

**Mayor**  
John K. Handeland

**Manager**  
Glenn Steckman

**City Clerk**  
Dan Grimmer



**Nome Common Council**  
Scot Henderson  
Mark Johnson  
Adam Martinson  
Maggie Miller  
Cameron Piscoya  
M. Sigvanna Tapqaq

**NOME COMMON COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS IN CITY HALL**

102 Division St. ▪ P.O. Box 281 ▪ Nome, Alaska 99762 ▪ Phone (907) 443-6663 ▪ Fax (907) 443-5345

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**WORK SESSION**

- A. Discussion of Nome Operated Ambulance Service or Norton Sound Operated Ambulance Service

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Scot Henderson; Mark Johnson; Cameron Piscoya; Meghan Sigvanna Tapqaq (virtual); Maggie Miller

Members Absent: Adam Martinson (excused)

Also Present: John K. Handeland, Mayor; Glenn Steckman, City Manager; Jeremy Jacobson, Deputy City Clerk; Nickie Crowe, Finance Director; Ken Morton, NJUS Assistant Manager; Will Crocket, Acting NPD Chief; Cole Cushman, Public Works Supervisor; Rose Reale, ES Tech

In the audience: Mark Peterson, Kirsten Timbers, Dianna Haecker, Nome Nugget Newspaper; Rose Reale, Danielle Slingsby, Elliot W, Ken Hughes, Adam Lust, Mike Owens, Paul Kosto, C. Fagerstrom (work session only)

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by C. Henderson and seconded by C. Piscoya to approve the agenda as presented.

At the roll call:

Aye: C. Johnson; C. Piscoya; C. Tapqaq; C. Miller; C. Henderson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Memorandum of February 23, 2022 from then-City Clerk Hammond to Nome Common Council re: Taxi Cab Licenses in Nome
- B. Letter of November 20, 2023 from AMCO to Nome Common Council re: Retail Marijuana Store #17077 2023-2024 License Renewal Notice
- C. Henderson asked NPD Chief if there were any issues with renewing the marijuana license.

- NPD Acting Chief Will Crockett stated, there were no issues with renewal from NPD's standpoint.
- C. Letter of November 20, 2023 from AMCO to Nome Common Council re: Retail Marijuana Store #11119 2023-2024 License Renewal Notice
- D. Letter of November 22, 2023 from NSEDC to Mayor Handeland re: 2023 Community Benefit Share
  - Mayor Handeland acknowledged NSEDC's generosity to the City.
  - C. Henderson questioned past year's unspent contributions, roughly \$300,000 listed as unspent in the communication.
    - Manager Steckman noted that the money has been committed but not spent.
- E. Letter of November 28, 2023 from Manager Steckman to Rodney Jones re: Delinquencies
  - C. Johnson posed the question if efforts were made by City staff to contact Mr. Rodney Jones. Also opined since City Sales Tax had been outsourced, the personal connection between City staff and businesses was lost.
  - Manager Steckman confirmed communication efforts had been made with Rodney Jones. A scheduled meeting was planned and Mr. Jones's did stop by recently to make a partial payment.
- F. Letter of November 29, 2023 from Kathleen Patella to Nome Common Council re: City of Nome Warning Siren System Repaired
- G. Letter of November 29, 2023 from Adam Lust to Nome Common Council re: Questions About Proposed Ambulance Service
- H. Memorandum of November 29, 2023 from Special Projects Manager Bryant Hammond to Nome Common Council re: Request for Penalty & Interest Forgiveness
  - Mayor Handeland noted C. Henderson as excused from the vote of Item H under Communication, due to conflicts of interest, prior to the motion being presented.

A motion was made by C. Johnson and seconded by C. Piscoya to forgive the penalty and interest on parcel #192.1.679.

At the motion:

Aye: C. Piscoya; C. Tapqaq; C. Miller; C. Johnson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

- I. Letter of December 6, 2023 from The Geo Group, Inc. to Nome Common Council re: Waiver of Penalties on 2023 Tax Bill

A motion was made by C. Henderson and seconded by C. Johnson to forgive all penalties on Tax Lot #001.242.05.

At the motion:

Aye: C. Piscoya; C. Tapqaq; C. Miller; C. Henderson; C. Johnson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

- J. Letter of December 6, 2023 from Nome Local Emergency Planning Commission Preparedness Sub Committee to Nome Common Council re: Notification Plans for Public Response to Emergencies in Nome
- Manager Steckman identified repair of the City's siren system currently in the first of several phases. First phase, repair downtown siren's operation prior to Iditarod.
  - Mayor Handeland recapped unaddressed points within communication Item J: funding for a new Radio System, draft Emergency Operations Plan, and LEPC's support of an Emergency Services Director.
  - Manager Steckman stated the Radio System bid package is ready to go out. Will be seeking to use the NSEDC funds of \$150,000 to be allocated to cover costs. Estimated cost for Radio System is \$1.2 million.

### **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

- Kim Newsome opined an interest to open a new taxi service in Nome.
- Paul Kosto (LEPC) detailed the reason for issuing a formal letter to the Council. Explained that letters like these can assist in State and Federal grant requests.
- Rodney Jones expressed concerns regarding correspondence with the City of Sales Tax. Stated that he had not been properly informed of payment delays or concerns until recently. Requested a follow-up meeting with Manager as well a Council Member to address concerns.
- Ken Hughes (Nome Winter Sports Recreation) advised updates on the Ice Rink. All the lights are on the pole and base ice is down. Thanked Shane Smithhisler for his assistance. Working on electricity to shed and trailer, hot water heater, and porches for entry and exit.
- Eve Mendenhall described previous work experience as a taxicab driver, currently pursuing a City of Nome Taxicab license.
  - o Mayor Handeland gave thanks to Eve Mendenhall, explained that the city has a limited number of licenses and Council is working with Manager to review the city's taxi needs. Advised that while City of Nome has no jurisdiction for Uber and Lyft, it is important to understand that operating as a taxi cab is prohibited.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. R-23-12-02 A Resolution Designating Charles "Chip" Leeper As Acting City Manager For December 20, 2023 to January 3, 2024.

A motion was made by C. Henderson and seconded by C. Johnson to adopt R-23-12-02.

At the roll call: C. Tapqaq; C. Miller; C. Henderson; C. Johnson; C. Piscoya  
Aye:  
Nay:  
Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

### **UTILITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

A. Activity Report: November 23 - December 8, 2023.

Ken Morton, Assistant NJUS Manager

- Seppala Drive Project loans will be advancing to the DEC with no addition funds needs from the city.
- SKADA Lift Station Project had a lot of progress recently: performance lift pump, (thanks to NSEDC), aeration fixed and providing greater energy efficiency.
- Moonlight Springs Pressurization Project is just about all wrapped up. Full completion in May 2024 due to weather conditions.
- Gave thanks to line crew for addressing Front Street debris due to recent storm.
- Power Plant – aftercooler developed some cracking but was quickly resolved.
- C. Piscoya requested financials reports from NJUS meetings as none are present on the website. Also inquired status update on East 6th Ave.
  - o Assistant Manager Morton advised the package from Anchorage Engineers are about 75% ready for review. Still expected for advertisement this winter for construction in summer 2024.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

A. Activity Report: November 23 - December 8, 2023.

- Manager Steckman gave appreciation to NJUS linecrew for their work during the recent storm and Front Street debris.
- The City is looking to piggyback off Seppala Drive Project in summer 2024 to repair Steadman Park.
- Gave thanks to Winter Sportsman's Association.
- Advised \$5 million allocated to Nome for professional housing developments.
  - o C. Henderson expressed disagreement with the term "lack of public housing" as there are buildings for lease that aren't being utilized by the City of Nome and Nome Public Schools.
- Gave thanks to city staff involved with Christmas Extravaganza, it was a successful event with a big turnout.
- Cab licenses are desired amongst the community, the City may look into opening up licenses.
  - o C. Henderson inquired into the licensing process for taxicab licenses.
- C. Henderson inquired of RFP timeline and status of port project.
  - o Joy Baker advised RFP delays from what was anticipated to be November is now end of January pending final review of the solicitation package.
- C. Henderson request a more detailed budget; at least a quarterly analysis.
  - o Manager Steckman explained Department Heads provide quarterly reports and we also do a Mid-Year Budget revision that is presented to Council. Manager advised he would review with Finance Director Nickie regarding the change request.

- C. Miller inquired if a sidewalk would be implemented as currently the sidewalk does end by Builders. Ken Morton advised that DOT does intend to extend the sidewalk on the southside.
  - C. Johnson inquired into roofing from the Front Street debris and if there was an assessment to ensure no further damage is done. Asked for updates on City Clerk and Chief positions. Also expressed concerns with remote positions within the City. Questioned if there are people operating unauthorized cabs and if the City has enforced ordinances.
    - o Manager Steckman confirmed Building Inspector had been in communication with the building owner regarding the roof debris. That there had only been one additional remote worker added since his arrival here. Confirmed there were vacancies within City Hall, but it is currently being addressed. Manager also established that taxi license are being reviewed internally regarding ordinances but also with the specific residents involved.
- B. December 2023 Monthly Port Projects Update

### **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

- None given.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER'S COMMENTS**

- C. Miller described concerns listed in findings related with close proximity to cell phone tower, particularly its effect on youths.
  - o Manager Steckman noted he would look into the location for additional recommendation. Mayor Handeland noted the City owns multiple properties, and potential other locations.
  - o C. Miller inquired into reduction of flow of barge traffic throughout the Port expansion project. Manager Steckman opined the project's affect in Port traffic throughout the expansion project should be nominal.
  - o C. Miller queried if seating would be added to the ice rink. Manager Steckman confirm the City would be looking into options and optics.
- C. Henderson congratulated everyone involved with setting up the ice rink, supported C. Miller's views on concerns about the cell tower proximity, and inquired on progress of the Cape Nome Jetty Expansion Project. Also gave thanks to everyone involved in ambulance service discussion.
- C. Johnson opined the new ice rink looked great, suggested for consideration a wall built for wind coverage with the ice rink and requested collaboration with the other commissions.
- C. Piscoya opined a great discussion regarding ambulance but expressed financial concerns regarding billing and rates. Also shared excitement for the opening of the ice rink.
- C. Tapqaq thanked C. Miller for bringing up cell tower proximity concerns. Inquired if any other Council Members would be interested in interacting with the youth to advocate for local government.

### **MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND REPORT**

- A. Activity Report: November 23 - December 8, 2023.
- Mayor Handeland opined the Nome Firemen's Carnival was a great turnout, and a lot of happy and smiling faces.
  - The Christmas Extravaganza was very festive. M. Handeland showed appreciation to Cheryl, Angie, Marguerite, Glenn, Santa Dan Ward, and Cole and his team in Public Works.

- Reiterated the \$5 million leftover COVID funds that will go away by 09.30.2025 if not spent. Anticipate using these funds for professional housing development in Nome.
- Noted financial information with the Ambulance was eagerly anticipated ahead of next work-session.
- Thanked the Search and Rescue team for their current efforts in looking for the two lost residents.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

- A. Discussion of Legal, Contractual and Personnel Matters the Immediate Knowledge of Which Could Have Adverse Effects on City of Nome Finances

A motion was made by C. Johnson and seconded by C. Piscoya to enter into Executive Session to discuss Legal, Contractual and Personnel Matters the Immediate Knowledge of Which Could Have Adverse Effects on City of Nome Finances.

The Council entered executive session at 9:11PM.  
The Council came out of executive session 10:39PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 10:40PM.

**APPROVED** and **SIGNED** this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2024.

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**JOHN K. HANDELAND**  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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**DAN GRIMMER**  
City Clerk