



**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 Tuesday, July 5, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Tuesday, July 5, 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
Jeffrey Jacobson
David Skipps

Absent/Excused:

Anton Keller

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Jeffrey Jacobson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the agenda of July 5, 2022

Seconded *by* Mr. Claus

Mr. Claus *moved* to amend the agenda of July 5, 2022 to consent the following items:

New Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-14, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole to Adjust the Budget to Purchase Essential Police Equipment
- b. NPDF Request to Dispose of Asset via Auction
- c. Request for Permission to Set Up an Online Retail Store

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Keller

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Keller

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Welch *moved* to approve the minutes from the 7/5/22 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 back on June 11, he was with Ms. Welch and Ms. Glab and her husband at the military appreciation dinner. There were about 600 people in attendance, he felt it was a well-received event.
- This last weekend was the 4th of July weekend, it started here at City Hall at 7am with the 5K run, followed by a breakfast at the Santa's Senior Center. He said that he received a lot of compliments throughout the day on how the city looked with the flowers and landscaping. After noon there was a festival at the Grange, there were vendors and a band and other activities. He said that he participated in the watermelon eating contest and that it was a fun day.
- Last Friday he and Ms. Welch hosted 2 engineers talking about new construction methods for housing here in the Interior.
- Earlier today he was at the University with Brent Sheets putting the final touches on the product that goes to the Department of Energy.
- He let everyone know that the summer session of AML will be in Sitka this year and to talk to the Clerk about travel plans if they are interested in going.
- The same weekend of AML is the Energy Fair at the Chena Hot Springs Resort.
- He let the Council know that Mr. Packee is completing the soil samples for the Howard property.

- He gave everyone an update on the Chambers renovation project.
- Mayor Welch also shared cost rates of heating oil that the city has paid for this year in comparison to the last 2 years.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- The City Clerk gave the oath of office to new police officer Christian Pergande.
- Stats from May and June. Uptick in activity both self-initiated and calls for service. More disturbances and DUI but less fraud, +2 on Larceny.
- AACOP – just announced the 2021 Chief of the Year – Juneau Police Chief Ed Mercer. Well deserved, nominated by his Mayor.
- Mayor has been given quotes on speed trailers. For messaging and speed notifications around city.
- 4. We will be meeting with Sheriff Taylor from Alabama and his entourage to discuss a cold case homicide in North Pole from 2005.
- July 27th Fallen Heroes ceremony. We will move it to 4:00 pm so employees have time to clean up and close out for the day.
- Attended Julie Ritchie's retirement party. Want the council to know she served our city in the mid 90's and served our police department at FECC for 30 years. Congratulations to her and Kevin and we wish them well in their retirement. We did present Julie with a plaque from the citizens of NP thanking her.
- Governor meeting went well on the range. We are waiting to work with DPS on the getting it into the budget next year.
- We just received word that our SDEU/HIDTA Detective will be moving onto a promotion to Captain at FPD. Wish him the best in his new job.
- Officer Pergande has started his abbreviated FTO and is moving along nicely. Will be on the road next week hopefully.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- The fire department completed its annual pump testing over the last week of June. Each apparatus is tested annually to ensure proper operation and to track potential pump wear. All pumps passed the test without difficulty.
- Fireworks Sales within the City of North Pole were not allowed to open this summer season. Coordination with the vendors that intended to open continues throughout the last few weeks of June. The final decision to not allow fireworks sales was made last Tuesday afternoon.
- The Fairbanks International Airport conducted a mass casualty drill on Tuesday the 28th. This drill simulated a large passenger aircraft accident while taxiing. North Pole Fire Department participated in the drill by sending an ambulance, rescue engine and a chief officer.

- Annual hydrant testing has been scheduled for July 18th through the 29th. Fire department personnel will be operating each hydrant within the city to test its flow capabilities. High water flow through the mains has been known to cause some sediment to dislodge causing discoloration. The public should be aware of possible color and pressure changes in the system during this time period.

Finance

- Ms. Fogarty gave an update to the Council on the audit. It is completed and she has a final draft of it. She will be sending it out soon to everyone. There will be a discussion with the CPA firm at the next meeting outlining the whole thing.
- They are finalizing some bank reconciliations, so she did not send out financials.
- She gave an update about the interests' rates that we are getting from AML and Mt. McKinley Bank.
- She also said that we are up on sales taxes consistently each month.

The Mayor asked that next time M.s Fogarty has things to share to make sure that they go to the Clerk so that they can be shared on screen during the meeting.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

- NPPD PFAS Testing Proposal - The proposal involves a PFAS site assessment in and around the NP Fire Dept. DEC detected PFAS/PFOA at the site and has requested the City to do an assessment of both soil and water (you should see this in your packet). We've got a proposal from Shannon and Wilson - which will include testing both the soil and groundwater at that location
- There might be funding available for this through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, but we have not been given any details on that. But Amber Masters at Shannon and Wilson have offered to assist with grant applications, if those opportunities become available. Ms Fogarty has done a fiscal note on this request.
- He has been working with Stantec and Respect on proposals for the replacement of the old water mains in the downtown area. He has been looking into different funding options with DEC also. He hopes to bring this before the Council soon.
- He toured that water treatment and wastewater facilities of the city last week with Utility Supervisor Paul Trissel. He said that was amazed by the facility and the process involved. He encouraged the Council to take this tour as well.
- He said that Public Works has been busy working on the chamber's renovation project as well as the beautification projects around the city.
- Mr. Wallace assured everyone that they have been keeping an eye on the air quality for our workers who are outside. When the numbers get too high, they have been moving inside to work on projects.
- PW is also working on reestablishing the light poles that were disabled during construction.
- PW and Utilities are exploring options for conversions of our boilers to natural gas. Hopefully there will be more to come on that later.

