

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: July 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:

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

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

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

August 21, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Save Our Pool group

Representatives of the Save Our Pool group met with City officials and the Community Foundation on Thursday. The conversation discussed primarily formal organization fundraising options. The Save Our Pool group's first formal meeting is next Thursday, July 26, at the Campbell Library at 6:00 pm.

Other pool updates

On Thursday evening, the Water and Light Commission voted to reaffirm the commitment of a loan to the swimming pool project of \$1,560,000 with a 10-year term at 1.5 percent interest. The Commission tabled the request to increase the loan amount or term until the commission could have a discussion with the City Council.

Unrelated to the Water and Light Commission action, I have been asked if the City could place the swimming pool issue on the November general election ballot. The City Council has until August 24 to decide if it prefers the issue to be decided directly by voters via a bond issue referendum.

League Policy Committees

I am a member of two policy committees with the League of Minnesota Cities – Improving Fiscal Futures and Human Resources and Data Practices. The committees help to form the League's legislative agenda on which the League develops its lobbying efforts. The committees began meeting this week. There are also meetings in August and September. The first two meetings were largely an overview of the League's current agenda. The committees also heard a presentation from League staff regarding its Community Conversations projects. The conversations started last fall in 12 Minnesota communities to gauge citizen responses to service priorities, funding options, and alternative forms of service. Some of the notable findings from

the Community Conversations include a general openness to change in response to reduced funding. According to the League, respondents indicated that “they did not care who provided services” so long as quality services were provided. In other words, participants encouraged outsourcing and joint ventures among other solutions. And, a majority felt that they were willing to deal with inconveniences in service response on infrequent items such as building permits. Other findings included that a majority felt that the state should spend money to ensure quality services throughout the state. Finally, a majority who were concerned about sources of revenue preferred general taxes (income, property) to fees although one should note that 48 percent did not have a preference on the type of taxation.

One can find more information regarding the Community Conversations project from the League of Minnesota Cities including the following:

Report: Community Conversations: Minnesotans Talk about Cities, Services, and Funding (http://lmc.org/media/document/1/comm_conversations.pdf)

Presentation: Community Conversations (http://lmc.org/media/document/1/cc_presentation.ppt)

State Consolidation of Local Governments Report

The Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) released its Consolidation of Local Governments report in May. A summary (<http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/pedrep/consollocgovsum.pdf>) and the full report (<http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/pedrep/consollocgov.pdf>) can be found on the OLA website. From the web site:

We found that there may be opportunities for more consolidation among smaller local governments in Minnesota, particularly those with capital-intensive service or equipment needs. However, consolidation proposals need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if consolidation would be appropriate. We recommend that the Legislature use requests to fund local capital projects as opportunities to encourage consolidation and collaboration. We also recommend that the Legislature provide grants to local governments to study consolidation possibilities. In addition, the Office of Administrative Hearings Municipal Boundary Adjustment Unit and counties should provide more information to local governments and citizens about how consolidations can be achieved.

MnCERTs meeting in EGF

Minnesota Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)- www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org - is hosting its Northwest Regional CERTs meeting in East Grand Forks on August 15. The topic for the northwest regional meeting is Saving Energy in Ice Arenas: Project Case Studies and Financing. One of the primary topics will be discussion of the pending East Grand Forks energy study of the City’s three indoor ice arenas. East Grand Forks received a partial grant from CERTs last fall to conduct an energy audit of the Civic Center, the VFW Arena, and the Blue Line Arena. The City procured EAPC Architects and Engineers to perform the energy audit. We expect to receive the report by the end of the month. The regional CERTs meeting will be at the Civic Center of August 15. Interested participants can RSVP online at <http://nwlocalgovt.eventbrite.com/>.

Long Range Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will hold a public meeting on the draft Long Range Transportation Plan on Thursday, July 26 starting at 5:30. There will be a brief staff presentation starting at 6:00 pm.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

The Library staff is training on the new Evergreen software this week with Jenny and Susan from PALS. The training is going well and the software is a grand improvement over our current system. We are still on schedule to go live on August 6.

The Library's roof project received no bids for the roof rebuild. As the insulation bid was being reviewed, discrepancies in the roof's square footage numbers on the bid documents were discovered by Kraus Anderson. KA asked Braun to review and corrections have been made. Notices have gone out a second time for bids and are due July 27 at 11 a.m. At the August 7 Council meeting, the Library plans to have bids to recommend and begin construction by August 15. The single insulation bid will be recommended for rejection on August 7 also. The Roof rebuild and shingle project will take 3-4 weeks to complete and will be done before fall which is necessary to assure a secure, dry spring for the Library's meeting room next spring.

