



**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, April 17, 2023, in the North Pole City Hall Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Welch called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, April 17, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

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

Absent/Excused:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Mr. Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the agenda of April 17, 2023

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to amend the agenda of April 17, 2023, to consent the following items:

Unfinished Business

- a. Ordinance 23-05, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the Pay Scale for City of North Pole Police Department Employees
- b. Ordinance 23-06, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the 2023 Budget to Accept Grant Funds

New Business

- c. NPPD Professional Development Changes
- d. NPPD Acceptance of Grant Funds from the Firehouse Subs Safety Foundation
- e. Acceptance of Street Sweeping Bid

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the Amendment

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

On the Agenda as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the Minutes

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Mayor Welch read the proclamation for the student of the month, Derrick Dewilde.
- The Mayor shared that along with Mr. Wallace they did submit some grant proposals last week.
- He said that he plans on being at the Governors Sustainability Conference May 23-25.

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

- None

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

- None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK

Police Department, Chief Dutra

- I am set to appear in front of House Committee on State Affairs for my 3rd committee interview for the Alaska Police Standards Council.
- I presented state of affairs of NPPD to the Rotary Club at the Elf's Den.
- I received notice that I was nominated for the 4th time for the Family Friendly Workplace Award. We have won the award 2 times going for a third.
 - I find it truly important to support my employees and their families in every way possible. They are the core of our organization and making sure their families are a top priority is my mission.
- We have seen a spike in applicants, and I am optimistic we will get a few onboarded soon.
- We had a Burglary in the Arms Room last week. We have developed leads and will hopefully report something promising soon.
- We have officially signed up to start the accreditation process for our police department. We are excited about the challenge and want the community to know we are at the cutting edge of police standards in North Pole.
- Officer Jim McBroom is retiring after 11 years of service to our city. We thank him for his service.

The Mayor asked Chief Dutra if he could join him in going to the Family Friendly Workplace award luncheon.

- Chief Dutra responded with a yes and said he would be leaving at 11:30.

The Mayor also asked if he planned on being at the air show on EAFB to talk about recruitment.

- Chief Dutra said that he had not considered it, but he would.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- The fire department is pleased to be awarded a grant of over \$30,000 from the Firehouse Subs Foundation. This is the second grant we have received from this foundation. With this grant we will be able to purchase all new firefighting nozzles, valves, hydrant tools and hydrant bags. The firehouse subs grants are made possible by the generous donations of their customers. If you choose to eat at a firehouse subs location anywhere in the nation, during payment you are presented an option to round up to the nearest dollar to support first responders. North Pole Fire Department highly encourages everyone to select the round up option.
- Last week was the annual EMS Symposium hosted by Interior Region EMS Council. I had the pleasure of attending the banquet last Friday evening. North Pole Fire Department was presented with the EMS service of the year award, Captain Shawn McGilvary received the EMS educator of the year award and our physician sponsor Dr. Robinson received the EMS physician sponsor of the year award. I am extremely proud of the hard work and professionalism of our emergency responders, each and every one of them add value to our agency and they deserve the highest recognition for their efforts.
- We continue to work with Public Consulting Group (PCG) on applying for the Alaska supplemental Emergency Medical Transport (SEMT) program. Their preliminary estimates for the 2022 period are higher than anticipated, we could possibly receive as much as \$200,000 for the 2022 reimbursement. The reporting deadline is May 31st and we will have everything together for this deadline with exception of the Cities 2022 audit that is required to be attached. CFO Fogarty has advised us that the audit is

scheduled for completion at the end of June. I have sent a request to AlaskaSEMT asking for an extension until June 30th. I have not received a response from them at this time.

- The fire department is making plans to purchase a new Ford Explorer command vehicle similar to the one we received in 2022. Currently our Battalion officers are using C-21 a 2006 F350 as their primary response vehicle. C-21 now has over 115,000 miles on it and is tasked with carrying a wildland skid pump in the summers, it is also the only vehicle in our fleet capable of towing the technical rescue trailer. The purchase of a more economical vehicle for the Battalion officers to respond with will lengthen the service life of the aging F350. It has come to my attention that a Ford dealer in Anchorage has several responder Explorer units on order from Ford. I reached out to them last week and due to the lengthy time, it takes to get these units from Ford they pre ordered several last year. We would like to reserve one of their pre-ordered units as soon as possible, I should have everything together to request purchasing approval at the May 1st council meeting. Funds currently available within the fire department fleet fund will be used to make this purchase. I will be traveling back to Appleton Wisconsin for the final on the new fire engine May 1st so I will not be present at the meeting. If you have any questions or concerns about this future agenda item, I would be happy to get with you and discuss it before I travel.

The Mayor asked about the availability of the Ford and if it was ok to wait a little to purchase. He also asked what else needs to be installed on it after we receive it. He also asked if the old truck could be ready for auction in May.

- The Chief answered that it comes with the lights, etc. but that it will need decals and radios installed still. He said that they will be keeping the old truck because they will still need it to pull that rescue trailer.

Mr. Jacobson asked if the city could go ahead and make that offer this week to hold the vehicle pending the Council approval at the May 1 meeting. He also asked if last years audit paperwork would work for the PCG deadline and to just let them know that we would supplement this years audit with it as soon as we have it completed.

- Chief Heineken said that he would make a call this week about the truck. He also said that he had not considered the idea of submitting last years audit as a placeholder for PCG and that he would look into it.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- I am happy to report that we are fully integrated with Tyler ERP Pro, sales tax and business licenses went live on April 1st and on May 1st we will bring on Tyler payments (credit card processing for utility billing) live. We started the process of conversion in March of 2021.
- We have been working with Altman & Rogers on yearend closing and general audit preparation. Last week I received the entry from them for the PERS liability portion and the construction in progress along with the fixed asset piece that has previously been done by Alliance.
- We received the statements today for the AMLIP investment accounts, our total interest was \$25,517.71 for the month of March.
- Mt McKinley's interest on our sweep account was \$1,076.00.
- Michelle is working on the bank reconciliations, when she has them completed, I will send the Mayor and the Council the financial statements.

The Mayor asked what the AMLIP rate of return was.

- Ms. Fogarty answered that she does not know it off the top of her head, but that she would make sure it was included with the financials next month.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

Special Topics

- Summer Hires
 - We have applicants for all positions and application closing date for these is Wed (April 19). We will conduct interviews beginning on Friday and anticipate a decision prior to 1 May.
- Grant Submissions
 - On Thursday, April 13, we submitted grant applications for both the Combined Heat and Power Plant and the City Water Main design. We will keep you posted on the progress of these submissions.
 - We also have a coordination meeting the week with Two Bears Consulting on the way ahead for grant writing and submissions. We are actively seeking grant opportunities to support other City needs (i.e., Fire and Police Departments).
- HC Contractors Continue to Dispute Payment for Snow Removal in April 2022
 - HC Contractors (Bill Hoople) continue to dispute the City's snow removal bill from last year.
 - The City paid HC \$413,280 for snow removed based on the number of loads reported by HC; HC is seeking the full contract price (\$628,170)
 - HC claims that the snow is compacted when loaded (in a 3 to 1 ratio) and should be paid for the amount of snow on the ground, rather than the amount of snow that was hauled away.
 - The City disagrees, but, on the advice of Zane Wilson, has agreed to attend a compacting demonstration scheduled for Wednesday.
 - The City's position on this remains unchanged, as per the contract, HC will only be paid for the amount of snow that it hauled.

Building Department

- We continue to work with the Wescott Pool project manager on building permit requirements. Today they returned the assessment worksheet and we're determining the permit requirements and costs.

Public Works Department

- We received only one bid for the Street Sweeping project, but we feel it will be sufficient. I'll discuss later in this Council Meeting.
- We're beginning work on the summer projects list. We have an internal meeting to review those on April 12th and I will present those on May 1st
- On May 8th, David McBroom will shift from part-time to full-time employment as part of the Public Works Team (they'll now have four full time employees)
- Our NP Streetlight Project will now potentially include the adding of LED lights to the NP Candy Cane Lights. We had submitted this as a project to FNSB/FAST, but they found a way to add it to the current project.
- The glass dividers in the Chambers will be removed in the next week.

Utility Department

- We met with Stantec (our water utility engineering firm) to discuss upcoming projects. We discussed: the MP 351 work (they are arranging for the Water Main move to support that overpass); Yukon Lift station maintenance and upgrades; water system control panels; and the need for a Utilities Master Plan.

The Mayor asked Mr. Wallace to talk about 3 Bears.

- Mr. Wallace said that there was some communication with 3 Bears, last week they met with reps from the borough and 3 Bears and made some headway. There are still some hurdles to cover but things are on track.

Human Resources, Ellen Glab

- Ms. Glab is out on maternity leave.

Borough Representative

Borough meeting 4/13/2023

- Ms. Welch attended this meeting.
- Appropriating \$1,052,000 From the Chena Goldstream Fire Service Area for The Purpose Of Replacing A Fire Engine. PASS
- Contract Award: Sourcewell Cooperative Contract #113021-RSD 1000 Gallon Pumper Fire Apparatus Approval of the proposal, as submitted by General Fire Apparatus in the amount of \$955,659.00 PASS
- Property Tax Exemption for Housing Incentive Hamilton Plaza Subdivision, 1st Addition (Located Off B Street in Fairbanks). Amended to 4 years for studio apartments. PASS
- Property Tax Exemption for Housing Incentive Located at Lot 6, Eagle Estates Subdivision, (Located of Patriot Dr in North Pole). Amended to 4 years for studio apartments PASS
- Additional Opioid Litigation Settlement Agreements and To Place Upon the Ballot for The Regular Election the Question of Expanding The Health And Social Services Power To Include Expending Settlement Funds For Opioid Remediation. Heavily amended PASS

Passed by consent.

- 16.d. *RESOLUTION NO. 2023-20. A Resolution Establishing the Rate of Levy Of 2023 Real Property Taxes for Areawide, Non-Areawide, Solid Waste Collection District, And Service Areas Jurisdictions and Establishing The 2023 Tax Delinquency (Advance to June 8, 2023)
- Will revisit at the next Thursday's meeting. Heavily amended downwards, then back up and eventually they ran out of time with no one willing to suspend the rules.
- 16.a. RESOLUTION NO. 2023-21. A Resolution Specifying the Minimum Amount of Money To Be Made Available From Local Sources To The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District For School Purposes During Fiscal Year 2023-24. (Sponsor: Mayor Ward)
- Adjourned 11:34

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne gave an update on the new city website; it is done! Training with Revize and at least 1 employee with each city department has been set for May 3. After this training she is going to give the

departments a week or so to review their info and change as necessary before giving the ok to go live with the site. The website will not be down at any point during this switchover.

- Ms. Dionne let everyone know that she will be speaking at the NPCCC luncheon April 25th at noon at the Hotel North Pole. She will be talking about elections, open seats and what it means to be a Council member.
- She also let the Council know that there will be a workshop before the next meeting on May 1, with Meritain to go over this year's insurance decisions.

The Mayor asked to take a look at the website again.

- Ms. Dionne brought it back up on screen and shared a few things about it.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance 23-07, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole Amending the User Fee Schedule and Title 15

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the Ordinance

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Clack, Jacobson, Cromer, Keller, Skipp, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent:

- Resolution 23-06, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council Supporting Funding for an Interior Veterans Cemetery

Mr. Hank Bartos was with us tonight to talk about this Resolution. He shared the background of the project as well as pictures of the property they have purchased for the cemetery.

Mr. Jacobson *moved* to approve the Resolution

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

On the Resolution

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 7 – A. Welch, Clack, Jacobson, Cromer, Keller, Skipp, Mayor Welch

No: 0

Absent:

* The Council asked if they could all be added as sponsors of this Resolution

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Ms. Welch shared that she had the Clerk send out a resolution that the borough and City of Fairbanks is considering regarding salmon fishing. The proposal would stop commercial fishing for a period of a few weeks to allow salmon to come up stream and spawn. Over the last few years, the number of salmon coming up the rivers has been less and less so time is of the essence for this resolution and she would like to see it on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Mr. Keller thanked Retired Lt. Colonel Bartos for speaking tonight, he said the property is beautiful and that he almost wishes he would have seen it first as it is a beautiful piece of land. He said that he is looking forward to seeing how the cemetery plays out and that it will be a wonderful tribute for those that have served and their dependents. With warmer weather equals crazy things at night, things are cooling down and freezing again making everything slippery especially around the turns so please continue being safe. But he said that he is excited for some sun and summer breeze to come through.
- Mr. Cromer also said that he is thankful for the sun and looks forward to getting some vitamin D.
- Mr. Jacobson concurred with Ms. Welch and said that it is important for us to protect the salmon coming into our waters and to not be overly fished. Many of the commercial fishers are from foreign countries and it is affecting our subsistence lifestyle here in Alaska. He thanked Officer Churness who wrote a very compelling and grateful letter to the Council thanking them for supporting the police pay increase. He said that it is not often that you get recognition for doing the right thing and he appreciates it very much. He said that a few meetings back he had handed out some literature about the mobile crisis team that is housed in City Hall in Fairbanks and Brenda McFarlane with the crisis team asked him to facilitate a meeting with the police and fire chiefs from NP. They did that today and they are very excited about the potential to coordinate with the team. The partnership would alleviate some of the pressure of the fire and police personnel when they respond to a crisis and has been very successful in Fairbanks. Mr. Jacobson said he feels like this partnership with benefit the city a lot. He talked a little of the assembly setting the school funding so low at the beginning of negotiations because it forces the school district to let go of so many schoolteachers in the spring because their positions cannot be guaranteed for the next school year. Some of the teachers will stick around while they work on it, but others will leave and seek positions elsewhere. He said that we lose a lot of good teachers because of this.
- The Mayor said that he is looking forward to the summer, for the most part he will be staying here because who would want to leave here in the summertime, it is the most coveted time to be here he believes. However, he did say that he might be taking a trip to Florida, whether he wants to or not later in July/August. He shared a story about a teacher that he knew and remembers that just about a year ago he was also talking about the teachers in our community getting laid off in his closing comments. He said that he will do his best to stay put for the next 3 months or so and asked that everyone take care and before we know it the mosquitoes will be out, and mud splashed everywhere and we will all really be enjoying ourselves.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn

Seconded *by* Mr. Jacobson

The regular meeting of Monday, April 17, 2023, adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

These minutes passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, April 17, 2023.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk