

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: October 14, 2011

To: Mayor Lynn Stauss, Council President Craig Buckalew, Vice President Wayne Gregoire, Council Members Marc Demers, Ron Vonasek, Henry Tweten, Greg Leigh, and Mike Pokrzywinski.

From: Scott Huizenga

RE: Weekly Update

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

October 18, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

October 19, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Budget Work Session – Library

October 25, 2011 – 5:00 pm - Work Session – Training Room

October 26, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Budget Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Accounting Technician

The Civil Service Commission interviewed candidates this week to fill the vacant Accounting Technician position. The Finance Director and I interviewed the finalists. The final recommendation is on the City Council consent agenda. Carrie Greicar has an Associate Degree in Business Administration with significant experience in bookkeeping and finance with particular attention to Accounts Payable. Carrie is available to begin with the City on Monday, October 31.

Health Insurance renewal

The City received two quotations for employee health insurance coverage in 2012. Medica and Health Partners bid on the coverage. Health Partners is the existing provider. And, the City had Medica from 2006-2008 before changing to Health Insurance. Staff will solicit employee input in the next two-three weeks. The City overall has seen a poor experience record in the last few years. This has led to dramatically increased premiums in the last three years. I should note, however, that despite the recent increases the City generally has had favorable coverage rates up to the present time relative to comparable cities. The City has explored several alternatives to contain the cost of health insurance including soliciting new coverage proposals and implementing a wellness program. We plan to expand upon the existing wellness program in early 2012 using by taking advantage of established programs from health care providers.

Lot Development Request for Proposals

The Economic Development and Housing (EDHA) reviewed a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) prepared by EDHA Director Jim Richter. The RFP would solicit proposals to develop the city-owned lot on the corner of DeMers Avenue and 4th Avenue NW. The proposal would request generally mixed-use (commercial and residential) alternatives; and financial incentives could be negotiable depending upon proposals received. The City Council will review the draft RFP at the next scheduled Work Session on October 25.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

Our Campbell Corner interview from 10-5-11 is now on the home page of Pioneer 90.1 – check it out!

<http://www.radionorthland.org/featured/campbell-corner-spotlights-egf-campbell-library/>

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund,

Parent Advisory – Everyday candy used to conceal alcohol consumption

Underage alcohol consumption continues to be a serious problem nationwide and the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks area is no exception. Law enforcement and public health workers continue to work to prevent underage persons from acquiring and consuming alcohol through both education and enforcement efforts but youth also continue to explore new avenues to acquire and consume alcohol. The latest “fad” in underage alcohol consumption involves the use of gummi candies that can be purchased at any grocery, candy or convenience store. Gummi bears, worms, chewy lifesavers or any other type of soft chewable candy can be used in this new practice. Underage persons take the gummi candy and place it in a pan or other container and then add alcohol to the pan (vodka seems to be the alcohol of choice because of its relatively low “alcohol” smell and taste). Over the course of several hours the alcohol is absorbed into the candy which can then be eaten. Eating the alcohol soaked candy is just like having a drink of an alcoholic beverage and has the same affects. Parents should be alert to any out of the ordinary behavior by their children and any use of gummi type candies should probably be checked out. Better safe than sorry.

EGFPD Conducts Alcohol Server Training

On Tuesday October 11, 2011 Officer Tony Reznicek of the EGFPD conducted alcohol server training for the employees of Hugo’s Wine & Spirits in East Grand Forks. The training, which is conducted free of charge, is designed to help workers in the alcohol industry be better prepared to spot fake ID’s in an effort to help minimize the availability of alcoholic beverages to underage persons. EGF City Code mandates that all servers receive this training and the EGFPD will be working with local businesses to make sure they are all in compliance with this ordinance.

AGENDA ITEMS:

The consent agenda contains the following items.

- Authorizing the Police Chief to fill an anticipated patrol officer vacancy
- Approving the hire of Carrie Greicar to the position of Accounting Technician
- Approving an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) concerning “Extra Burn” hours.
- Approving a lease with Butler Machinery for two motor graders for winter snow removal.
- Approving the City as the annual sponsor for the snowmobile trail maintenance agreement between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Red River Snowmobile Club.
- Approving a feasibility study to explore renovation and new construction options for the City’s swimming pool.
- Approving the request from Sacred Heart school to place banners on City street lights for its 2012 100th Anniversary celebration.

Item 13 is a resolution to adopted a Joint Powers agreement with the State of Minnesota to share databases concerning criminal background checks. There is no change to the terms and conditions; but the state requires periodic renewal of the agreement.

Item 14 considers the approval of the Cost of Service Analysis (COSA) for the proposed Waste Water Interconnect Project. The City Council heard on Thursday a presentation led by Steve Burian, CEO of Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services (AE2S) for the proposed COSA. The resolution supports the COSA as presented and directs the City Attorney to incorporate the COSA into an intergovernmental agreement for the interconnect project. If the Council approves this resolution, there are several more steps before the interconnect project is finalized. The Council must still approve the intergovernmental agreement prior to submitting plans and specifications to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for review. The packet includes the full COSA analysis, the presentation slides from AE2S, and a letter from Springsted, Inc that concurs with the COSA model.

Item 15 approves proposals from Kraus-Anderson, Braun Intertec, and McFarlane to investigate and design a solution to the ongoing roof leaking issue at the Campbell Library.

The City Council will hold its budget work session on Wednesday. The Council will meet at the **Campbell Library** at 5:00pm. The Council will tour Parks and Recreation facilities, and will then convene back at the Library to hear budget presentations from Parks and Recreation and the Library.