

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2013 - 5:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for February 12, 2013 was called to order by Council President Craig Buckalew at 5:00 P.M.

CALL OF ROLL:

On a Call of Roll the following members of the East Grand Forks City Council were present: Mayor Lynn Stauss, Council President Craig Buckalew, Council Vice President Greg Leigh, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Henry Tweten, and Mark Olstad.

Dave Aker, Parks & Recreation Superintendent; Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Greg Boppre, City Engineer; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Scott Huizenga, City Administrator; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant; Jim Richter, EDHA Director; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present

1. Reconsider Excess Liability Coverage – Karla Anderson

Ms. Anderson explained to the council there was a little confusion and some questions that needed to be answered before proceeding with what final decision needs to be made with excess liability coverage. She continued explaining in the past the city has waived the limit but did not purchase additional insurance. To purchase the additional insurance would cost \$35,000.00 that was not budgeted for. After some discussion the choice with most support was to waive coverage but not purchase the additional insurance.

2. Special Events - Andy Magness

Mr. Magness informed the council of two special events that his group, Ground Up Adventures, would like to sponsor. They are going to both take place down in the greenway area and in the river. One of the events happened last year, a swim/paddle from East Grand Forks up to Oslo. He explained how he again is partnering up with the Grand Forks Sheriff's Office for safety and informing Polk County Sheriff's Office about this event to receive permission to be in the Red River. The second event is an obstacle course that will be laid out on both sides of the greenway. Again they will have the insurance, security, and anything else necessary for the event to take place. Council members and the mayor commended Mr. Magness for setting up these events and utilizing the greenway.

3. MNDOT ADA Project at 2nd & Demers – Greg Boppre

Mr. Boppre informed the council of updates that will be taking place at various crosswalks in town so they are ADA compliant. There is a project that will be taking place at the intersection of 2nd St and Demers. MNDOT will be paying for this project. This intersection will be closed for at least a couple weeks at some point this summer while the project is being completed.

4. 13CP2 Police Building Improvements – Greg Boppre

Mr. Boppre introduced Brent Dammen to the council. He is the architect who put the report together regarding all of the repairs that need to be done to the Police Department building. He explained the different repairs and options that could be done to rehab the building. Mr. Boppre also explained to the council that they included alternatives for this project so it can stay within the budget. The council members discussed everything that needs to be taken into account for this project, including the decision that needs to be made with the dispatch area. Council member Tweten asked if some of the flood money could be used to help with the costs of this project and Mr. Huizenga said we will ask.

5. Background Check Ordinance – Ron Galstad

Mr. Galstad told the council Chief Hedlund was contacted by MNCIS (Minnesota Criminal Information System). By 2015 they are requiring all cities have passed a specific background check procedure in place. He drafted up an ordinance that would comply with the new requirements and once adopted, the current ordinance would be terminated. Council member Olstad asked if only Chief Hedlund and his designated official allowed to complete a background check or is there the possibility of having more than one designated official. From what Mr. Galstad has read over, he hadn't seen anything that would prevent Chief Hedlund from appointing more than one designated official to run background checks.

6. 2013 Police SUV Order/Declaration of Surplus Property – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund informed the council about the information he has gathered about the purchase of a new SUV for the police department. This item was budgeted for in 2013. Currently the cost of the vehicle and equipment required will be coming in under budget. The cost of striping the vehicle is not included but most likely would also be covered with the remaining funds. The Expedition will be kept but only used when necessary.

7. Declare Surplus Property of Seized/Forfeited Firearms – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund explained the police department has a number of firearms that are of no use to the department. To help with costs of items they do need or might need to be replaced, they would like to trade these firearms in and purchase what is needed. Council member Tweten asked if they will be running their own background checks on the people purchasing the firearms. Chief Hedlund explained they only sell these firearms to a business, obtain credit, and purchase firearms or other items needed for the department.

8. Police Officer Hiring Request – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund told the council the department has been a man down since the resignation of Andy Boen. He had just started the process of making a roster in the case of this happening. The hiring process has started and he would like the council's permission to hire a new officer hopefully by the end of March as well as complete a roster.

9. Wedding Reception at Civic Center Request – Dave Aker

Mr. Aker informed the council the Civic Center has been rented out for a wedding reception on June 22, 2013. The rental for the event was \$500.00 which already has been collected. The couple also has put down a deposit for clean up, hired security, and has insurance in place for this event. The Blue Moose will be catering the event as well as serving alcohol. After some discussion the council doesn't feel this is a good practice to be doing on a regular basis. They don't want to be taking business away from any of the local businesses. Mr. Aker told the council the couple is expecting over 400 guests at the reception, they needed the space.

10. Park Maintenance Hiring Request – Dave Aker

Mr. Aker asked to hire another person for his department. This position has been included in the budget for 2013. He told the council the Parks and Rec department has been a person down for the last two years and they are falling behind. Dale is doing a good job but needs help. Mr. Huizenga added that this position would also help with the maintenance work at City Hall and at the library.

11. New Construction Incentive Tax Rebate Program – Jim Richter

Mr. Richter asked the council to renew the New Construction Incentive Tax Rebate Program until 2015. He explained how well the program has been received. Crookston just renewed their program and the county is expecting East Grand Forks do to the same. Realtors use this program as a marketing tool to help sell lots and homes in East Grand Forks. Discussion followed about what helps lots and homes sell in the city and what hurts these sales. Council member Vetter asked where the funds come from. Mr. Richter explained that this rebate is from their taxes they paid in.

12. Fire Escrow Account – Megan Nelson

Ms. Nelson explained to the council it could be to the city's benefit to get added to the list of cities that are protected by a Minnesota statute that will basically provide a safety net in the case of a property owner not cleaning up after a fire or explosion. Instead of all of the insurance money going straight to the property owner, 25% of the money would be put in the city's fire escrow account. This would pay for the cleanup. Any money left over would be returned to the property owner. As long as the property owner is taking care of the cleanup and there isn't any health or safety violations there would not be any funds turned over to the city. Council member Tweten wanted to make sure that this process would not affect anyone's credit.

13. Snow Parking – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund explained how there have been issues when it comes to snow emergency parking in the city. There are issues around apartment buildings that don't have enough parking for their residents and around the school. Mr. Stordahl added that usually a two inch snow event doesn't cause too many issues. After much discussion the council seemed to favor changing a snow emergency from two inches to four inches. There was also talk about seeing there is a way to send out a notification to residents so they know when the streets will be cleaned so their cars can be moved.

14. Compressor At Civic Center – Dave Aker

Mr. Aker told the council that a compressor is down at the Civic Center. This compressor is beyond repair. There is one that can be put in but it will take time and the gauges need to be changed. All of the repairs should be completed by the time the section tournament starts next week. Mr. Aker reminded the council that these compressors and the system are getting older and will need to be replaced so this is something that should be put in the budget within the next couple years.

15. MPCA – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl told the council that he arranged a meeting with Nicole Blasing via the web on February 21, 2013 at 9:30am. Even though she isn't able to make it all the way to East Grand Forks, the council can have a meeting with her and her staff to have questions and concerns addressed and answered. Mr. Stordahl asked that questions be submitted before the meeting so Ms. Blasing has the people needed in the meeting to answer the questions council has for the MPCA.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 12, 2013 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:37 P.M.

Voting Aye: Leigh, Vetter, Buckalew, Tweten, and Olstad.

Voting Nay: None

Scott Huizenga, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer