

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: January 6, 2012

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:

January 3, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

January 10, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

January 17, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

January 24, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

League Bulletin

This week's *League Bulletin* from the League of Minnesota Cities contains several informative articles. The first is that a committee under state Department of Labor and Industry's recommends that the state *not* adopt the latest International Building Code provisions related to residential fire sprinkler systems. The *Bulletin* also discusses the latest proposals from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) to incorporate five-year financial plans and budgets into municipal financial reporting. Finally, the League is sponsoring its annual Workshops for both Experienced and Newly-Elected Officials in late January. One can find more information on the workshops at the following link: <http://www.lmc.org/page/1/experienced2012.jsp>. Please let Michelle French know if you are interested in attending any of these workshops. One can find the entire *League Bulletin* at <http://www.lmc.org/page/1/cities-bulletin-newsletter.jsp>.

Water Rates

The Water and Light Commission adopted a modified version of a new water rate structure recommended in the recently-completed Water Rate Study. The adopted proposal calls for an increase of \$0.50 on the base meter fee, with an increase of \$0.45 per 1000 gallons to \$5.40 per 1000 gallon for the first 4000 gallons (Block 1) for single-family residences. The rate for increments above 4000 gallons (Block 2) will be \$6.75 per 1000 gallons.

Legislative Priorities

We plan to discuss the city's legislative priorities at the work session of January 24. Let me know if you have any items that you would like the full City Council to consider for the city's priorities. Also, the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is scheduling a meeting with Representative Deb Kiel prior to the commencement of the new legislative session. A meeting is tentatively scheduled for the third week of January. Let me know if you are interested in attending.

NV 360 Community Visioning

The Chamber and the Community Foundation are sponsoring the “North Valley 360” visioning project. This is a wide-encompassing project that is charged with developing an updated vision for the region. Charlotte Helgeson, Corey Thompson, and I attended a session on the topic of media and outreach. There are nine total topics within the overall visioning project. This is an update to the 2006 community vision project that was also co-sponsored by the Chamber. Next week’s topic concerns economic development. More information can be found through the Chamber or the Community Foundation.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

Sgt. Bill Solem retires after 30 years of service!

Sgt. Bill Solem started with the East Grand Forks Police Department in July of 1981. Sgt. Solem served in a variety of roles with the EGFPD including working in Patrol as an officer and as a supervisor and serving as one of the Department’s original DARE officers. Sgt. Solem’s last day with the EGFPD was on December 28, 2011 and a retirement party was held in his honor on New Year’s Day. Bill and his wife Kim are moving to Arizona to start their new retired life. We wish them the very best in this new stage of their lives.

Snowmobile Regulations – Snowmobiles are NOT allowed on the city’s Flood Control Levees!

The Red River Valley has finally gotten a taste of winter with our recent snowfalls. The new snow provides a variety of recreation opportunities but also creates a few problems. The dikes used as part of the city’s flood control system are easily damaged and snowmobiles are not allowed to be driven on them. Snowmobiles may be driven within the city limits in a very limited manner. Snowmobiles **may** be driven on city streets if they are driven at speeds under 10 MPH and are kept close to the right hand curb or road edge. Snowmobiles are **NOT** allowed to be driven on any public property, including schoolyards, parks, playgrounds and recreation areas unless such areas have been declared as official snowmobile trails/use areas by the city council. The complete city ordinances as related to snowmobile usage may be found at www.egf.mn in the Traffic section of the Municipal Code.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. The City Attorney will present a proposed Intergovernmental Agreement with Huntsville Township regarding 14th Avenue SE. Council Member DeMers, Mr. Galstad, and I met with the township several times last fall to discuss the township’s willingness to participate in a special assessment project to complete paving, curb, and gutter of 14th Avenue SE. from 13th Street SE to the city limit on 17th Street SE. The primary provisions of the agreement are that the township agrees to contribute 10 percent (via adjacent property owners) to the project. The City, in turn, agrees not to pursue annexation of the adjoining township lands for a period of 15 years. The City can proceed with the design of the proposed 14th Avenue SE project if both parties agree to the intergovernmental agreement.
2. I will provide a brief overview of the findings of the recent online Citizen Feedback Survey. The responses overall were very positive.
3. The Police Chief will review quotations for surplus patrol vehicles and a proposed new unmarked police vehicle.

4. Mayor Stauss will update the City Council on preparation for the 125th Anniversary celebration. Mayor Stauss will also request approval for a contract to Games Galore to provide children's games during the celebration.
5. Council Member Gregoire will provide an update of Cemetery Commission activities. This will be the first report in a rotating series of Council Member reports. At each work session, one Council Member will provide the City Council with an update of the boards and commissions on which the Council Member serves.