

# WEEKLY MEMO

**Date:** June 22, 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 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*

*July 17, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers*

## **WEEKLY UPDATE:**

### **Duluth and the League of Minnesota Cities Conference**

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the League of Minnesota Cities conference due to the flash flooding in Duluth earlier this week. Ultimately, the League decided to press ahead with the conference. I found myself caught in the middle when I was traveling the long distance between East Grand Forks and Duluth. I expressed my regrets to several of my colleagues and to the League staff who had invited me to help facilitate one of the concurrent sessions. I look forward to participating in some of the League's policy committees later this summer. Meanwhile, I have extended out the City's assistance to the City of Duluth in any manner that they may need.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

### **Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund**

#### **EGF Officials Take Part in Northwestern Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Workshop**

Chief Mike Hedlund of the East Grand Forks Police Department, City Council Member Greg Leigh (who also coordinates the Driver's Training Program for the East Grand Forks School System) and Sue Thompson of Polk County Public Health all took part in the Northwestern Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Workshop in Thief River Falls on June 20, 2012. This conference was geared toward enhancing and implementing the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program throughout the state. TZD is a program that involves the four E's (Enforcement, Education, Engineering and Emergency Medical Services) in a collaborative effort to try to improve traffic safety with the ultimate goal of no traffic related fatalities in Minnesota. Traffic fatalities in Minnesota in 2011 were at their lowest level (368 deaths) in over fifty years. As recently as 2003 Minnesota had 655 traffic fatalities. Since that time the state has made a number of significant changes; in 2005 the lowering of the legal limit for DWI to .08 and the development of a statewide trauma system, in 2006 the ban on cell phone use by provisional drivers, in 2008 the adoption of graduated driver's licenses and the enactment of legislation banning texting, e-mail and web-access by all drivers, in 2009 the adoption of the primary seat

belt law and in 2010 the adoption of additional DWI administrative sanctions including the use of the ignition interlock system. These changes have made an obvious and significant change in the safety of our roads and highways but more work needs to be done. Traffic crashes are still the #1 cause of death for people aged 5-34. Northwestern Minnesota has made great strides in seatbelt use but we still lag behind the rest of the state and that is costing needless deaths each year. Be smart. Buckle up!

### **Drug Overdose results in Death in EGF**

The East Grand Forks Police Department responded to a medical assist regarding a possible drug overdose on June 13. The subject in that incident, a 17-year old male, subsequently died. This was the second drug related death in the GF/EGF area in a week. Several other subjects have been hospitalized after ingesting what is believed to be a synthetic hallucinogen. It is believed that more of this substance is in the area and law enforcement officials are asking that anyone with information on this substance please contact their local law enforcement agency. Law enforcement officers from ND and MN are concerned that there could be additional deaths or illnesses if these drugs aren't taken off the street. The drug has been known to be used in two forms, a white powder and made into a solution and placed on blotter paper.

### **Agenda Items:**

1. JD Burton, Lobbyist for the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities, will present Coalition's annual legislative update on Tuesday evening.
2. City staff will present a draft development agreement with the proposed Minnesota Heights mixed-use development on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and DeMers Avenue. Staff also will be available to discuss the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and any outstanding issues with the Planning Commission.
3. The City Engineer will discuss assessment projects for 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (11AJ01) and Greenway Boulevard and 13<sup>th</sup> Street (12AJ03). The City advertised the two projects together for bid. The total bid for both projects combined was below the engineering estimate. However, property owners for both projects will see increases from the original estimates on their proposed special assessments. The assessments are higher for two reasons. First, Greenway Boulevard is eligible for less state aid than originally proposed. Therefore, the resident portion of that project increases even though the overall project cost is lower. Second, the 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE portion of the project was higher than estimated. The City's portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE project also increases by about \$28,000. Please note that these estimates include project contingency. Therefore, the final cost may decrease, but it likely will not increase.
4. Council Vice President Gregoire and the City Engineer will discuss bid results for the proposed Swimming Pool renovation project (12CP06). The low bid was approximately \$200,000 higher than the design estimate. The council's swimming pool committee will meet on Monday and the committee will report with a recommendation to the City Council at Tuesday's work session.
5. The Library Director will discuss a proposed a construction oversight with Braun Intertec on the roof renovation project. This contract is distinct from the construction management contract. But, it is included in the current project budget.
6. Council Member Pokrzywinski will update the City Council on other activities of the Library Board.