



**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, October 3, 2022, via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, October 3, 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
David Skipps
Jeffrey Jacobson
Anton Keller

Absent/Excused:

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Mr. Keller

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Claus *moved* to approve the agenda of October 3, 2022

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend the agenda of October 3, 2022, to consent the following items:

Old Business

- b. Ordinance 22-21, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the 2022 Budget

New Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-22, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the 2022 Budget to Accept the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant
- b. Ordinance 22-23, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the 2022 Budget to Purchase a 2022 Ford F250 Pickup for the Northern Expansion
- c. NPPD Acceptance of Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for \$144,456

d. RISQ Benefits Decision – No Surprises Act/Qualified Payment Amount \$1 PMPE

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Claus *moved* to approve the minutes from the 9/19/22 meeting

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Bill Wright with Explore Fairbanks gave the Council an update on tourism for the North Pole area.
- The Mayor shared that last Wednesday he was at the Westmark for the Alaska Fire Fighters Association Conference. He was also at in Eielson last week, meeting with the new 3 star General Naholm talking housing and the area need.
- He let everyone know that the city will be starting the holiday decorating early this year because there is going to be a film crew here mid-November filming a show called Small Town Christmas with Megan Alexander.
- He reminded everyone that we will be live in the Chambers for the October 17th meeting.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- Ms. Welch asked the Mayor if he had shared the NPCCC flyer for the Holiday lighting Contest that they are sponsoring.

The Mayor asked the Clerk to share the details of the contest on the screen and to follow up with an email to the Council.

- Mr. Jacobson asked to confirm the Budget workshop dates, as well as the Bed Tax Committee meeting. He also asked if we had heard anything from AIDEA after the last meeting or from the Borough regarding their property tax rebate.

The Mayor said that the non-Borough wide property tax incentive was not an obligation that fell to the city. He followed up with that the city attorney, Zane Wilson, is working on the wording for a NP City Ordinance regarding property tax incentives that the City of North Pole will be discussing.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- Chief Dutra was out on vacation.

Fire Department, AC Chambers

- Chief Heineken shared with the Council some details from the State Firefighters Conference. There were over 200 firefighters from all over Alaska. North Pole was very well represented. He thanked the Mayor for coming out and talking during the opening ceremony. He also thanked AC Chambers and Sam Sanders, they were very busy during the conference and did a great job.
- Lt. Beckley has accepted a position with the Steese Fire Department, she will stay on as a part time fire fighter with the North Pole department. She has been with the department for a long time, and this is a great opportunity for her.
- The ambulance that was ordered has been delayed, it is anticipated to arrive in 2 years. They are looking at the current ambulances that we have in service and trying to make them stretch an additional year.
- They are working on winter preparations also and thanked the Public Works department for their help with moving some of the training equipment around
- October is fire prevention week they stay pretty busy this month. They are back to doing in person tours again and had a few groups of school age kids there just today.

The Mayor thanked the fire department for coming out a putting together some furniture for the Fiscal department at City Hall.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty sent out the latest financials to the Council this afternoon. She said they are still having some matching issues between Caselle and Tyler. She said before the next meeting she will send out September's financials as well as the AMJLIA update.
- She said that the department had done some training with Tyler on assessments today.
- Ms. Fogarty updated the Council that the department heads met with her and Michelle Peede last week for the first round of budget talks. She reminded the Council that the Budget Workshops will be the 24 through the 26th here at City Hall. She is continuing to meet with the Department heads to make necessary changes so that it is as complete as we can get it before it goes to Council. The schedule will be Monday night for admin, Clerk/HR, and revenues, Tuesday will be Fire and Police departments and building, public

works and utilities on Wednesday.

Mr. Jacobson asked about the financials and why September and the third quarter numbers weren't on there.

- Ms. Fogarty said that it is only the first meeting in October, those numbers do not get to us till the beginning of the month and that the next set of financials will be available for the next meeting.

Ms. Welch asked if the Council could get the financials a little more before the meeting so that they had time to review.

- Ms. Fogarty agreed that she would. Normally the financials wouldn't be available till the 2nd meeting, but because she had some issues with them for the last meeting, she wanted to provide them for this one.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

- Winter prep and budgeting is the focus for city services right now. He is learning a lot about the budget process and his supervisors, as well as Ms. Fogarty and her team have been a lot of help working with him.
- For the building department he has been in contact with the FNSB housing task force to share info regarding housing projects.
- Winterization efforts are at the forefront of the public works department. They are working to renew the renewal contract for snow removal with Hubbard.
- They will be interviewing for a part time public works department employee. This person will be doing the in-house cleaning of City Hall and the Police station and with the PW department should they need additional help.
- Two of the summer hires for the PW department are staying till early November. They are helping with the winter prep around the city, including the holiday lights.
- ADEC has asked that we change our chemical injects into the water system. They are working on a plan for that and will present more information later on.
- He is in talks with Alaska Project Solutions to provide grant writing assistance for the city water main requirements. They are working on connecting the city with the grants that are available out there.
- Mr. Wallace took a moment to recognize Paul Trissel and the utilities department. They were awarded by DEC the Ursa Major award; this is the 4th year in a row that the department has received this.

Human Resources, Ellen Glab

- Ms. Glab was out most of last week ill.
- She has been trying to fine tune Ordinance 22-20 and working with department heads and employees on their feedback to it.

Borough Representative

Ms. Welch attended the borough meeting on 9/22/2022 via Zoom.

- Fairbanks City Council Report
 - Is considering the ManCho project impact on the city. Waiting to hear from DOT about their plan.
 - Working on their budget.

- School Board Report
 - October 3 is a work session.
 - Working on bussing situation.
- Borough Mayor Report
 - Transit garage groundbreaking was this past week, they will finish next spring.
 - 8th of October is the skate park opening.
 - The Roads plan is open for comments till 21 Oct. Find more info on the borough website.
- The Assembly approved the RFP to Green Star for the recycling facility and IFB for Graehl park replacement awards.
- Resolution 22-30 summarizing lots of land to be disposed of was postponed until 11/3.
- The assembly concurred on a few appointments to various commissioners.
- Ordinance 22-52 establishing the Two Rivers Fire Service area was adopted.
- Ordinance 22-53 establishing a premium pay program for school bus drivers was adopted.
- Ordinance 22-54 leasing 5 acres of property to the University Fire Service area to operate a fire and emergency services station was adopted.
- Ordinance 22-20-1I amending the budget to fund the Graehl Park Mosaic Project was adopted.
- Ordinance 22-35 approving a property tax exemption for North Shanly Subdivision was defeated.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne let everyone know that City Hall is all set up for the election tomorrow and reminded everyone to go vote. She let everyone know that she will be coming in late tomorrow and will be at the Borough building as votes are being reported and it will probably be a late night. Also Mr. Wallace has volunteered to stay late tomorrow to make sure the elections workers are good and do not need any help.
- She let everyone know that the \$5,00 earnest money that was put down on the Howard property purchase was returned to us today.
- On Friday she will be Revize working on the site map finalization for the new website.
- Ms. Dionne also reminded everyone that the October 17th meeting will be in person. We will have snacks and refreshments and we will swear in the new councilmembers.

Mr. Jacobson asked about the rumor that there was a write in candidate for the Council seat.

- Ms. Dionne responded that the citizen did not meet the requirements to run.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- Senator Myers has been in touch with us regarding our Legislative Priorities for this upcoming year, the Mayor will work with him to get that in the works.
- Dr. Holde will be here on November 15th to discuss the combined heat and power project. We are planning a demonstration and talk for the Council, citizens and the legislative delegation.

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

None

Old Business

- a. Ordinance 22-20, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Leave Policy for the City of North Pole Employees

Ms. Welch *moved* to postpone the Ordinance 22-20 until the October 17, 2022 meeting
Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

On the Postponement

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Keller sent best wishes to the people effected by the hurricane in Florida. He thanked Mr. Dutra for his hard work in getting grant monies. He reminded everyone to stay safe with the bad weather fast approaching.
- Ms. Welch reminded everyone to start preparing for winter and gave a shout out to a friend who recently became a US citizen.
- Mr. Jacobson said that his heart goes out to the people recovering from the aftereffects of the hurricane in Florida and the people effected by the bad storms in Western Alaska. He said that he was surprised by Shannon and Wilson drilling holes in his neighbor's yard, they were testing for PFAS. He said that he is excited about the Christmas in lights celebration and the upcoming tv special that is being filmed here.
- Mr. Skipps wanted to give shout out to the Interior Alaska football and asked everyone to go out and cheer for their local teams.
- Mr. Claus reminded everyone that tomorrow was local elections and that they should get out and vote.
- The Mayor shared that the City's attorney has a house down in the area of Florida that was hit by the hurricane, his daughter and her family got out of the area, but his home was totaled. He also shared that he is working with the attorney on wordsmithing the ordinance for the property tax abatement that the City is considering and that should be available soon.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The regular meeting of Monday, October 3, 2022 adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, October 3, 2022.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk