



**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 Wednesday, January 4, 2023, in the North Pole City Hall Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Wednesday, January 4, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Jeffrey Jacobson – Mayor Pro Tem
Anton Keller -Alt. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
Chandra Clack
Aino Welch
David Skipps

Absent/Excused:

DeJohn Cromer – Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

Mr. Jacobson *moved to* enter executive session to “To discuss attorney client privileged legal matters for a claim advanced by HC Contractors related to its snow removal contract from March 2022.”

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

Ms. Welch *moved to* end the executive session at 6:55pm

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Mayor Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Welch *moved to* approve the agenda of January 4, 2023

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

Mr. Jacobson *moved to* amend the agenda of annuary 4, 2023, to consent the following items:

Old Business:

- a. Ordinance 22-29, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Changing the Order of Business
- b. Ordinance 22-30, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the 2022 Year End Budget

New Business

- a. Ordinance 23-01, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the User Fee Schedule (Pg. 13)

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the amendments

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Keller, Skipps, Jacobson, Welch

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Cromer

On the agenda as amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Keller, Skipps, Jacobson, Welch

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Cromer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the minutes from the 1/4/2023 meeting

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Keller, Skipps, Jacobson, Welch

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Cromer

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Mayor Welch shared that he has been busy the last few weeks. He recently saw the national NBC special that was filmed here in North Pole, it was a very nice show.
- Last night he was at EAFB with General Wilsbach and Col Burkland among others talking expansion, housing and logistics. General Wilsbach is still concerned with the cities ability to provide enough additional housing for their needs.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- None
-

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- Ofc. Churness is due to come off FTO this week. Det. Lockwood is due to retire March 1. Ofc. McBroom is expected to retire May 1. Sgt. Tibbets is in the final phase of being hired in Washington. We have 2 people applying for the Detective position and a few new people dropping into the hiring process. This is all going to led us into a very odd situation of having only 5 officers heading into the summer season.
- The new hire video is complete and just about ready for deployment.
- He is working with Convergence to complete the building paging system.
- Chief Dutra also shared the new NPPD recruitment video with the Council.

The Mayor asked about what is going to happen if come this summer we do not have enough officers to be able to have enough to cover the city as well as the Chena Lakes patrol officer.

- Chief Dutra said that he is working on some ideas on how to handle that. Including potentially creating a non-perm positions that would be outside of PERS and having one of the retired officers come back to work that summer position. He said that he would be coming back to the Council in the next few meetings to solidify the plan with them.

Mr. Jacobson asked about the candidates that have applied for the detective position, if they were outside candidates or internal. He also said that he thought the video was good.

- Chief Dutra said that they were both outside candidates, so they would be adding to their numbers and not subtracting.

Mr. Welch asked how the department numbers looked during the holidays.

- Chief responded that outside of the Christmas/car issues that were happening the holidays were pretty quiet for the department.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- The Fire Department Christmas caroling fire truck was a success and went on without a hitch. They plan to continue the tradition in the years to come.
- For the last year the fire dept ran about 1450 calls, which was down from the year before, but because the lowering of COVID patients it was to be expected.
- Chief reminded everyone that it is wintertime and access to the fire hydrants around time is difficult during this season. He asked the public to 'adopt a hydrant' if possible. If there is a hydrant in front of you house please do them a favor and keep it clear of snow if you can, or at least be aware that you do not bury it. It helps save a lot of time in an emergency.

Ms. Welch thanked the fire fighters for the caroling truck, she said that they always enjoy it.

Mr. Skipp asked if there is an update for the new fire truck

- Chief said that they were waiting for the rear ends to arrive, but that they normally send updates to him on Fridays.

Mr. Jacobson extended a congratulations to the Chief and his son, his son was recently promoted and pinned during a ceremony at the City of Fairbanks. He also sent his condolences for the loss of his father, Brent Heineken. Mr. Jacobson said that he was a pillar of faith and service in our community and his heart and thoughts go out to Chief and his family.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty said that since the last meeting they have sent out 132 business licenses.
- They are working on payroll this week and will be moving into W-2s right after.

The Mayor asked if Altman and Rodgers had gotten a hold of her regarding potentially contracting with the city as a consultant.

- Ms. Fogarty said that she had talked to Altman and Rodgers and that was moving forward. They were going to talk to them later this week and then will meet with them via Zoom to talk about the details.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace – Paul Trissel was with us tonight in Mr. Wallace's absence

- Building Department
 - We are still working on getting the 2023 contracts signed by our building inspectors.
- Public Works Department
 - No snow plowing/ice complaints received over the holidays; Coordination with DOT on plowing efforts continues to go well.
 - The Doughchee Bridge/Beaver Springs rehab project (involves rehabilitating damage at that area, at the intersection of Doughchee and Badger Rd).
 - We're still looking at options to have Hubbard Construction remove hard pack in February. This would make the spring removal easier.
 - Arctic Fire inspected our fire extinguishers at City Hall, Police Station and Public Works (they do this each year)
 - Crowley Fuels have assumed our heating oil contract. No issues yet (but no deliveries have been noted).
- Utility Department
 - No significant utilities issues over the holidays. Things were quiet.
 - Utility Rate increase notices will go out with this month and next month's bills. Each household will get a one-page information sheet providing background and other information regarding this change.
 - Next week, we'll begin a series of discussions (with Paul Trissel, Tricia Fogarty, and Mayor Welch) on potential ways ahead to address the annual sewer funding deficits that the City experiences. Hopefully, these will result in workable options.
- Moose Creek
 - The Period of Performance (end date) has been extended to June 30th, 2023. This is required due to much of the work (grading, hydroseeding, pipe work) was not completed and will be completed next year.
 - DEC issued its final approval for the Moose Creek Expansion project. We are now cleared to operate that site as part of the City of North Pole utility system.

- Melanie Swanson, in her role as the Utility Account Specialist, has assumed lead on our Moose Creek accounts.
- Other items
 - FNSB Trails Challenge Site #11 (Beaver Springs Nature Trail / 5th Ave Park) has now been installed by FNSB. The Fairbanks Trails Challenge is sponsored by the FNSB Parks and Recreation Department and is an all-ages, all-abilities, outdoor scavenger hunt . Each summer and winter season, Parks Department staff temporarily installs special signs in secret locations along a dozen or so local trails. While the signs are up, we invite everyone to visit the trails and try and find the signs.

Mr. Jacobson asked if there have been any additional building permits put in for the upcoming building season for the city.

- Mr. Wallace said that no, there has been nothing that they didn't already know about.

Human Resources, Ellen Glab

- Ms. Glab shared that she did not pass her SHRM testing, she missed by just a few questions. There were some extenuating circumstances that she would like to share with Council regarding the test, but she would like to share them off camera. She will be taking the test again in June.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch attended no meetings since the last NPCC meeting.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne said with the new year and the new budget that she was looking forward to get back into training. She hasn't been to one in a month and that's too long. She currently is looking forward to finding a PIO training to take in the new year.
- She shared that she would have an update on the website for the Council at the next meeting.
- She let the Council know that the Committee's sign ups are coming up at the next meeting and to be aware of it.

Mr. Jacobson asked if there could be a brief description of each committee included with the committees sign up list.

- The Mayor responded that yes he would work with the Clerk to provide that.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- None

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

- None

New Business

- Ordinance 23-02, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Professional Development Step

Salary Increases for City of North Pole Employees

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve 23-02

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: – A. Welch, Clack, Keller, Skipps, Jacobson

No: Welch

Absent: 1 – Cromer

- Ordinance 23-03, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending Title 13, Public Services Utility Rates for 2023

Mr. Keller *moved* to approve 23-03

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Cromer

- Resolution 23-01, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council to Change the Effective Date of the 2023 Maximum Sales Tax Rate Increase

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve 23-01

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Jacobson moved to amend Resolution 23-01, to change the effective date from February 1, 2023 to March 1, 2023

Seconded *by* Ms. Clack

On the Amendment

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Cromer

On the Resolution

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 – Cromer

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Ms. Clack joined us tonight from a cruise ship in Hawaii. She shared that she enjoyed the meeting and told everyone to have a nice new year and to enjoy their evening.
- Mr. Keller offered a happy new year to everyone and said that it was 2023 and that we all make it the best year yet.
- Ms. Welch also wished everyone a happy new year's. She said that it was great to get back to school today. She reminded everyone to please follow the drop off procedures at the schools to make the mornings easier and safer for everyone.
- Mr. Skipps also wished everyone a happy new year.
- Mr. Jacobson too wished everyone a happy new year. He said that he has been in discussion with Senator Gary Wilken regarding the Manchu Mine proposal. He asked the Mayor and the Clerk to talk about having Mr. Wilken at our Council meeting to discuss the idea of the mine trucks on the highway.
- The Mayor said that while we were on the topic of the mine and trucks that he thinks that the second meeting in February would be a good time to have a workshop or some time at that meeting to discuss the Manchu mine project. He also reminded everyone that the birthday of the city is January 16th and shared that he is open to ideas of how we are going to recognize it.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Mr. Skipps

The regular meeting of Wednesday, January 4, 2023, adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Wednesday, January 4, 2023.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk