that the flowers in the roundabouts and around City Hall that the Public Works summer hires have been working on are looking great. The carpet in the chambers and paint on the walls also look good. She asked Mr. Jacobson to meet her in the City Hall on Friday to help get the chambers situated.
- Mr. Skippis reminded everyone to stay safe and to be mindful of people riding motorcycles.
- Mr. Claus wished everyone a happy Fourth of July and reminded everyone to be mindful of the fire danger over the weekend as well as of the people and animals who have issues with the fireworks noises. He let everyone know that if they are going to be at the Forth of July festival that he will be there judging the watermelon eating contest.
- The Mayor thanked Ms. Glab for all her hard work in her almost 90 days that she has been with us. He said having someone in her position has been a needed in the city for a long time. He also thanked Mr. Wallace, he said that he knew he was a go getter before he was even hired because he was the only person to ever give us his interview question answers in writing before the interview even happened. He let everyone know that Mr. Wallace will be traveling at the end of July for a pre-arranged trip. He gave a thank you to Mr. Claus for putting his hat in the ring for the vacant senate seat here in Alaska, he had a very good showing and was high ranked in a race with many participants. The Mayor said that he feels the city is at a crossroads and reminded everyone that the community is vital to the future of the arctic and the future of the armed forces. He asked that people remember what we are really celebrating as we go into the Fourth of July and that the only way we can have the best country is for everyone to do their best, day in and day out.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn
Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

The regular meeting of Monday, June 20, 2022 adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, June 20, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk