

**MINUTES
NOME CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
January 12, 2009**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome City Council was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Mayor Denise Michels in the City Council Chambers of Nome City Hall located at 102 Division St.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Stan Andersen, Jerald Brown, Neal Foster, Mary Knodel, Jon Larson, telephonically; Randy Pomeranz

Members Absent:

Also Present: City Manager, Josie Bahnke; City Clerk, Sandy Babcock;

In the audience: Donald Handeland, GCI; John Handeland, Utility Manager, Janeen Sullivan, Mitch Erickson, Jon Wehde, Rick Luthi, Tyler Rhodes, Nome Nugget Newspaper;

INVOCATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 22, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by C. Knodel and seconded by C. Brown to approve the minutes.

At the roll call:

Ayes: Foster, Knodel, Larson, Pomeranz Andersen

Nays:

Abstain: Brown

The motion CARRIED.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Michels reported that the various communications were available in their packets, online and at the Clerks office and asked if there were any questions.

CITIZENS REQUESTS AND GRIEVANCES

Janeen Sullivan, Principal at Nome Beltz JR/SR High School, stated she came to invite the Council and Public to a program that is happening Wednesday night. They are having an assembly for a program called Rachel's Challenge. She stated that this assembly is happening at a number of other schools and it is a part of schools improvement plan. She stated that they are hoping to improve the schools climate. She reported that they have really good kids in Nome but when they looked at the statistics between August and the beginning of December they had 50 different suspensions for fighting, bullying, harassment, intimidation and these types of things. Rachel's challenge has found to be an effective way to change a schools climate. Rachel Scott was the first person killed in the Columbine High School Tragedy in 1999 and Ms. Sullivan reported that their current 7th graders were only four years old when it happened so they do not have remembrances of this event like others do. Rachel Scott left journals behind talking about starting chain reactions with small acts of kindness and being able to change the world you live in and school communities are finding it very effective in doing just that. She stated that they are very hopeful and excited about bringing this to Nome and would like to welcome everyone to join them Wednesday night at 7 – 8:00pm at the Elementary School.

Mitch Erickson reported that he is wearing many hats tonight;

Chamber of Commerce - Wednesday night the Chamber of Commerce is holding a solar, thermal hot water seminar at Old St. Joe's. He stated that factory representatives with Carbon Smart will be in town and on Thursday they will be holding a training session to certify technicians in the design and installation of solar panels. He reported that the seminar and training are free.

Nome Convention & Visitors Center Report – Mr. Erickson handed out a report and mentioned the following; they are painting the inside of the building; the slides are being digitalized and there will be access by visitors to the slides shown on a big screen TV and DVD player; they offer access to the internet for guests and have a portable computer that can be used. He stated they are trying to make it a good spot to come for information. Once they get the building painted he would like to invite the Council for lunch sometime to show them what they have.

Fuel Surcharge idea- Mr. Erickson stated that tomorrow he will be meeting with Mr. Luthi and the finance officer to look at the fuel surcharge idea hoping to draft something for the legislature this year which might get some money reimbursed back to the schools.

Nome Youth Hockey – Mr. Erickson stated that the skating rink is mostly self-funded except for lights and things that he thanked the City for providing, but they have an item that is getting stolen now. They have Plex dasher boards that they put on a year or two ago that are being removed now. Mr. Erickson stated that this is a yellow plastic strip about 10 feet long that runs along the edge of the rink to protect it. He speculated that people might be using them around the rims of crab pots but it is frustrating.

Mayor Michels stated that the word should be put out to return them to the hockey organization if they are found. C. Knodel suggested the police patrol at the rink more frequently.

C. Andersen asked what the process is with the solar project and if the costs have come down. Mr. Erickson stated that they are a series of solar panels designed to heat water. The idea is that with a string of these the temperature gets up and it turns on a pump and circulates the water into a storage tank. They are hoping solar energy is being collected from February to September/October. He stated that the cost is based on \$4.99 for heating fuel and he does not know what costs were in the past. He stated he would like to see President-Elect Obama give a tax rebate back to people for installing them. They are hoping a payback on a system like this with maybe a \$10 to \$15,000 install could be a year and a half but they don't know.

Rich Luthi, Superintendent of Nome Public Schools, stated that he wanted to recognize all that Janeen Sullivan has been doing and he hopes the community gets an opportunity to begin to understand Rachel's Challenge. He stated the Janeen, Doug and the staff are constantly looking for ways to help make it a positive culture at school and this is a tremendous step and it wouldn't be happening without Janeen Sullivan's leadership.

Mr. Luthi reported that he and Mr. Wehde have been working with Bering Strait School District. In February they will travel to Teller and have a joint board meeting which they have learned is the first time it has ever happened. They are looking for ways to combine resources, have in-services together, some joint purchases of supplies and maybe even the sharing of some staff.

Mr. Luthi related that they are in the beginning process of formulating their FY2010 budget and they met with City Manager Bahnke the other day to let her know where they are going and what they are thinking. He stated he will keep the Council posted on any information they want to hear during this process. He stated that he will be taking a timeline to the School Board meeting tomorrow night and they want the process to be a very public process. He stated that they are looking at a reduction in student numbers and that will precipitate what the financial picture will be.

Mr. Luthi informed the Council that they received a letter from the Nome Education Association this week and they requested that the negotiations be open. He stated that they will be moving forward on

this. He stated that the year is half over now. Folks are working hard and they have a positive atmosphere.

Mayor Michels stated that she had a follow up based on Mitch Erickson's comments about the fuel surcharge idea. She stated that she did bring this up with the AML and they requested that Mr. Carl Rose attend their board meeting that they will be having at the end of January in Juneau and bring information to the AML to see if they can work together. She requested they provide to the AML the cost and percentages of increases of fuel over the past couple of years and how it affected their budgets. She stated that the AML is following up on the request and looks forward to receiving the information.

PLANNING AND ZONING

SPECIAL ORDERS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. O-08-10-01 An Ordinance of the City of Nome, Alaska Amending Ordinance No. O-85-1-1; Authorizing a Second Amendment to Tripartite Agreement Among the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Municipal Bond Bank and the City; and Authorizing the City to Issue its Port Revenue Refunding Bond 2008A, in the Principal Amount of Not to Exceed \$5,000,000 to Refund the City's Port Revenue Bond, 1986 Series A; Fixing Certain Details of Such Bond; and Providing for Related Matters.
~Second Reading, Public Hearing and Final Passage

City Attorney Brooks reported that NOAA is still reviewing language proposed by the Bond Bank and it is his recommendation for a motion to postpone O-08-10-01 to the January 26th, 2009 NCC meeting.

A motion was made by C. Knodel and seconded by C. Andersen to postpone O-08-10-01 until the January 26, 2009 Regular City Council Meeting.

At the roll call:

Ayes: Foster, Knodel, Larson, Pomeranz, Andersen, Brown
Nays:

The motion CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

- A. O-09-01-01 An Ordinance Amending the City of Nome FY 2009 General Fund Municipal Budget
~First Reading
- B. O-09-01-02 An Ordinance Amending the City of Nome FY 2009 Capital Projects Fund Budget
~First Reading
- C. O-09-01-03 An Ordinance Amending the City of Nome FY 2009 Special Revenue Fund Budget
~First Reading
- D. O-09-01-04 An Ordinance Amending the City of Nome FY 2009 Port of Nome Fund Budget
~First Reading
- E. O-09-01-05 An Ordinance Amending the City of Nome FY 2009 Construction Capital Projects Fund Budget
~First Reading

Hearing no objection Mayor Michels asked the Clerk to read O-09-01-01, O-09-01-02, O-09-01-03, O-09-01-04, and O-09-01-05.

A motion was made by C. Pomeranz and seconded by C. Andersen to pass O-09-01-01, O-09-01-02, O-09-01-03, O-09-01-04 and O-09-01-05 on to second reading, public hearing and final passage

At the roll call:

Ayes: Knodel, Larson, Pomeranz, Andersen, Brown, Foster
Nays:

The motion CARRIED

- F. R-09-01-01 A Resolution Approving a Contract Between the City of Nome, Alaska and Chief Dallas Massie for the Provision of Interim Police Chief Services

A motion was made by C. Andersen and seconded by C. Foster to approve R-09-01-01.

Discussion

City Manager Bahnke stated that Mr. Massie is willing to begin his employment with the City on January 19th and it is a six month contract unless a permanent Chief of Police is found before this. The contract is for \$6,500 a month with no overtime compensation, PERS or insurance. The contract includes the apartment at Belmont.

C. Larson stated that on page 84 of the packet or page 2 of the Employment Agreement there is a provision regarding moving expenses and it looks like it is open ended. At the risk of being called a nit-picker he stated he would like to suggest putting a cap on the moving expense provision.

City Manager Bahnke stated that they did speak with the City Attorney and State law requires that a return ticket is provided and the contract is in line with other contracts with previous City Managers as well. C. Larson responded that it looks like the contract reads that a return ticket is provided and his actual moving expenses. He cautioned that a car could be flown up as actual moving expenses.

After a discussion concerning amounts the Council suggested that the City Manager work out the details of the contract and change the moving expense allowance to be an amount up to \$1,000 plus the airfare to and from Nome.

At the roll call:

Ayes: Foster, Knodel, Larson, Pomeranz, Andersen, Brown
Nays:

The motion CARRIED

- G. Facility Reservation Fee/Waiver – NRC
~Tae Kwon Do demonstration – January 10, 2009
- H. Facility Reservation Fee/Waiver – Mini Convention Center
~Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race Committee, March 14 -28, 2009
- I. Facility Reservation Fee/Waiver – Mini Convention Center
~Kawerak Regional Conference, February 23 – 27, 2009

J. Facility Reservation Fee/Waiver – Old St. Joe's
~American Red Cross of Alaska – February 4, 2009

A motion was made by C. Andersen and seconded by C. Knodel to approve the four fee waiver requests presented.

At the roll call:

Ayes: Knodel, Larson, Pomeranz, Andersen, Brown, Foster
Nays:

The motion CARRIED

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

UTILITY MANAGER REPORT

Utility Manager Handeland reported the following:

- They are working on year end closure and the Utility Board will act on the budget at the next meeting.
- Met with the City Manager on several different issues.
- Met with the City Assessors this weekend on some insurance and valuation of facilities updating.
- Had some discussions with the school on fuel costs. Some names turn up again and again and he had a message from Amy Lujan who is working with the Alaska Association of School Business Organizations and she is also working on a proposal with the Alaska Power Association.
- Next week engineers will be in town working on some of the water and sewer plans for the upcoming year so they can finalize those and get in some additional grant applications and present a plan to the community.

C. Andersen asked about the sewer and water plans. Utility Manager Handeland stated they have some money and are still looking for some Federal dollars from USDA but they will be working on 6th & 7th Avenue, updates to the pump house behind the recreation center as well as a segment of the Moonlight Springs line.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Bahnke handed out a written report and commented on the following;

- Would like to encourage the Council and the Public to visit the library. A framed 49-star flag was donated by State Representative John Coghill and the State Library as a way to celebrate and instill community pride in Alaska's 50 years in statehood.
- In an effort to get a share of the proposed federal economic recovery package, NJUS Manager and I submitted six projects to U.S. Senator Mark Begich. The projects total approximately \$170 million with \$150 million for the new Norton Sound Regional Hospital. Originally Senator Begich had requested these projects as place holders or as a way for communities to prioritize however through President-Elect Obama and members of our State Delegation it has now evolved as no earmarks and the formula they are going to use is through granting agencies and various departments.
- At the direction of the Council to seek additional Federal Lobbying services, she and Utility Manager Handeland met with City lobbyist Larry and Wendy and their advice was to wait and

see what departments get the funding. They have been in touch with various folks in the Governors office, Washington D.C. and with our Delegation staff.

- The Legislature will convene on January 20, 2009 and they are working on finalizing the City's State Legislative Priority Package and once these are complete, Mayor Michels, Utility Manager Handeland and I will travel to Juneau on January 27, 2009 and will be meeting with Legislators.
- Traveling to Washington D.C. on February 23, 2009 to meet with the Alaska Congressional Delegation and hopefully by then will have some idea of the process and meet with the appropriate agencies.
- Have begun advertising for a permanent Chief of Police position and are looking at contacting previous members of the selection committee and will get the group together to do selection and interviewing once the selection committee is approved by the Council.
- City Hall will be open on Martin Luther King Day,
- January 20, 2009 meeting with USCG; VADM Pekoske, RADM Brooks, RADM Sullivan along with USACE and State DOT Re: Port of Nome and Transportation Planning
- Need to set up a date for the work session on the animal control ordinance. (Council decided Monday, January 19, at noon for the work session)
- At the request of the Council there will be a Public Safety Building Presentation by Randy Romenesko at the next Council meeting on January 26, 2009.
- Would like to recognize Controller Cussy Kauer and thank her for her valuable service. She has been an employee of the City of Nome for 35 years, as of January 2, 2009 and hope she stays a couple more.

C. Andersen requested that a copy of the revised budget get distributed to the Council and public before the Public Safety Building presentation so they will be able to ask some questions and know what is going on.

C. Andersen asked if there have been many bites on the Public Works Director position. City Manager Bahnke stated that they have received 5 applications and she and Utility Manager Handeland conducted one interview last Friday. C. Andersen asked about the process and who will be doing the interviewing. City Manager Bahnke stated there were a couple of interviews scheduled this week and she invited a Council member to be included. C. Knodel stated that this position answers to the City Manager not to the Council.

C. Andersen asked the City Manager her thoughts on replacing the Harbormaster. City Manager Bahnke stated that she has been in contact working with the Acting Harbormaster, Joy Baker. She stated that Joy has expressed interest in returning for the 2009 shipping season. She stated they will advertise the position. C. Andersen asked why since it didn't have much interest the last two times they advertised it.

C. Andersen asked if their two paid lobbyists are suggesting that they can handle it and run to D.C. and get it done. City Manager Bahnke explained that their thoughts were that between the City of Nome, Utilities and the two of them that they have the manpower to address whatever might come out of it. C. Andersen asked if they could find out through the AML or the Managers association what others are doing because he doesn't want to be the only one sitting at home.

C. Knodel asked if there needs to be as much lobby now especially since it is going into the different departments instead of earmarks.

C. Andersen responded that they might call it a different name but it will still be the same. It is still money being appropriated.

COUNCILMEN COMMENTS

C. Brown had no comments.

C. Foster had no comments.

C Knodel had no comments.

C. Larson had no comments.

C. Pomeranz stated he wanted to thank the people that put on the fireworks display and it was a great show again this year. The other folks that did the 8 stars on the flags was a great show also. He hoped everyone got out to see it.

C. Andersen asked how the Police Department is doing without a Chief. City Manager Bahnke stated that she has talked with Acting Chief Redburn and she believes things are going fine. C. Andersen did not realize an Acting Chief was appointed. City Manager Bahnke stated that she appointed Acting Chief Redburn on December 28th.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT

Mayor Michels reported the following;

- Thanked the City Manager and Utility Manager for getting the Federal priorities out by 5:00 P.M.
- Coordinating with the Coast Guard, DOT and the Corps for Admiral Brooks visit. The Council is encouraged and invited to attend. The meeting will be in the Chambers at 1:00 -2:30 P.M. on January 20, 2009.
- Drafted a letter to the Attorney General, Talis Colberg, Chair of the Alaska Rural Action Subcabinet, and sent the Council a copy to see if it was agreeable to invite them to Nome and host a community meeting and offer the use of Old St. Joe's or they could come up when Kawerak has their regional conference.
- Received a notice that the DOT is soliciting public comments on the draft project scoring criteria and project nominations for the 2010 – 2013 STIP so I will bring some projects to you like I did in 2003-2004.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

~Personnel Matters – Interim Chief of Police (no longer needed)

~Legal & Financial – Alaska Gold Company

~APEA Labor Contract Negotiations

A motion was made by C. Andersen and seconded by C. Foster to enter into executive session. The Council recessed from regular meeting at 8:12 P.M.


The Council reconvened the regular meeting at 9:09 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by C. Foster and seconded by C. Andersen that the meeting be adjourned.


Hearing no objections the Nome City Council adjourned at 9:09 P.M.

SIGNED AND DATED the 26th day of January 2009.



DENISE MICHELS, Mayor

ATTEST:



SANDY STURGIS-BABCOCK, City Clerk/Treasurer