

TO: The Mayor and Common Council

FROM: Glenn Steckman

RE: City Manager's report

February 23, 2024

Nugget Inn:

City staff is assisting the owners of the inn as they seek to get the State Fire Marshal approval to reopen. The owners hope open on a phased basis to start producing revenue. Further improvements are planned for the summer when supplies are to be delivered by barge.

Commercial property inspections:

There have been a number of questions concerning the city's involvement with commercial building inspections. First, Cliff McHenry is not a commercial building inspector. He works with the State's Fire Marshal's Office as their eyes on the ground here in Nome. Second, he can only issue a commercial CO with the approval of the Fire Marshal's Office. Plans are accepted by the Building Inspector's Office but the plans are reviewed by the Fire Marshall's Office.

In the next round of quarterly reports from department heads, Cliff will outline how the process works.

City Clerk:

I am requesting approval to hire Dan Grimmer to be the new city clerk. Dan and his family reside in Nome. He worked for Norton Sound Hospital in the Behavioral Health Center and had fifteen years of senior administrative experience with them. He will bring strong process skills to the position. And, more importantly, strong customer service skills.

Communications System:

The bid for a new radio system came in at \$1,062,000. The price was within the parameters that our third-party designer, Federal Engineering, estimated. Because of the complexity of the project and the bid proposal, I am asking Federal Engineering to review the proposal to see if it meets Federal Engineering's specifications.

NVFD Garage Doors:

I am asking that the council approve the higher of two bids by Bliss Construction. The higher priced option allows for a faster opening of the garage doors to allow for a quicker response time. The price difference is \$2,636.00, The bid came in below the estimate of \$60,000.

Emergency Siren:

The replacement for fire damaged siren at the public works building will start February 28-March 4. However, the siren is being relocated to the snow dump off Greg Kruschek Ave. to provide better coverage for Nome. The damaged siren was forty years old.

City staff with assistance from the NVFD will review the other locations of the other sirens to see what improvements need to be done. The city received a \$10,000 to assist with this process of updating our siren system.

ADA and Security Improvements for Nome Schools:

The sole proposal by Bliss Construction came in at \$773,673.00. The estimated price was \$320,000. The staff recommends not approving it.

Port Tariffs':

The Port Commission is requesting approval of the tariff language change. I am requesting a special meeting on March 4 for second reading and hopefully approval.

Mark Synnott Request;

Mr. Synnott's request for personal property tax relief should be denied because he failed to follow process and it's too late to request relief according to solicitor Charles Cacciola. He was also operating his 47' boat for business purposes according to a Google search.

The Swimming Pool:

The pool is heated and properly operating. However, the three factory reps could not coordinate their meeting to approve and warranty the system at the end of February. Mr. Walker is working to get the reps to Nome after Iditarod but before the end of March. Mr. Leeper is communicating with the swim team families.

Comprehensive Plan update:

The city grant writer is submitting a funding request to the Denali Commission to assist in paying for a new comp plan. The Comprehensive Plan does not need to be dated as was the 2020 Comprehensive Plan but can be listed simply as the Nome Comprehensive and reviewed periodically and amended as needed.

NVAD and NSHC:

The City has signed an agreement with NSHC to receive the necessary services to allow NVAD to continue providing ambulance services. The agreement is attached to this report.

NVAD:

City attorney Sam Severin continues to try to reach an agreement with NSHC on management of the ground ambulance service.

Recidivism Reduction:

Please find attached a letter sent to the Alaska Dept of Health in support of a grant proposal by NSHC to reduce the rate of recidivism in Nome.

Visitor Center:

Working with the Chamber of Commerce's President, Drew McCann, a new Visitor Center Director has been hired. Shauntel Bruner-Alvanna will take over the position in March and just in time for Iditarod.

Iditarod:

City staff is now preparing the city for the Iditarod. Public Works staff will soon begin building the snow ramp and move the Iditarod Arch to Front Street. The Mini Convention Center will serve Iditarod HQ. OSJ will host the craft fair. The Museum and Library will be hosting events for children and visitors on snow dog sledding. The Museum will open for extended hours to provide visitors more opportunities to do things.

The Rec Center will play host to the Lonnie O'Conner Basketball Tournament and then the Iditarod banquet.

The council chambers will serve as the communications center for Iditarod. Because of this, there will be no council meeting on March 11.

Housing for Iditarod support teams and attendees remains a challenge in the community. Using the racquetball court at the Rec Center for a dorm is being considered as a last resort.

Planning Commission:

NJUS will make a presentation to the Planning Commission on their efforts updating NJUS' master plan and proposed future development plan for water and waste water expansion plans. These plans depend on securing grants and developers' projects having funds to extend the system to their developments.

Erin Reinders, the city planner, will discuss with the commission members on how to proceed to solicit public input on the proposed "Downtown Zoning District".

Sam Severin is developing procedures for the commission to follow on how to grant variances.

Because there have been three commissioners appointed in the last year, I have asked Erin to find a training module on how the planning process works and their roles as commission members.

Snow Removal:

As of February 16th, city road crews and city contractors have moved 7,200 truck loads of snow exceeding the winter of 2010-2011 at the same time.

Iron Dog:

With brutal weather for Iron Dog, the Public Works Building hosted 37 contestants who used the building to repair their machines for the second part of the race.

The City of Nome contributed \$2,500 to buy helmets for children who ride/operate snow machine in the city.

Front Street Speaker System:

Thanks to NJUS and Thomas Simonsen, the sound system works. But new microphones are being ordered to replace the partially workings mics we currently have.

Historic Preservation Plan:

The recommended changes from Austin Ahmasuk have been incorporated into the document. The HPP will be reviewed at the May meeting of the commission. I've requested Councilmember Tapqaq to also reviewing the HPP.

Recreation Center:

A five-year MOA has been signed with the City of Nome and NSHC. This allows for NSHC to use the Rec Center if there is an emergency at the hospital and the hospital needs to be evacuated. No monies will exchange hands and NSHC indemnifies the City of Nome. There is a ninety day withdraw clause.

Behavior Health Services and NPD:

An agreement has been signed between NPD and Behavioral Health and NSHC to provide training and education to designated NPD staff to deal with the continuing behavioral health crisis in Nome.

This level of training is not provided at the police academy and will better prepare our officers to deal with these incidents.