

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: June 15, 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:

June 19, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

June 26, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

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

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

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Waste Water Improvements

As discussed at Tuesday's work session, the Mayor and I spoke on Monday with Gil Hantzsch with MSA Professional Services. Mr. Hantzsch is performing the peer review regarding the City's waste water treatment facility plan. The peer review is due on June 30. I have asked Mr. Hantzsch if there is any possibility of expediting the report in light of the pending City Council decision regarding the state's bonding funds grant process.

Boat Ramp

Mayor Stauss, Council Member DeMers, Barry Wilfahrt from the Chamber of Commerce, the Parks and Recreation Superintendent, and I met on Wednesday with officials from the Department of Natural Resources regarding a new boat ramp for LaFave Park. The DNR staff indicated that the City will be eligible for a new boat ramp within the next 2-3 years assuming current state funding rates. The City could opt to expedite the process if the city chose to hire its own design team for the boat ramp and associated facilities (e.g. parking).

O'Leary Park

Council Member Tweten convened a group including Council Member Pokrzywinski, the City's Recreation Coordinator (Mark Dragich), the City Engineer, and Chip Shea of Shea's Nursery and Landscaping to discuss a "master plan" for O'Leary Park. The City Engineer and Mr. Shea will propose a redevelopment plan for the area that includes updated playground equipment, enhanced landscaping, and possibly new park shelters. The Council will consider the proposal in the 2013 budget discussions.

Labor Relations

Council President Buckalew, Council Vice President Gregoire, and I attended the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Labor Relations and Employment Seminar on Thursday in Staples. The Coalition staff provided a wealth of information including how to deal with past practices, recent negotiation settlements in Minnesota, and experiences from other Minnesota cities actively negotiating with their bargaining units. Incidentally, we learned of a web site from the federal Department of Labor: www.unionreports.gov. The site includes annual required filings from labor unions throughout the country. The filings include union expenditures on bargaining, overhead, and political activities. They also include the salaries of officers and employees. One can obtain from the Administration Office upon request the most recent annual reports for the labor unions that represent City bargaining groups.

The City's five labor agreements expire at the end of 2012.

Rep. Deb Kiel visiting

Representative Deb Kiel will visit City Hall in the training room on Tuesday, June 19 at 4:30 pm just prior to the City Council meeting. The City Council members may have received invitations in the mail.

League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference

I will attend the annual League of Minnesota Cities conference next week in Duluth. I will be out of the office on Wednesday through Friday.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Public Works Department, Jason Stordahl

Construction: On June 18th the Army Corps of Engineers will be working on sill plate repair projects at the flood wall closures on Demers Ave. and Bygland Rd. SE. The projects will take approximately two to three weeks to complete. During this time period expect minor traffic delays, as traffic will be rerouted around the construction areas.

Reminder to residents: Please do not mow grass clipping into your street gutters. During rain events grass in gutters washes down storm water catch basins and causes them to plug, in turn flooding adjacent street. Thanks.

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

1 - We are finishing the second round of tree planting this week; we have planted 80 trees so far this year.

2 - I would invite everyone to visit the cemetery this week; we have dirt to level in the uprights and then pour slabs where the marks go.

3 - Our bandwagon and park sites are filling up for the summer.

4 - We helped with the animals that are around town in setting them up.

5 - The campground is filling up as the camp sites are 90% full this summer on the weekends.

6 - The Senior Center board went over to the Senior High and got a tour, they are holding a free supper there for the 125th on August 8.

7 - I don't think we give our summer help enough credit for the work they do. Most of them are still kids and they take a lot of responsibility and ownership. Thank You!

Agenda Items:

- The consent agenda includes the City's resolution to participate in the state's standard measures program for 2012. There is also a fireworks permit for July 4.
- Item 5 acknowledges the retirement of Fire Chief Randy Gust after more than 25 years of public service.
- Item 6 is a resolution to approve the City's application to the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for grant funds to construct the proposed waste water interconnect project. If approved, the City could receive up to half of the project cost from the state. Council Vice President Gregoire requested this item on the agenda.
- Item 7 considers the Planning Commission recommendation to approve the final plat for the Minnesota Heights Addition at 4th Avenue NW and DeMers Avenue. Minnesota Heights is the proposed mixed use development with ground-floor commercial space and 39 residential units on upper-level floors. The plat request also includes a request to vacate a city alley in the area.
- Item 8 is the first reading to amend the city's code of ordinances to allow street-level residential units in the downtown area. At least 35 percent of the ground-floor space would have to remain commercial. The developers of Minnesota Heights would use this provision only if commercial tenants could not be procured in a reasonable time. The intent of the development is for the ground floor to remain commercial.
- Item 9 considers a construction management agreement with Kraus-Anderson Construction for construction management services on the proposed library roof replacement project. The previous agreement with Kraus-Anderson was for design and bid procurement. The design is complete, and bid advertisement will begin next week (Item 10). The City may procure any firm for construction management. There is an advantage for the City to maintain the relationship with Kraus-Anderson which is to ensure continuity throughout the project.
- Item 10 considers filing the plans and specifications for the library roof project and to advertise for bids. The City Council will consider the awarding bids at the July 17 regular Council meeting.
- Item 11 sets a July 3 public hearing date to file the assessment rolls 11AJ01 – 14th Avenue SE and 12AJ03 – Greenway Boulevard and 13th Street SE. The City has received the bids for these projects. The City Council will review the rolls and the bids at next week's work session.
- Item 12 considers a resolution to confirm the designation of 4th Street NW from 5th Avenue NW (the Veterans Memorial) to 10th Avenue NW (Kennedy Bridge) as "Joan Kroc Parkway." The prior City Council passed a similar measure as a motion in 2007. The resolution reconfirms the previous Council vote and sets in motion a proposal by Mayor Stauss to establish a memorial for the area dedicated to Ms. Kroc.