



**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, August 7, 2023, in the North Pole City Hall Chambers.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tem Jacobson called the regular City Council meeting of Monday, August 7, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

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

Absent/Excused:

Mayor Welch

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG

Led by Melissa Dionne

INVOCATION

Given by Ms. Welch

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Cromer *moved* to approve the agenda of August 7, 2023

Seconded *by* Ms. Welch

Mr. Cromer *moved* to amend the agenda of August 7, 2023, to consent:

New Business

- b. Resolution 23-10, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council Designating City Officials' Authorization to Sign on City of North Pole Accounts
- c. Resolution 23-11, A Resolution to Place an Initiative on the October 3, 2023 Ballot Authorizing the City to Apply for and Accept a \$1.5 Million Forgivable Loan to Mitigate Emerging Contaminants (to Include PFAS)
- d. Resolution 23-12, A Resolution of the North Pole City Council to Place an Initiative on the October 3, 2023 Ballot Authorizing the City to Accept a \$653,000 Loan to Design New Water Mains to Address Potential Water System Failure

- e. Approval of Services Contract with Graham Construction
- f. Request to Hire HR/Deputy City Clerk Position
- g. Request to Contract with Work Shield

Seconded by Mr. Keller

On the Agenda as Amended

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Jacobson, Cromer, Keller, Skippis

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Welch

On the Agenda

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Jacobson, Cromer, Keller, Skippis

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Welch

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Keller *moved* to approve the minutes from the 7/24/2023 meeting.

Seconded by Ms. Clack

On the Minutes

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

Yes: 6 – A. Welch, Clack, Jacobson, Cromer, Keller, Skippis

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Welch

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- The City Clerk officially swore in our new police officers, Detective Cash and Sgt. Templin tonight.
- Chief Dutra also introduced Chirs Illingsworth to the Council.
- Mr. Jacobson let the Council know that if they are interested in registering for the Alaska Defense Forum that is being held on August 29-30 or the Military Banquet at the Carlson Center that is coming up on Thursday, August 24th, to please talk to the Clerk.
- Mr. Jacobson also asked the Clerk to make sure that the EAFB newsletter and PFAS info that was recently sent gets posted to our website so that city residents could access it.

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

- Introduced Det. Cash: Det. Cash comes to NPPD with a long history of police work. A lot of patrol work and some extensive Detective work in both major crimes and narcotics.
- Sgt. Templin comes from the lower 48 and has 19 years' experience in law enforcement.
- Introduced Chris Illingworth to the council. Mr. Illingworth has 30 plus years' experience in the community and extensive experience in working within our schools. Mr. I, as he is known, is our new Public Safety Assistant.
- We did lose one recruit out of the academy for personal reasons. We are working to fill that position now.
- We had a small group attend the memorial service. Thank you to those who attended.

Mr. Jacobson read an email written by a citizen regarding Ofc. Bluhm helping a family who had a blown tire on the side of the road.

Fire Department, Chief Heineken

- Chief Heineken shared a PowerPoint presentation with his ideas for recruitment and retention going forward for the Fire Department.

Ms. Welch asked if the intern positions that the Chief was going to be a part time employee?

- Chief Heineken responded that they are going to consider those positions seasonal, there would be no benefits from the city.

Mr. Cromer asked about the paramedic program and if there would be a contract committing the employee who took the paramedic class to so many years with the city.

- Chief said no that they cannot really do that, but that the employee would be liable for a pro-rated reimbursement of the cost of the class to the city should they leave soon after completing it.

Finance, Tricia Fogarty

- Ms. Fogarty let everyone know that there was a bound copy of the audit at everyone's spot tonight. She thanked Mayor Pro Tem Jacobson for stepping up and writing the response letter for the audit in Mayor Welch's absence.
- After the audit was completed last week, they boxed up the 2022 paper back ups and got it over into archives. She said looking at the freed-up office space and drawer space made her feel a sigh of relief.

Mr. Jacobson said that the audit was completed in time to send off for the fire department's grant and that was a good thing. He asked the Council to start reading the audit on page 65, that is were the summary is and the letters that he wrote regarding the issues. He said that there are some issues that we will be addressing moving

forward and some others that will be addressed by the total compensation committee in the next few weeks, including the idea that Ms. Fogarty will be retiring in a few years so the city needs to start planning to bring on a CPA to replace her.

- Ms. Fogarty said that she will be meeting with Altman and Rogers to talk about some of the issues that were found in the audit reading lack of checks and balances internally on grants and coming up with a plan moving forward.

Director of City Services, Danny Wallace

Special Topics

- Moose Creek
 - We're continuing to work towards the final months of this project (ending Oct 30, 2023). We anticipate final bills from HC will be submitted this month.
 - We are also pursuing funding for critical spare parts for the pump house. That list is being compiled by HC and we'll order those later this month.
- Combined Heat and Power Plant
 - Our twice monthly meeting is scheduled for 10am tomorrow to discuss public-private partnership funding proposals from Harrison Street. We will also tentatively participate in a working group meeting at Chena Hot Springs on Monday (after the Renewable Energy Fair).
 - These are brainstorming / information sharing sessions (no commitments).
- Community Survey
 - Owen Luo (Municipal Intern) continues to work on several projects, to include the Community Survey. We've received 42 online responses thus far, although surveys went out via mail last week. This remains on track and we should have results and analysis by the end of the month.

Building Department

- July was, as expected, a busy month for building permits. We received permit requests for 7 family homes (in the Stryker Loop area) and an 11-Plex in Stone Point Court (all by Stepping Stone Construction / Rick Watson).

Public Works Department

- Beautification efforts continue to include the resealing of the parking lot. You'll see that parking spaces have shifted, to include handicapped parking relocated closer to the entrance. The parking spaces along the COVID wing will be marked for City/Emergency vehicle use. We also plan to have parking bumpers installed to prevent any vehicles from hitting buildings or ending up in the slough.
- For the streetlight installations, they have shifted to pile driving, welding pile caps, installing j boxes and backfilling and grading
- We have had some Citizen feedback on mowing operations throughout the City. Right now, the focus is clearing intersections and right of ways (ditches). The Dog Park is on the list, although mowing that increases safety in the City takes precedence over other areas.

Utility Department

- Next week, the City will conduct its annual Industrial Pretreatment Program facility inspections. Mike Pollen (NSE Alaska) will provide guidance and support for these inspections on the City's behalf. Inspection locations will include Marathon Oil, PetroStar, and GVEA.

Mr. Jacobson asked about the light pole project that is going on and whether there were going to be any issues completing it in time, before it gets too cold.

- Mr. Wallace said that he has not heard that the project would not be completed on time.

Borough Representative

- Ms. Welch attended the FNSB meeting on 7/27/2023.
- 13.a. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-39. An Ordinance Providing for The Disposition of Property Which Lies Within the City of North Pole Which Has Been Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure. (Sponsor: Mayor Ward) Tabled--- Passed (Includes 3 properties) One property owner requested special consideration due to being unaware of issue, the property is a lot attached and not her main house though the area is fenced together but was properly notified and borough atty said the assembly only could decide whether proper notices were given before foreclosure happened.
- 13.b. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-40. An Ordinance Providing for The Disposition of Property Which Lies Within the City of Fairbanks Which Has Been Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure. (Sponsor: Mayor Ward) PASS
- 13.c. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-38. An Ordinance Providing for The Sale of Real Property Acquired Through Tax Foreclosure. (Sponsor: Mayor Ward) Substitute motioned two properties redeemed. Tabled for 13.a to pass first.
- 13.d. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-24. An Ordinance Repealing the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and the Solid Waste Management Plan as Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and Amending FNSBC 4.76.050 Regarding the Responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Commission. (Sponsor: Mayor Ward)
- 13.e. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-36. An Ordinance Amending FNSBC 2.12.010, Duties of The Borough Attorney. (Sponsor: Assemblymember Lojewski) PASS
- 13.f. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-37. An Ordinance Amending the Definition of Special Election in FNSBC Title 1, Changing General Election to Regular Election in Fairbanks North Star Borough July 27, 2023 Regular Assembly Meeting Heavily amended PASS
- 13.g. ORDINANCE NO. 2023-20-1A. An Ordinance Amending the FY 2023-24 Budget by Appropriating an Additional \$4,000,000 From the General Fund Balance to Increase the Local Support to The School District for Education. (Sponsor: Assemblymember Lojewski) PASS
- ADJ 11:20

Mr. Jacobson let the Council know that he will be the representative at the next FNSB meeting and shared a few of the agenda items.

City Clerk's Office, Melissa Dionne

- Ms. Dionne let everyone know that the last day to withdraw from the election was today. We have 3 candidates: Ellen Glab, Benny Williams, and Larry Terch III. Mr. Williams and Mr. Terch were with us tonight in attendance.
- She reminded employees that John Ayotte with Empower would be in the chambers on Thursday, August 10, to talk to employees about their retirement plans. There will be a presentation at 9am followed by one-on-one appointments. If you would like to sign up for an appointment, please contact her.

- Ms. Dionne reminded Mr. Jacobson that it was his turn to be the borough rep for the city.
- Since the Council consented to start the job search for a new HR/Deputy Clerk she asked the Council to pick the dates to interview for the City Clerk and HR/Deputy City Clerk positions. It was decided on September 12 & 13. Ms. Dionne let everyone know that the city will provide food for those nights.
- Ms. Dionne gave a training update. Throughout the entire city, there are only 2 people that have not completed them.

ON GOING PROJECTS

None

New Business

- Ordinance 23-10, An Ordinance of the City of North Pole, Alaska to Adjust the Police Department Budget

Ms. Welch *moved* to approve Ordinance 23-10

Seconded by Ms. Clack

On the Ordinance

DISCUSSION

None

PASSED

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Welch

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Keller said that he is trying to figure out what to do with all of the smoke in the air, it is not wintertime yet. He hopes everyone is healthy, getting some cool air and continuing to be safe on the roads. There are lots of motorcycles and ATV's out there still and school is starting up again soon, so please pay attention in those school zones even though some of them are not as marked as they could be. So please watch out for those, as well as school buses, the school buses haven't been out on the road for the last 3 months, so traffic is going to be interesting. For the first couple of weeks. Continue to watch out for your neighbors and watch out for kiddos.
- Ms. Clack asked that everybody be safe and that she would see everyone at the next meeting.
- Mr. Skipps let everyone know that NP High School football starts this week and to come out and cheer them on against Wasilla.
- Ms. Welch gave an update about the Mayor. She said that he is planning on being away in mid-September for his visit to the Mayo clinic. They are hoping to finally get some answers on some of his health issues. Right now, he is home recovering from reoccurring issues brought on by a concussion while back. Tomorrow he is seeing his doctor and having a CT scan to see if something is going on to make the headaches come on so fast. They appreciate the prayers for him. The fair is over, she said she knows that there is always negative stuff about the fair, but she said that the new management is really trying. For the people out there here is what you can do to have a better fair, enter things into the fair, to support

the people that are there, come up with things that you and your children can enter into the fair. She said that she had so much fun working on her fair entries, including one that ended up winning the division grand prize. It was a fair themed mascarpone pig eating the 1st place zucchini and the judges had a fun time eating the hay bales that the pig was sitting on. She said she had fun doing all the things around the animals and wanted to let everyone know that those people who say that the fair is only the midway or the food that there is so much more. She said that when growing up in Denmark a fair was called a word that directly translated means 'animal viewing', the original purpose of the fairs was set up for farmers to show their animals and for housewives to showcase their crafts. As a place to show your wares that you had done all winter, how you put your strawberry jam away to make sure that it is properly secured in your glass jar preserving it the way that you are supposed to, to show your handy crafts and of course all the animals so that you could improve upon the traits of the animal. To get better milking cows, better goats, better pigs, etc. that is what it was originally all about. For you to show off what you had done with your farming side or your housewife side or handy man type stuff. Ms. Welch said if we want a better fair we need to take us back to basics. If you do knitting or you do quilting or whatever enter it into the fair, it doesn't cost anything. She said that she doesn't know what she is going to get out of it, you get a certain amount of money for every first place, but she had fun with it and enjoyed it. She said that she also got to do the bake off and that was fun.

- Mr. Jacobson thanked Ms. Welch for the world history lesson. He said that he is appreciative of the fact that she entered things into the fair, that is the kind of fun part of the fair for families and young people and old alike to share their talents and their crafts. He wanted to thank the Public Works department for the great job of resurfacing and the new striping for the parking spaces in the parking lot. He asked the Council to help as many people as they can understand the 2 ballot propositions for the city to continue functioning with a water system that will continue to provide clean drinking water and for the PFAS to make sure that we have identified and have the ability to clean up any of that contamination. So when explaining make sure that they understand that yes is critical for our city. The total compensation committee met at the end of July, the Clerk sent out the notes from that meeting and the department heads are tasked with putting their wish list together for how they would like their department staffed and any changes in pay or stuff like that for the next meeting. The purpose is to put together all of these ideas and synthesizing it. After the 3 meetings we will make a decision if we need to continue on or present what we have to the Council so we can roll that over into the budget discussions. We have the month of October in which we have our budget work sessions for the introduction of the 2024 budget in November to make our deadline for the 3 meetings before the budget is adopted by the end of the year. He said it is going to be a busy fall. He also asked that we keep Mayor Welch in our prayers, he has gone through a lot of health challenges this past year. He did share that he went to temple on Friday and put the Mayors name on the pray row.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Welch *moved* to adjourn.

Seconded *by* Ms. Clack

The regular meeting of Monday, August 7, 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, August 7, 2023.

ATTEST:

Melissa Dionne, City Clerk