

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: November 30, 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:

December 4, 2012 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting – Council Chambers

December 11, 2012 – 5:00 PM – Possible Work Session – Training Room

December 18, 2012 – 5:00 PM – Regular Meeting – Council Chambers

January 8, 2012 – 5:00 PM – Organizational Meeting – Council Chambers

WEEKLY UPDATE:

2013 Budget

The 2013 Proposed Budget has been finalized after several months of preparation and several weeks of Council discussion. The Proposed Budget contains a four-percent increase to the levy. The proposed change represents the first increase since 2010. Most properties with stable property assessed values will not see overall tax increases. The budget continues the city's commitment to capital maintenance and replacement of the last several years by dedicating \$250,000 to street improvements, approximately \$300,000 of equipment replacement, \$250,000 for building maintenance, and annual park playground replacement. There are no other fee or service changes. The primary additions to the 2012 budget include \$400,000 for exterior and aesthetic upgrades to the Police Department Headquarters, and the addition of a Parks Maintenance Worker position. The Parks Maintenance Worker role will include City Hall maintenance and Library maintenance. The position has been vacant for nearly two years.

Labor Negotiations

The City Council labor negotiation team has received proposals from four of the five labor bargaining units that represent City employees. We expect most negotiations to resume in January. The five current labor agreements expire on December 31, 2012.

Green Choices Challenge

Residents have one more month to join the Green Choices Challenge (www.recyclebank.com/greenchoices). East Grand Forks slipped to 23rd place in November. East Grand Forks can still pull through with strong December. Sign up today or contact Public Works at 773-1313. Additionally, residents will have access to the Recyclebank program for at least six more months following the Green Choices Challenge completion at the end of the year. Residents can earn

rewards redeemable for gift cards, discounts, and coupons simply by reporting recycling and other green activities.

League workshops

The League of Minnesota Cities is hosting the Conferences for Elected Officials in January. Contact Administration if you are interested in attending.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund

Safe Driving Tips – The Holiday Season is one where everyone seems to be in a hurry. Speed is one of the biggest factors in many crashes and can lead to serious injuries and even death. Help us keep this holiday season a safe one and slow down – and always wear your seat belt.

Deer Activity – There has been a recent increase in deer activity within the city limits of East Grand Forks. Deer can show up anywhere in town – especially at night – but are most common in areas along our two rivers. The Greenway is home to many species of wildlife and they are fun to watch but animals the size of deer can cause serious damage in a crash. Deer are especially common in the areas along River Road and near the State Campground, near the Point and Louis Murray Bridges, and near the coulee along Bygland Road. Keep your eyes open for wildlife and stay safe.

Public Works Department, Jason Stordahl

WASTEWATER

We have received more information from Hawkings regarding odor control options. We have selected a treatment that we will apply at lifts 4 and 5. We are cautiously optimistic that this treatment will alleviate our odor problems.

STORM WATER

ALERT: We have had some vandalism to our flood walls, and signs along bike paths. If you see anyone spray painting graffiti on flood walls, signs, or any other city owned property please call EGF Police Department at 773-1104.

Agenda Items

Note: Tuesday's Regular City Council meeting will begin at **7:00 pm** to comply with state law regarding the public hearing on the 2013 Proposed Budget.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday for the first reading of an ordinance to annex property into city limits. RJ Zavoral and Sons, Inc. has petitioned the City to annex property and improvements on a platted lot east of current city limits on 10th Street NE. The City Council approved on November 8th a development agreement with the company to extend utilities to the site.

The consent agenda contains the following items:

- Authorizing the Fire Chief to promote and recruit for the positions of Assistant Fire Chief, Fire Engineer, and Fire Fighter.
- Approval to promote Megan Nelson to the position of Executive Assistant and authorizing the City Administrator to recruit and fill the position of Accounting Technician.
- Approval to recruit and hire a vacant Truck Driver position in Public Works. The position is included in the 2013 Proposed Budget.
- Consider increasing the Cemetery winter internment rate to \$1250.

Item 15 considers authorizing the City Administrator to recruit and fill the new position of City Planner. The City Planner would oversee the functions of Planning and Zoning, Inspections, Facility Management, ADA coordination, and sustainability. The position does not directly affect the city budget because it is integrated with existing city functions.

Item 16 considers transferring \$500,000 from the Levee Fund to the Water Fund to contribute the Lime Pond project that is substantially complete. The Water and Light Department had to relocate its former lime pond as part of the original flood control levee project. Therefore, \$500,000 was targeted from the original state and federal grants funds to offset the utility cost.

Items 17 and 18 consider approving the 2012 Proposed Final Budget and Levy. The hearing will consider a proposed levy increase of 4 percent. The City Council did not raise the levy in 2011 or 2012 Adopted Budgets. Most properties with stable valuations will not see overall tax increases in 2013 under the proposed levy.