

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: October 21, 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 25, 2011 – 5:00 pm - Work Session – Training Room

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

November 1, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

November 8, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Swimming Pool

The City Council toured the swimming pool among other Parks and Recreation facilities on Wednesday evening. Council Member Tweten procured a brief report from the Water and Light Department that indicates water use at the pool more than doubled since 2009 – from approximately 920,000 gallons per year to over 2.2 million gallons. Staff will attempt to verify in the pool feasibility study if discrepancy is due primarily to water leaks.

Development Ordinance

The Planning Commission took its first formal look at a proposed development ordinance revision. The draft as proposed would require all new developments to have full infrastructure, including paved streets, within three years of plat approval. The ordinance, if approved, would solve two longstanding issues for the City Council. First, the City Council would be less susceptible to disputes between residents and developers regarding the timing of street paving and special assessments. Also, potential property buyers would have a much clearer picture of the total cost of home building because special assessments would be calculated prior to closing on a new property. The Planning Commission recommended an amended ordinance and two developer agreement templates to the City Council. The City Council will review the recommendations at upcoming meetings.

Arena Energy Efficiency

Parks staff and I plan to meet next week with staff from EAPC to discuss energy efficiency upgrades at the city's arenas. The statewide Clean Energy Resource Team (CERT) has a technical assistance grant available that potentially would pay for an energy efficiency study. The grant application is due November 15. The arenas have several mechanical facilities at the end of their useful lives (cooling towers, HVAC, etc). Now is an ideal time to plan for upgrades with efficient technologies.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

Short Story Contest Entries must be at the library no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 1, 2011. Details are online or you can pick up a flyer at the library. Mama Maria's Italian Restaurant is sponsoring this contest.

Our Readers Theatre is meeting regularly throughout the winter every other Monday at 4:30. They are continuing to record stories for our Dial-A-Story which can be heard at 218-399-3435.

An organizational meeting for our new Supper Book Club will be meeting Wednesday, October 19 at 6 p.m. This will be our second book club. The other is our Sack Lunch Club meeting once a month on the second Tuesday at 11:30. As their name suggests, bring your own lunch and join the discussion.

Public Works, John Wachter

The two winter lease motor graders will be delivered from Butler sometime next week.

Salt and sand has been delivered and will be stockpiled this week.

All yard waste containers have been pulled from the green site.

In an attempt to combat some snow conditions that result in major drifting some snow fence will be installed on 1st Street SE at the approach to the Minnesota Avenue Bridge and on 23rd Street NW at the intersection locations.

All city equipment has been serviced and is prepared for winter operations.

Tree trimming of city berms and alleys will continue through October and November.

WASTEWATER

The wastewater team completed the fall wastewater discharge. The total discharge was approximately 60 million gallons of treated wastewater. Transfer operations between the primary and secondary cells will continue for the remainder of this week.

There has been continued clogging of sanitary lift stations #8 and #16. Letters will be hand delivered this week to all residents of the affected areas. The letter will discuss the items that should be introduced into the sanitary sewer such as clothing and towels. These items continue to clog the pumps and effect operations.

Smoke testing of the sanitary sewer will take place on Oct 26 and 27. The areas that will be tested are the state campground and the area around lift station #7 on 19th St NW. Letters will be hand delivered door to door on October 21.

STORM WATER

The storm water team along with F/S Engineering is exploring possible mitigation efforts to combat the early flooding of the 4th Street NW underpass. As information becomes available it will be presented to the city council.

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

The campground will close on Tuesday, October 25 and the office will finish up reports on October 31. We will say our goodbyes to Gladwin Lynne, who is retiring after this season. He has been our campground manager since the start of the park. It was a very good year in the campground and the only reason we didn't break our record attendance was because of the stoppage in work for three weeks.

The hockey and figure skating season started up this week with 224 participants in hockey and 154 participants in figure skating so far. Hockey clinic are starting this week and the figure skating picked their synchro teams earlier this year.

AGENDA ITEMS:

The City Council will hold its regular work session on Tuesday. And, the final budget work session will be on Wednesday at 5pm back in the Training Room. Water and Light, EDHA, and planning are on the agenda. The City Council will also discuss the budget at least two more times at the regular work sessions in November before final passage in December.

The following are the agenda items for Tuesday's work session.

1. The Economic Development and Housing Authority (EDHA) Executive Director will review a proposed Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop city-owned land on the corner of DeMers Avenue and 4th Avenue NW. The location is in the heart of downtown. Ideally, proposals would consist of mixed use development, which combines commercial and retail space with multi-family housing. The RFP is substantially similar to the proposal that was developed for the former Civic Auditorium site (and others) in Grand Forks.
2. I will discuss a proposal from Springsted, Inc to update the City's pay plan. The City implemented its uniform pay plan with all employees and labor groups in 2010 and 2011. But, the plan was already five years old when implemented. Therefore, the proposal updates the pay plan by performing both internal reviews and external market studies. Pay plans should be evaluated at least every 5-7 years. And, the timing coincides with the next round of labor negotiations slated to begin in the fall of 2012.