

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: January 20, 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 24, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

January 31, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room (If Needed)

February 7, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

February 14, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Swimming Pool Update

Council Member Gregoire, representing the Swimming Pool working group, presented its plan to the Water and Light Commission on Thursday. The plan calls for the Water and Light Commission to redirect a portion of the long-term investments from external government securities and Certificates of Deposit to an internal loan of approximately \$1.5 million to fund a renovated swimming pool. The Water and Light Commission approved the request for \$1.56 million over a 10 or 20 year period at an interest rate of 1.5-2.5 percent, which is roughly equivalent to the current government bond market rates. The working group will meet again on Monday; and present its report to the City Council at Tuesday's Work Session.

Legislative Visits

Mayor Stauss and I met with Representative Deb Kiel on Tuesday along with Crookston city officials and Tim Flaherty representing the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities. The discussion outlined the priorities of the city and of Greater Minnesota including maintaining stable funding for Local Government Aid (LGA), supporting economic development initiatives in Greater Minnesota, and opposing Supermajority Constitutional Amendment proposals. CGMC's Legislative Day at the Capitol is Wednesday, February 8. Tim Flaherty, Mayor Stauss, and I also met with the *Grand Forks Herald* to discuss legislative priorities.

Legislative Update

Several new bills at the state legislature could have major impacts on cities, as outlined in this week's *League Bulletin* (<http://www.lmc.org/page/1/cities-bulletin-newsletter.jsp>). First, Governor Dayton announced his bonding proposal. Among several items is funding for both the Clean and Drinking Water Fund and the Waste Water Infrastructure Fund. The Clean and Drinking Water Fund provides low-interest loans for water and waste water projects. The Waste Water Infrastructure Fund provides matching grants for waste water projects based on project cost and income levels in a community. Other noteworthy bills include a DFL proposal to restore the Market Value Homestead Credit (MVHC) and a proposal by House Tax Committee Chair Greg Davids to expand local sales tax options for capital projects.

Invitation to Senior Citizens

Visit the East Grand Forks Senior Center at 538 Rhinehart Dr SE in 2012. Daily mail, activities to strengthen mind and body, fun and fellowship. Memberships available at 50 years of age. If over 60, enjoy a free noon meal on your first visit. Call 773-3017 before 10:00 am on the day you wish to eat for meal reservations.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

- 1) Winter Fest 2012 has been canceled because of a lack of snow this year. The people involved with cross country skiing and snowmobiling, along with the other groups decided that this year we do not have enough snow for it.
- 2) The Northern Star Competition starts this Thursday at the VFW Arena and Blue Line Arena with practices, on Friday they are at the VFW arena and Sunday they are at the Civic Center with competitions. The figure skaters have fixed up their locker room and also the weight room has been made into a girl's figure skating locker room. On Sunday the Basic Skills Competition will be at the VFW Arena.
- 3) Boy's hockey: the VFW team is 16-10 overall and 4th in Districts as of right now; Bantam Eagles is 18-4 and 2nd place in Districts; Bantam Legion is 8-13 and 6th place in Districts; PWA Blue Line is 14-7 overall and 4th in Districts; PWB American Federal Bank is 11-10 and 3rd place in the Districts.
- 4) Girl's hockey: the 14U is 5-12, the 12U is 10-10 and the 10U is 8-10 overall and 3rd, 4th and 4th in the Districts respectively. The squirt Gold team is 9-5 and 3rd in the District and the Black team is 6-8 overall and 3rd place in the South Division. Districts are February 17, 18 and 19 so we still have time to move up.
- 5) The outdoor rinks are opening Thursday, they did get skated on last weekend when they weren't ready so they got pretty rough.
- 6) I talked to Bruce from American Turbine Pump Co. last week and he was going to look for a pump that we could use this summer. He is looking for a submerged pump that can get us by this summer.
- 7) This Friday, Eagle Electric is going to start working on replacing the lights at the Senior Center.
- 8) The signs we moved over by the Civic Center are currently not running. The trial session we have with Venus 1500 is over and we are waiting for Corey to sign us up.

Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust

The Fire Department full-time personnel are now taking their HAZ-MAT Tech. training and will do so weekly for the next four weeks. This will bring all full-time members to the tech level. We will have 12 members including 2 paid-on-call members trained to this level when done.

Fire Department truck committee is still looking into information on Aerial Platform Trucks to present to Council.

We have some preliminary indications that we were successful in obtaining another fire grant from the Aid to Firefighter Grant for approximately \$33,000. We should know for sure sometime in the near future.

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

Officer Aeisso Schrage selected to become investigator for the East Grand Forks Police Department

Officer Aeisso Schrage, an East Grand Forks native and officer with the EGFPD since January 2005, has been selected to become the next investigator with the Department. Schrage has spent his career to this point working in the Patrol Division in the Department but has actively sought investigations related training and has worked with the Department's investigations staff on a variety of cases. Schrage will assume his new role in February.

Essay Contest Winners Named

The East Grand Forks Police Department in conjunction with the MN Chiefs of Police Association conducted an essay contest for local 8th grade students. The contest involved students writing short essays on the theme of how to use technology for good. The local winners were Tessa Hanson (1st Place) and Kelly Green (2nd Place) both students at Central Middle School. Hanson and Green will be awarded cash prizes that were donated by the East Grand Forks Police Association.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Prior to the work session, I will present the City's Pay Equity and Comparable Worth report for approval by the City Council. The report is due to the State on January 31.

1. The Swimming Pool Working Group will report back with its formal recommendation to the Council to proceed with a complete renovation of the swimming pool and to fund the project with an interfund transfer loan from the Water and Light Department. If the Council concurs with the recommendation, the next step is to approve a design contract for a potential bid advertisement later this spring.
2. Council Member DeMers will report back to the Council on the status of the Intergovernmental Agreement with Huntsville Township regarding the paving of 14th Ave SE. The agreement is unchanged from last week. Currently, the township is unlikely to agree to a long-term agreement that includes maintenance or reconstruction costs. Therefore, the City is left with two primary options: to construct the road understanding that the City will bear a significant share of the costs for the township portion of the road; or to not improve the road at this time. One other option that parties have discussed briefly is annexation of the affected township areas. The City thus far has been reluctant to endure the legal hurdles involved in an annexation action.
3. Council Member Leigh will discuss a request to raise the speed limit on 23rd Street Northwest.
4. Fire Chief Gust and Assistant Chief Jeff Anderson will present options to purchase a late model aerial platform to replace the department's current truck, which is 30 years old. The City Council approved debt financing for a new aerial platform truck in the 2012 budget.
5. The Blue Line Club has inquired regarding the possibility of allowing advertising on the City's arena ice resurfacers (commonly known by their brand, Zamboni). I will ask the Council to decide if a) the Council would like to issue a Request for Proposals for advertising, and b) if the Council would like to direct proceeds from a potential advertising agreement to the Blue Line Club.

6. The Parks and Recreation Superintendent will request approve to purchase new bleachers and picnic tables. The City Council included funding for bleachers in the 2012 budget.
7. I will present a proposed legislative priorities agenda for the 2012 State Legislative session. The final approved list will accompany the City's delegation to Legislative Action Day in St. Paul on February 8.
8. Council Member Tweten will provide an update on the activities of the Water and Light Commission.