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

National Night Out

The East Grand Forks Police and Fire Departments will be joining other regional public safety agencies in a National Night Out event at the Purpur Arena in Grand Forks, ND on August 7, 2012. National Night Out is a family friendly event that works to support crime and drug prevention and increase neighborhood and community spirit. The event runs from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM and the first 2,000 people get free hamburgers. Area law enforcement agencies, fire departments, EMS agencies and military organizations will have displays including squad cars, fire trucks, military vehicles and other equipment. There will be interactive games and lots of information on a variety of topics. Door prizes will be given away throughout the evening. Come out and help us celebrate our community!

Summer Safety & Crime Prevention

Summer is a fun time for everyone but it is also a time when people tend to relax about things like home security and safety. Help the East Grand Forks Police department keep you and your property safe by following some simple tips!

- Bike Safety – Remember to wear your helmet and ride safely! Bike riders must obey the traffic rules just like cars do!
- Lock it up! Whether you ride a bike or drive a car lock it when you aren't using it.
- Lock your house and garage. This simple task helps keep you – and your belongings – safe.
- Don't leave valuables in your vehicle – and if you have to for some reason put them in the trunk or some other spot where they aren't visible.
- Parents – know where your kids are and who they are spending time with.
- Vacation Safety

- If you go on a trip have a friend stop by your house regularly to check on things. This helps to keep your house looking occupied (which discourages burglars) and also helps us start an investigation sooner if something does happen.
- Have your friend or neighbor pick up your mail/newspaper.
- Have lights in your home on timers to help keep the house looking occupied.

Public Works, Jason Stordahl

The floodwall sill plate reconstruction on Demers Avenue is progressing. The concrete is poured and curing. Water and Light along with Public Works will be assembling the wall next Monday for a test fit. If all goes well we hope to have Demers opened up by the end of next week.

The Malory Bridge is currently closed due to construction, and the Bygland Road flood closure is under construction. This limits access across the Red Lake River, and has caused some concern with local farmers wanting to move equipment. To help to mitigate this problem we will be changing the configuration of the construction zone near the flood wall closure to accommodate larger equipment. The change will make it possible for large equipment to proceed through, but while the equipment is moving through it will reduce the traffic down to one lane. So we encourage farmers to call the Public Works Department to let us know when they are planning to travel through that area, so we can assist with closing down one lane momentarily.

You can reach Public Works Department by calling 218-773-1313 from 8:00am to 4:30 pm. After hours you can contact the East Grand Forks Police Department at 218-773-1104.

AGENDA ITEMS:

The City Council will first consider in a special meeting the resolution to accept the low bid for the proposed swimming pool renovation project. One option is for the City Council to proceed with the bids as is for a construction price of \$1,523,736. The total project with soft costs would be \$1,904,670. There is a healthy contingency in that figure, so costs could be as low as about \$1.6 million without change orders. The City Council also can decide to reject the bids. The Council would then decide whether or not to rebid the project in the winter. As currently budgeted, debt service on the pool would necessitate a general levy increase of 6-7 percent by itself. Previously programmed budget items could raise the total levy increase to 14-15 percent without further adjustment to the 2013 budget.

The City Council will also consider at the Special meeting a resolution to reappoint election judges to reflect roster changes since the City Council passed the previous resolution. The City will also consider a temporary liquor license application for the Bikes and Bites event downtown next Thursday.

The regular work session consists of the following:

1. Council Member Pokrzywinski requested at the last Council Meeting that the City Council discuss the Waste Water Treatment peer review. Mayor Stauss informed the Council earlier

this year that he wanted to procure MSA Professional Services to provide a “second opinion” regarding the City’s options for future waste water treatment.

2. Police Chief Hedlund will request the City Council to declare seized vehicles as surplus.
3. The Parks and Recreation Director will request that the City Council also declare current Civic Center hockey boards as surplus to be sold in order to make room for the new boards currently on order. The Parks and Recreation Director will also request a \$5000 increase to the contract with Becker Arena Products to allow Becker to remove the old boards.
4. The Interim Fire Chief will present a proposed mutual aid fire fighting agreement with the Grand Forks Air Force Base.
5. The Interim Fire Chief will request an increase to the number of Paid on Call Firefighters currently on the roster. The City currently has 18 Paid on Call fire fighters. City policy typically has allowed for as many as 35. The direct cost to the City is relatively small as Paid on Call firefighters only are paid when they respond to a fire or other emergency. The primary increase will be for additional training hours to the new fire fighters, which again is relatively small.
6. The MPO will discuss the 2013 transit contracts for bus service and Dial-A-Ride services.
7. Council President Buckalew and Council Vice President Gregoire will provide an EDHA Board update to the Council.

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