- He met with the community planner from the FNSB, they talked about the strategic plan for the borough and North Pole and it was very good information regarding rezoning questions.
- He will be out of the office the last 2 weeks of July doing some leadership training at the US Army War College, this was a carry over from his previous position. He will not be here for the next meeting, Paul Trissel will fill in for him.

Mr. Jacobson asked what the timeline for replacing the water mains in the city.

- Mr. Wallace said that they are still in the planning phase and will have more information on this as the proposals come in.

Human Resources, Ellen Glab

- Ms. Glab has been at home the last 2 weeks, today was her first day back in the office. She has been working from home and helping out some of the other departments as she could.
- She reported that the new administrative assistant started training with the Fire Dept today.
- She also gave a report on the Military Appreciation dinner that she and her husband attended in June with the Mayor and his wife.
- Due to being out of the office Ms Glab said that the safety meeting for June had to be rescheduled until this week. She reported that the safety meetings have been going well.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch attended the meeting via zoom on the 23rd of June.
- Mayor Ward talked about the fire district in the Pleasant Valley area and that they are still having issues hiring people in the borough.
- She said that the City of Fairbanks is increasing the garbage fees by \$5 a month.
- She said that the city is looking for people to part of their Diversity counsel, you do not have to be a city resident to apply.
- She reported that the borough passed an ordinance on compensating the volunteers who work in the elections. The State recently passed one as well, hoping that finding workers to work the elections will be easier.
- The borough purchased a new bus that is electric.
- The restaurant at Pioneer Park is going up for competitive bid, possibly replacing the Salmon Bake. Ms. Welch said that people were really angry at the idea of the Salmon Bake not being there after being there for 30 plus years. She said that there are many restrictions on the businesses that could put in a bid.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne thanked the Council again and that she received her education points from PD1 just today.
- She said that she will be working with Revize on initial set up of the new website and getting that going.
- Ms. Dionne also thanked the COuncil for the online store that they approved tonight on the consent agenda. She feels that having the access to North Pole gear with the minimal amount of work that we will

be doing for it is going to be very valuable. We will be able to advertise this site on the cities FaceBook page and YouTube channel and it will be great incentives for employees and visitors as well.

- She shared that she has been working with the Borough and City of Fairbanks clerks to get information out there on elections and seats that are open. They will be walking in the Golden Days Parade as well to start getting information out to citizens.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- Howard Rixie, with the NPCCC, reminded everyone that the Lions club has the marquee over at the NP Plaza mall and if we need anything advertised on it to please send him an email to northpolelions@gmail.com. He said that the Firecracker Run was a big success, they had around 70 people walking in it. He gave a progress report on the idea of the visitors center that the NPCCC is proposing and asking for the NPCC's help with. He will have something more formal for the Council for the next meeting.
- Misty Posekany, with the NPCCC, was with us as well and thanked the Council for their support and for everything that they do.

The Mayor asked when the next NPCCC meeting was.

- Ms. Posekany said that meetings are always the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Mt McKinley bank here in North Pole and that everyone is welcome.

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

- None

Old 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

Ms. Dionne called a Point of Information. The title of this Ordinance should have been 'PFAS Site Assessment' instead of 'PFAS Clean Up', none of the wording the Ordinance itself is changing.

Ms. Welch *moved* to approve Ordinance 22-13

Seconded by Mr. Jacobson

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Claus, Cromer, Jacobson, Skipp, Welch

No:

Absent: 1 - Keller

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jacobson congratulated everyone for the successful events over the 4th of July weekend. He said that there were some families that were lining up and expecting a 4th of July parade and that he stopped and let them know that there was no parade and directing them to the Grange. He also thanked the Mayor

for representing the City of North Pole so well and doing all of the public things that he does and the visibility that he gives the city.

- Ms. Welch wished everyone a happy 4th of July. She shared that becoming a citizen was one of the proudest days of her life and welcomed all of the new citizens to the US. She also gave a thank you to the Santa's Senior Center for the breakfast and to the NPCC for the run and the Grange for the festival.
- Mr. Skippis congratulated and welcomed Officer Pergande to the NPPD.
- Mr. Claus also thanked everyone for the July 4th events, he said that he had fun judging the watermelon eating contest.
- Mr. Cromer said that he hopes that everyone had a great 4th of July and that the weather is clearing up and told everyone to get out and enjoy the summer.
- The Mayor shared that tomorrow is his 49th anniversary as active duty member in the Air Force, it is also the 23rd anniversary of him moving with his family to North Pole. He spoke for a few minutes about the military conflicts that are happening in the world right now. He wished everyone well for the rest of the summer and said that we should all pray for a little rain.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Claus *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

The regular meeting of Tuesday, July 5, 2022 adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Tuesday, July 5, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk