



**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, September 6, 2016 in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 125 Snowman Lane, North Pole, Alaska.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Ward called the regular City Council meeting of Tuesday, September 6, 2016 to order at 7:02 p.m.

*There were present:*

- Mr. McCarthy – Mayor Pro Tem**
- Mr. Smith – Deputy Mayor Pro Tem**
- Ms. Holm – Alt. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem**
- Ms. Dawson**
- Mr. McGhee**
- Mr. Claus**
- Mayor Ward**

*Absent/Excused*

- Excused**
- Excused**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG**

Led by Mayor Ward

**INVOCATION**

Invocation was given by Councilman McGhee

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. McGhee moved to Approve the Agenda of September 6, 2016**

**Seconded by Mr. McCarthy**

**Discussion**

None

Mr. McGhee moved to consent items:

**Old Business.**

- a. Ordinance 16-17, an ordinance of the North Pole City Council amending Title 2.36.470 Personnel Code, adding over hire.
- b. Ordinance 16-18, an ordinance amending Title 2, Personnel Code, Chapter 2.36.470 Pay, Section F. Professional Development

**12. New Business**

- b. Ordinance 16-19, an ordinance of the North Pole City Council Repealing Chapter 4.18, 4.20, and 4.22.
- c. Ordinance 16-20, an ordinance of the North Pole City Council adding Section 4.19, Property Disposal.
- d. Ordinance 16-21, an ordinance of the North Pole City Council amending Title 2, Chapter 2.36, Section 2.36.220, Travel and Host Reimbursements.

**Seconded by Mr. McCarthy**

*On the amendment*

**PASSED**

Yes: 5 –Smith, McGhee, Claus, McCarthy, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Holm, Dawson

*On the main motion as amended*

**PASSED**

Yes: 5 –Smith, McGhee, Claus, McCarthy, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Holm, Dawson

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. Smith moved to Approve the Minutes of August 15, 2016**

**Seconded by Mr. Claus**

**Discussion**

None

**PASSED**

Yes: 5 –Smith, McGhee, Claus, McCarthy, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Holm, Dawson

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

The next muffins will be cancelled as I will be out of town moose hunting. I will be out of the office from September 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>. I may be back in time for the council meeting. Our Mayor Pro-Temp may need to run the meeting.

I am proud to announce that the City of North Pole has a new Fire Chief. Geoff Coon was promoted from within the Department to the Position of Fire Chief and I am excited to work with Chief Coon to build a better City and Department.

The three local mayors will march from North Pole City Hall to The Door in Fairbanks (14miles) on September 10<sup>th</sup> to bring awareness to the community about the homeless youth issue we have in the interior. Each mayor has a fundraising page. Please help bring awareness and donate! All proceeds will go to The Door. The public is welcome to join us.

Mayor Wards Page is <http://www.fyaohn.myevent.com/participant/378307> Thank you to all of the sponsors who have helped raise funds for our homeless youth.

I was able to speak at the Fairbanks Rotary last week and give them a state of the City, It was a great opportunity to speak to our Rotarians and hear what they are doing for the community.

We had the Streetlight Standardization meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August and are still receiving some of the responses back. The breakdown of the responses will be published and the council will be informed of the results. We are taking responses till the end of the week.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR**

- None

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS, BOROUGH REPRESENTATIVE AND THE CITY CLERK**

#### **Police Department, Chief Dutra**

- Emergency Vehicle Operation Course was last week. Fifty officers in the Interior attended the course.
- Working with NPHS on active shooter course.
- Officer Milne was unable to attend the IRS training in Florida due to the hurricane.
- He will give the statistics report during budget time.
- Attended the skateboard park opening. Bill Butler deserves kudo's for his efforts. It's about time to clean up that park. Hats off to the Public Works department.
- Has signed up for "Guys Read".
- Great training has been going on for 9 years. The department believes that it makes a difference with the students.

- The pavilion has been erected at the Memorial Park. Tin should be on the roof before September 15<sup>th</sup>. Flag poles have been ordered. Span Alaska has been very helpful with the shipping. The list of people who have contributed to this park is phenomenal.
- The 354<sup>th</sup> fighter wing was out cleaning up all the dead trees in the islands.

**Fire Dept., Deputy Chief Coon**

- None

**Finance, Tricia Fogarty**

- None

**Director of City Services, Bill Butler**

- **Building Department**
- All permits issued for Santa Claus House warehouse addition.
- Exploring a Community Development Block Grant opportunity with the Santa's Senior Center. Goal is to renovate the existing building. Letter from President of Santa's Senior, Goldie Southwood, in support of the idea is attached.
- Awards of up to \$850,000 possible. To be competitive need at least a 25% match. Concept is, with City Council approval, to donate the existing land and building to the Santa's Senior Center conditionally only upon receipt of a grant. Intending to introduce a resolution in support of this project at the September 19
- Council meeting that authorizes conditional donation of city property to Santa's Senior Center upon receipt grant.
- (\*See attached letter from Santa's Senior Center.)

**Public Works**

- Skateboard & BMX Competition held on September 3 at the Skateboard Park.
- Welcome to North Pole signs delivered and hope to install them later this week at base of exit ramps at Badger Road & Santa Claus Lane.
- Took delivery of wood chipper on September 2.
- One of our summer hires has returned to college, down to two summer hires.

**Utility Department**

- Lift Station Phase 3.
- Work continues at all five sites.
- Expect to begin the final major phase of the work—electronic controls—beginning no later than the end of September.
- Emergency generators: Received final submissions too late to include recommendation for this Council meeting, but will make a recommendation at September 19 meeting.

- Later this month will begin the effort to bring local restaurants compliant with the Fats, Oil & Grease (FOG) requirements in City Code
- It will be an approximately year-long campaign that includes mailings, workshops and consultations.
- Goal is to reduce threats of sewer backups, reduce maintenance costs and reduce treatment costs

#### **Natural Gas Utility Board**

- No IGU board meeting since North Pole's last Council meeting so I have no new official report to make.

#### **Borough Representative**

At the last Assembly meeting I was able to share with the public about the skate park success and the event we held this last weekend as well as other North Pole events.

The assembly amended the Borough Code with Ordinance 2016-47 to allow the wavier of certain animal impound fees after a local disabled resident had their service animal stolen and it was later found at the animal shelter. Prior code would not allow the fee to be waived even though it was not the owners fault someone broke into their vehicle. Mayor Kassel and assembly woman Diane Hutchison paid the fee for the resident.

The assembly weighed in with Resolution 2016-39 on the contentious issue of trapping bears, wolves and wolverines adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve. This issue drew a big crowd and ultimately the assembly passed this resolution.

Coming up at the next Assembly meeting is Ordinance 2016-20-1F, an Ordinance amending the FY 2016-17 budget by appropriating \$372,474 in federal grant funding to develop a borough-wide Growth Management Plan related to the F-35 basing at Eielson AFB.

#### **City Clerk's Office, Kathy Weber**

- Sample ballots are on the website and we should have absentee ballots by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Municipal Election for the City of North Pole will be held Tuesday, October 4, 2016. The following seats are open:

#### **CITY OF NORTH POLE COUNCIL SEATS**

(All offices serve at-large)

2 City Council Seats.....3-year terms

1 City Council Seat.....2-year Term

Elyse Dawson gave her letter of resignation at the last council meeting. She will not be in attendance tonight as she has a sick child.

- Candidates for City Council are:

**DeJohn Cromer**  
815 Marquette Loop  
North Pole, AK 99705  
P: 907-347-2808  
Email: [jejohnc@gmail.com](mailto:jejohnc@gmail.com)

**Avery Thompson**  
135 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave  
North Pole, AK 99705  
P: 907-388-5351  
Email: [ThompsonAvery@msn.com](mailto:ThompsonAvery@msn.com)

**Doug Isaacson**  
1003 Shirley Turnaround  
North Pole, A 99705  
P: 907-322-3133  
Email: [douglas.isaacson@gmail.com](mailto:douglas.isaacson@gmail.com)

**David Skipps**  
2729 Perimeter Dr.  
North Pole, AK 99705  
P: 907-750-5106  
Email: [DavidSkipps@yahoo.com](mailto:DavidSkipps@yahoo.com)

The seats will go to the top three vote getters by the number of votes received.

- The City hired 3 new positions last month. The new Fire Chief is Geoff Coon, Utility Billing Clerk/AR is Jamie Duncan, and Records Manager/Archivist is Sally Terch. Sally is also doing the social media, helping with the website, doing the newsletter and working with attorney Zane Wilson organizing information and inputting info from FHR, Williams AK, and State of Alaska.
- The Alaska Municipal League Annual Local Government Conference is November 16 – 18<sup>th</sup>. If any council members are interested in attending please let me know and I will sign you up for the conference, hotel, and book airfare for you. The sooner we know the better the rooms and flights are.
- Next meeting is Monday, September 19, 2016.
- 110 days until Christmas.

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- None

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Goldie Southwood, President of Santa's Senior Center

They are very interested in getting the block grant for the failing infrastructure of the senior center. She wanted the council to know how important this is for the Center.

Jeff Stepp, FNSB Special Assistant to the Mayor and Economic Development Coordinator

Mayor Kassel asked him to come out and to identify areas to build synergies and bridges to fill in gaps between the borough and City of North Pole and economic development strategy. The FNSB has received a grant for \$350,000 to implement a growth management plan in regards to EAFB F-35's. For more information email Mr. Stepp at [JStepp@fnsb.us](mailto:JStepp@fnsb.us).

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**REQUEST FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR EMILY GIBSON IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,288.**

On August 1, 2016 Officer Gibson gave me her tuition reimbursement. I left on August 3<sup>rd</sup> for vacation. I took the request and set it on my desk until I returned to work on August 15<sup>th</sup>.

When I actually looked at the tuition reimbursement then looked at the City Code 2.36.231, that was passed in February of 2016, my heart skipped a few beats. I realized the system, specifically me, had failed to complete the "LETTER" of the code and that this failure may well cost one of my employees a lot of money.

The employee submitted their tuition request with plenty of time to allow me to get it in front of the council and hopefully garner an approval before the courses started.

What I failed to realize, at the time I initially was handed the request, was the dates of the class relative to the council meetings and my vacation. To no fault of the employee I did not do my part. The "system" failed.

I know the intent of this ordinance was to give the council members the ability to approve courses "prior" to enrollment. It appears from this unforeseeable set of circumstances that we may not have considered all the variables.

\$1848.00 is what Emily Gibson is asking for but I am only authorizing \$1288.00 of that amount. Thank you for your time.

Chief Dutra explained why these courses are needed for her degree. He asked that they approve and reimburse Det. Gibson.

Mr. McGhee said that they have had many discussions about this issue. He said that Chief Dutra has argued that an employee who wanted to go to school wouldn't have enough time to put this forward for reimbursement. Mr. McGhee asked if he recalled those meetings.

Mr. Claus asked if the departments work goes to court or an attorney, if they rely on the experience of a Detective if they have an accounting background, if there is a financial crime that is committed.

Chief Dutra stated that they definitely do.

Mr. McCarthy asked if there is a specific date as to when this needs to be approved.

Smith stated that classes aren't always offered and has come in to play. He said it's hard to get this paperwork turned in. He asked how we can not let this employee fail. wanted to know how we can not let this officer fail.

Mayor Ward asked if this does or does not violate the code if council approves this.

Chief Dutra stated that it did.

Mr. Smith asked if this was because of the timeline.

### **Public Comment**

None

**Mr. McGhee moved to approve tuition reimbursement for Emily Gibson in the amount of \$1,288.**

**Seconded by Mr. McCarthy**

### **Discussion**

Mr. McGhee said that the on NPMC 2.36.231, that he was a staunch supporter of it. He said it was never the council's intent to deny an employee from bettering themselves. In the past employees were coming before council after the class had been taken, requesting reimbursement. Mr. McGhee said that he will bring this forward in future meetings. The employee did their job and the department head dropped the ball due to their schedule and work load.

Mr. McCarthy said the intent was to get the council front loaded and that a person was going to school and get reimbursement. He felt that council is reading this portion of the code wrong. Most places in the industry you would do this after the class was taken. The intent was just letting council know they were going to school.

Mr. Claus said he agreed that this should be approved.

Mr. Smith stated that this is like the step increases for the fire department and that it pays off.

Mayor Ward said that he disagrees with this language in the code and is in support of the police department and Ms. Gibson. The code states that this needs to have prior approval. He remembers the discussion with council and council wanted to make sure that employees came before them first. If the code needs to be changed then we should change it. By approving this would be a violation of the code.

Mr. McCarthy said this was something that they ran into with the Planning Commission. He felt this situation has the wrong choice of words and that it wouldn't be a violation of the code and we should not use this officer as an example.

Mr. McCarthy called the question.

Mr. Smith disagreed.

Mr. Smith asked if they could change the code and then bring it back.

Mr. Claus stated that when this is revised that it may come back before council.

**Mr. McGhee *moved to postpone the reimbursement for Officer Gibson this until the meeting of Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.***

**Seconded by Mr. Claus**

**Discussion**

Mr. McGhee wanted to look at the verbiage and bring it back. He said they took an oath to uphold the code. They have come up with a solution and bring this matter back.

On postponing until October 17, 2016

**PASSED**

Yes: 5 –Smith, McGhee, Claus, McCarthy, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Holm, Dawson

**Mr. McGhee *moved to Suspend rules for a 3 minute break***

**Seconded by Mr. Claus**

**Executive Session –**

Mr. McGhee *moved to recess into executive session to discuss status of litigation and any action*

that needs to be taken.

**Seconded by Mr. Claus**

Mayor Ward called the meeting back into session at 9:18 p.m.

**Mr. McGhee moved to approve the Mayor to resolve the City of North Pole and Flint Hills litigation on the grounds discussed in executive session and to authorize the Mayor to sign all documents resolving the litigation between the City of North Pole and the Flint Hills defendants.**

**Seconded by Mr. McCarthy**

**PASSED**

Yes: 5 –Smith, McGhee, Claus, McCarthy, Ward

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Holm, Dawson

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. McGhee moved to Adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m.**

**Seconded by Mr. Claus**

The regular meeting of Tuesday, September 6, 2016 adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

**These minutes passed and approved** by a duly constituted quorum of the North Pole City Council on Monday, September 19, 2016.

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Bryce J. Ward, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Kathryn M. Weber, MMC  
North Pole City Clerk