

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: May 10, 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:

May 15, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

May 22, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

June 5, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

June 12, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Legislative Update

The Legislature adjourned this week with a few notable end-of-session actions. In addition to the widely-reported Vikings stadium bill, the Legislature passed a revised tax bill for the Governor's consideration. The revised bill offers less tax relief while also drawing less on state reserves. For cities, the tax bill before the Governor will freeze Local Government Aid (LGA) at 2012 levels. Under the previous LGA formula, East Grand Forks would have lost approximately \$86,000 of LGA funding in addition to large cuts already sustained in recent years.

The Legislature also passed a compromise bonding bill that primarily funds state agency projects and programs. The Legislature granted few allocations to city-specific projects.

The Legislature modified Legacy funding as it applies to Greater Minnesota. The state will no longer require a match to Greater Minnesota cities on Legacy-eligible projects. And, the Legislature removed a funding cap of \$500,000 for Greater Minnesota Legacy projects. Previously, Greater Minnesota faced these limitations whereas metropolitan areas did not face similar restrictions or caps.

Finally, the Governor vetoed Legislation that would have expanded the sale and use of fireworks in Minnesota.

Adult Use Ordinance

As you are aware, a self-described lingerie and bachelorette store opened on Monday without contacting the City for building code or site approvals. Currently, the business is not eligible to open for three reasons: 1) There is not a final Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Official; 2) The City Planner has not approved the facilities site plan; and 3) The City Planner has determined that business constitutes an adult use as a sexually-oriented store. Adult Use Businesses must locate in an I-2 Industrial Zone according to the City's Code of Ordinances.

The business attempted to locate in a C-2 Commercial Zone. The business has the opportunity to file an appeal of the staff determination within 30 days. The Planning Commission first would hear the appeal. The City Council could hear the appeal contingent upon a recommendation of the Planning Commission.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Public Works, Jason Stordahl

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

This week is the City's clean up week. Just a reminder to residents, Hazardous Waste/Electronic Drop Off will take place this Saturday at the Public Works Building from 9am-3pm. Residents may drop off items such as: TV's, computers, tires, fluorescent bulbs, paint, and other house hold/yard chemicals.

Grass/Dandelions: We hired our seasonal mowing employees this week, and they will report for mowing duties next Monday 5/14/12. The dandelions are still growing, and we are continuing our spraying efforts.

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

- 1) We are finishing the pickle ball courts at O'Leary Park with a fence that will divide the courts.
- 2) We have finish the first part of the pool renovations, the only thing we have left is to paint the pool and put up signs which the pool staff will do.
- 3) The stumps have been bid out and Larry Skala got the bid, stumps will be removed the week of May 21 - 25.
- 4) Summer registration is going on this week.
- 5) Tree planting is getting done, we planted 12 new trees in the cemetery also.
- 6) The bathrooms at the Trailheads open Saturday, May 12.

Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust

Fire Department personnel held their semi-annual live burn training on Saturday, May 5th. We had a very good turn out with all but three members present. We were able to conduct level II and level III burns which consists of starting multiple fires in the Northland College burn building and having our personnel respond to and train as if it was a real life fire. I want to thank the Northland College and Public Works for their help in making this happen. As a side note our grass fires have slowed down now that the area is starting to green up. We did have a number of unmonitored fires this spring that had to be extinguished.

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

EGFPD to Receive Radar Unit from MN Office of Traffic Safety

Tom Kummrow of the MN Office of Traffic Safety will be presenting the EGFPD with a Stalker Radar Unit at the City Council Meeting on May 15, 2012. The radar unit, valued at over \$2,000, is presented to recognize the efforts of the department in the state's "Safe & Sober" program.

Officer April Hansen recognized by the Optimist Club

The Optimist Club held their annual "Respect for Law" luncheon at the Ramada Inn in Grand Forks on Wednesday May, 9, 2012. The Optimists seek to recognize law enforcement officers who serve as a "friend of youth". Hansen was recognized for her work with the "Code 3 for Christmas" program in which Christmas presents are given to underprivileged youth in Polk County. This past year over 400 presents were donated and given to area families.

Water and Light Department, Dan Boyce

The Water and Light Department will be replacing the primary electric wires in neighborhoods in the north end of East Grand Forks. We will not be replacing the secondary wire that runs to customers' buildings. The work is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2012 and may not be completed until 2013. The Department has hired North Holt Electric to replace the primary wires. The Water and Light Department crew will be energizing the new equipment. We will notify customers if an outage is necessary. To facilitate this work, it is imperative that fences, trees, and debris are removed from the utility easement. Cooperation from customers will make the installation go smoother and limit the outage time.

A map of the construction zone is available online at <http://2012projects.egf.mn>. Please feel free to contact the Water and Light Distribution office at 218 773-0515 if you have any questions. Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation in the safe completion of this project.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Item 3 considers awarding the low bid for constructing a sidewalk on the west side of Bygland Road from 6th Street SE to 13th Street SE. The state Safe Routes to School program funds 100 percent of the construction. The City is responsible for soft costs relating Engineering, Legal, and Administration. The City constructed a sidewalk on the east side of the street a few years ago under the same program. The state was impressed with the City's construction and implementation of the program. And, residents overwhelmingly favor the walk ability options on Bygland Road.

Item 4 under the consent agenda authorizes the City to act as legal sponsor for the 2012-2013 snowmobile managed trails program from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The City annually acts as a sponsor (pass-through) organization from the state to the local Red River Snowmobile Club, which maintains and grooms the snowmobile trails. The City's role in the program is to report and ensure compliance with the program.

Item 6 considers a variance request from the owners of East Side Express (4th Street NE) to exceed the maximum 85 percent impervious lot coverage requirement in the City Code. The proposed variance facilitates a building expansion for the business. The facility already has over 95 percent impervious coverage that the City approved before the City adopted the current 85 percent standard. As such, the Planning Commission recommends approval of the variance because the change will not cause a substantive change beyond current conditions.

Item 7 considers filing plans and specifications and ordering bid advertisement for the proposed swimming pool renovation project. The current estimated construction cost for the renovation is approximately \$1.33 million. The construction cost is approximately \$80,000 above the initial estimate in November 2011. The current estimate is within the original budget with

contingency. And, staff anticipates favorable bid prices in a construction economy that is feeling the effects of the recent recession.

Item 8 considers accepting the Office of Traffic Safety's donation of a new radar unit to the Police Department. As Chief Hedlund states above, the donation is in recognition of the City's successful participation in the state's Safe and Sober program