

TO: The Mayor and Common Council

FROM: Glenn Steckman

RE: City Manager's Report

January 17, 2024

Work session:

There will be three items on the work session for Monday night:

Item one: ADF&G wishes to remove weapons restrictions beginning August 1, 2024 on the hunting of Muskox and changes to the TX095 Muskox Tier II Permit Hunt with permission of the Common Council. In your packet is an email from Sara Henslee and map proposals. Acting Police Chief Crocket will make the presentation.

Item two: John Bles from Bristol Engineering will be available by Zoom to discuss awarding the bid to Sturgeon Electric to proceed with the heating and ventilation system replacement in City Hall. The original price has been reduced from 1,598,500 to \$1,406,400. The price could be further reduced by eliminating the "fire alarm system" which I am not recommending. I am proposing that funds that were saved by the CARES Act be used to pay a portion of this project.

Item three. Are reports from the Department of Public Works Director Cole Cushman and acting Police Chief Will Crocket to discuss their departmental reports.

City Clerk:

I am requesting permission to hire Mr. Greg Knight as the new city clerk. It is a three-year contract, with a starting salary of \$90,000.00. The city will provide him an apartment for three months while he secures more permanent housing.

Port Strategic Development Plan:

The Port Commission will be hosting three nights of meetings on the landside development of the port. The questions that will be asked of the community: what it should look like? What services do you believe need to be developed? Etc. This is not a meeting to discuss the first phase of the port development project. That portion of the project is going out to bid this February.

Polar Pools:

Bob Walker, from Polar Pools, will be here this Monday, January 22 to begin completion of the project. Nome School District is being requested to turn up the heat. This is necessary to warm the pool water up to minimum of 80 degrees.

Snow Removal:

Our snow removal crews are operating 8-9 hours a day. There is also no limit placed on funding for this key operation.

There is one problem that city crews are facing. After the roads are plowed and piles of snow removed, private contractors dump snow right back into the streets. City Hall is also receiving complaints from property owners having snow dumped on their properties including vacant lots.

The NPD will start enforcing the parking restrictions on Front Street from 5am-8am. This year, a number of people are leaving their cars parked overnight. This prevents Front St. from being cleared properly by AKDOT.

I want to acknowledge Cole Cushman, the road crew, our temporary staff of drivers and our contractors in their efforts these last ten days.

GCSIT:

The city's long term thirty party provider of IT support services was sold to LMJ Consulting on January 1, 2024. City staff will be evaluating whether the services received by LMJ Consulting are equal or better than GCSIT's. There also is a sixty-notice clause to end the contract if the city is not happy with services.

At this time the transition has been bumpy.

Iditarod:

The scheduled Common Council meeting for March 11 will not be held due to Iditarod. The council chambers will be used by the media for the event.

ADA and security upgrades for the NSD buildings:

The changes needed for ADA and Security Improvements are ready to go out to bid. The contractors will need to return their bids by February 15 at 3pm. Bristol Engineering has provided the design services for the project. The project should be completed by this summer depending on the bids come in for.

Planning Commission:

The Planning Commission met on January 9th. It was decided to schedule meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. This schedule will be firm and the meetings will start at 7pm with work sessions at 5:30pm.

At the meeting the “Opening Meetings Law” was discussed in a presentation by Sam Severin. Also, discussed was the variance process. Unfortunately, a variance was granted improperly by the Planning Commission.

I am scheduling additional training for the membership in the coming months.

At the work session of the Planning Commission, city planner, Erin Reinders walked the commission through ideas on a “Downtown Zoning District” to encourage development in the historic heart of the city.

Public Safety Advisory Commission:

The PSAC met on Saturday, 1/13, at 10:00am and again this past Thursday to discuss the police chief candidates.

Day Shelter:

After a staffing shortage, the Day Shelter was able to get staffed back to levels to allow the shelter to remain open until 8pm. I want to acknowledge the staff at the Day Shelter who were out taking care of our homeless population during the week plus of snow storms.

Staffing:

I am pleased to announce that the city has hired a new accounts payable clerk (Jovan Dull). On the agenda is a request to hire a new city clerk (Greg Knight). The NPD is also in the process of hiring a new police officer.

Nome Volunteer Ambulance Department:

I have met with three of the four employees that will be affected by the shutting down of the city ambulance service. Two employees will transfer to other positions in the city. Another employee is leaving Nome.

Norton Sound Hospital:

Sam Severin and I are drafting an agreement to be presented to NSHC. Despite my efforts, NSHC has not agreed to meet face to face which may prolong negotiations.

Traffic control improvements at Nome Elementary:

The improvements for pedestrian safety and traffic improvements are being submitted by NEC with City of Nome support.

Alaska Native Housing:

At the last council meeting, a question was asked about what the city is doing to increase Native Alaska housing opportunities. The access to funding for these development projects is restricted to the local tribal governments and Native Alaska corporations. The City of Nome does not have its own housing authority.

NJUS and the City of Nome partner with these organizations on their draft housing developments which are supported by grant funding. This includes supporting grant funding to develop the infrastructure necessary to develop these homes.

Our partners with the 3D printed housing have also met with tribal leadership to discuss how this construction project may be beneficial to provide more attainable housing.