

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: September 28, 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:

October 2, 2012 – 4:00 pm – Closed Meeting to discuss pending litigation – Training Room

October 2, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

October 3, 2012 – 2:00 pm Feasibility Study Meeting with Ballard King & Associates – Training Room

October 9, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

October 15, 2012 – 10:30am-1:00pm – Flu Shot Clinic – City Hall

October 16, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Pool Feasibility Study

Ballard King and Associates will visit East Grand Forks next week to conduct its first onsite visit of the community and its facilities. The consultants will hold several meetings with local stakeholders, including a public forum on Tuesday evening, followed by a debriefing meeting with the City Council on Wednesday. The consultants also will survey other aquatic facilities in the area. The scheduled meetings are as follows.

Monday, October 1

Save Our Pool – 6:30 pm, Eagles Club

Tuesday, October 2

East Grand Forks Senior High – 8:30 am

Senior Citizens Center – 10:30 am

Central Middle School – 1:30 pm

Public Forum – 5:00pm City Hall Training Room

Wednesday, October 3

City Council Debriefing, 2:00 pm, City Hall Training Room

Engage the Forks

Most are aware now that the Engage the Forks web site is running at www.engagetheforks.com. This site is part of the NV360 community visioning exercise that has been in progress for the past year. Engage the Forks is branded as an online public forum, or “virtual town hall meeting,” in which interested residents can view and offer their comments and suggestions on a wide variety of topics.

Users can input their own suggestions, or comment and agree (“second”) others’ comments. The web site already has had over 700 “interactions” in its first week of operation. All of the community’s libraries, including the EGF Campbell Library and Northland College, can access the web site for those who do not have personal internet access. Training and assistance is available at the libraries.

The project is joint venture of the Community Foundation of Grand Forks-East Grand Forks, the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce, and the Cities of East Grand Forks and Grand Forks. The final results will be compiled for the Community Foundation Annual Meeting in November and again for the Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting in January. The results will be incorporated into a new community vision and strategic plan spearheaded by the Chamber. From East Grand Forks, Corey Thompson, Information Technology Manager, and I participated in NV360 stakeholder groups to help launch this effort. Mr. Thompson especially should be commended for volunteering his time and expertise to integrating social media platforms into Engage the Forks. One can find Engage the Forks on Facebook (www.facebook.com/EngageTheForks) and on Twitter (@EngageTheForks) in addition to the web site.

Campaign Signs

The Administration office has received several inquiries regarding whether or not campaign signs (or any other signs) can be placed in city easements, often referred to as “berms” or “boulevards.” State law supersedes local restrictions on size and number of signs during the campaign season. However, the City can regulate placement of signs on public property or rights of way. According to City Code 152.395, campaign signs cannot be placed on the “street right of way.” A “public right of way,” according to Chapter 152 of the Code of Ordinances, includes the following:

PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY. The area on, below, or above a public roadway, highway, street, cartway, bicycle lane and public sidewalk in which the municipality has an interest, including other dedicated rights-of-way for travel purposes and utility easements of the city. A public right-of-way does not include the airwaves above a right-of-way with regard to cellular or other non-wire telecommunications or broadcast service. The lands described by an easement, deed, dedication, title, law or occupation of a road, highway, street, cartway, bicycle lane, or sidewalk are included as right-of-way.

Therefore, campaigns signs are **NOT** allowed on berms, easements, etc. On properties with sidewalks, campaign signs should be on the building side, or property side, of the sidewalk, away from the street. If there is no sidewalk, a general rule of thumb is that the sign should be *at least* 10 feet off of the curb. City staff, including the Police Department, will begin monitoring the placement of signs after next week. This will allow those who have signs in violation of the city ordinance to relocate signs as soon as possible. After next week, the City will reserve the right to remove any violating signs without further notice. Interested parties can contact the City Administration office with further questions.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

- 1) The boards at the Civic Center are in, they look really good.
- 2) The trees are all down; Dale Gulbranson is currently cutting trees that were not on the bid sheet.

- 3) The stumps will be removed next week.
- 4) Hockey and figure skating registration will take place next week with a night on Wednesday, October 3, where parents can come in and sign their kids up until 7:00 pm.
- 5) The person from Ballards for the swimming pool will be here to conduct meetings with various groups; he is meeting with the SOP on Monday night. Then on Tuesday he is meeting with the high school at 8:30 am, Senior citizens at 10:30 am, middle school at 1:30 pm, and there is a public forum at 5:00pm in the Training Room at City Hall.

Public Works, Jason Stordahl

STREETS

The paving projects on the south end of town are progressing nicely. Currently 13th ST SE, and 14th AVE SE are paved and open to traffic. And the contractor started pouring concrete on Greenway Blvd SE on Thursday.

On the north end we are awaiting the opening of 15th ST. NE, which we hope to open this Friday.

WASTEWATER

So far we have had very little success in trying to mitigate the odor issues around sanitary lift 1. My waste water staff has been continually researching new ways to deal with the odor. This week staff spoke with someone from the City of St. Cloud, and learned about some innovative ways they have come up with to deal with odor issues in the past. We are looking at possibly implementing some of these ideas into our own system in the future.

Before proceeding with any other odor control measures, we are first going to speak with a wastewater expert from MN Rural Water. He will be visiting East Grand Forks next week to take air test samples, as well as water test samples. And based on the samples he will give us recommendations on which avenues that he believes we should take to control the odor.

REMINDER

Fall cleanup will be taking place next week. The schedule for pick up will be the same as in the past, but with one exception. We will now be collecting from residents that live in apartments buildings as well. Since we haven't done this in the past, we don't know exactly how much extra time this will take us. So if we don't get to your apartment building while we are in the area, don't worry we will be back!

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

Traffic Safety – With harvest season in full swing the EGFPD is asking all drivers to be a bit extra careful. Farm trucks add to our traffic and can lose portions of their loads at times, resulting in traffic hazards for other vehicles. In addition mud can be left on roadways resulting in slippery conditions. We are also experiencing the first frosts of the season so drivers need to be aware of the fact that roads may be extra slippery in the mornings.

Pedestrian Safety – We have already had some near misses in the early part of the school year as some drivers are not stopping for pedestrians. By Minnesota State law drivers need to stop for pedestrians in any crosswalk and for pedestrians crossing at intersections where there is not a marked crosswalk. Slow down when you approach these areas and help us keep our pedestrians safe.

AGENDA ITEMS:

The City Council will meet in a *closed session* at 4:00 pm prior to the regular City Council meeting to discuss pending litigation. The closed session will be held in the training room.

Item 3 of the regular meeting requests approval to award the lowest and best bid for 2012 Assessment Job No. 4, which is utility and street construction in the Riverview 10th Addition adjacent to 20th Street SE. The City Engineer will open bids at 10:00 am Tuesday morning, and the bids will be presented at the City Council meeting.

Item 5 considers the approval of an Application of Private Use of Public Streets to BCTGM Local 167G.