

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2013 - 5:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for September 10, 2013 was called to order by Council President Craig Buckalew at 5:19 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, Ron Vonasek, Henry Tweten, Mark Olstad, and Chad Grassel.

Dave Aker, Parks & Recreation Superintendent; Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; Karl Lindquist, Interim City Administrator; 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. Long Range Transportation Plan Update – Earl Haugen

Mr. Haugen informed the council that the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the MPO, started a process in 2012 revising the Long Range Transportation Plan for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. He explained how the deadline for this process has been moved to January 31, 2014 so in the next few months the Planning Commission and City Council will be reviewing the draft plans so the revisions can be adopted by December 18, 2013. Mr. Haugen then introduced Mr. Brian Shorten from SRF Consulting Group.

Mr. Shorten explained the role that SRF has in this process and went over the revenue forecast and Minnesota Financial Overview for the long range plan. He stated how the MPO can't overspend the funds for projects and added how right now East Grand Forks has room for expansion because there are more funds than projected costs. He also did a quick overview of the funding for North Dakota and how they don't have the same outlook as East Grand Forks.

Mr. Haugen finished the presentation by telling the council that after the current repairs are completed to the highway system MNDOT is projecting to be back in 10 years for more maintenance work to the roads. He added that the MPO will be asking the council for input for projects in the future since there are funds that are still available.

2. Project Lifesaver Grant – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund reminded the council of the search for an autistic child. He said that he had been approached by a mother who has an autistic child in East Grand Forks about seeing if the Police Department would start Project Lifesaver. Chief Hedlund explained that Project Lifesaver is a non-profit organization has a system that uses a type of tracking device for children with autism or people suffering from dementia who have a tendency to wander off. He explained that local law enforcement would have the system in place to help track these individuals if they are missing. Chief Hedlund informed the council that he had applied for a grant with Project Lifesaver and recently found out that East Grand Forks was awarded the grant. He added that not all of the details have been worked out but as of now the City will be getting equipment and trained for at least one year. He also added that fundraising efforts have been started to help with the costs of this program but if there are costs they will be minimal.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

3. Pay Plan for Non-Union Employees – Karl Lindquist

Mr. Lindquist informed the council that all of the unions had settled except the fire department. He said how these bargaining units that had settled with a 1.5% increase to the current pay plan. He added how he spoke with the City labor negotiator about including this for the non-union employees would be a good to keep everything consistent. He said that this increase would be based on an employee's anniversary date. Mayor Stauss asked what happens if someone is already at the top of their pay range. Mr. Lindquist responded by saying they would receive a 1% increase. Council member Olstad asked what this 1.5% increase will do to the budget. Mr. Lindquist explained how there was already a 1% increase added in to the budget. Discussion followed about how the entire scale will be moved up 1.5% and when employees move up a step they receive approximately a 4% increase. Council member Vetter asked what will happen to all of the employees that already passed their anniversary date. Mr. Lindquist said they would receive back pay. Council member Vetter asked how employees move up on the pay scale. Mr. Lindquist explained how for each year employees move up a step and the only way to move to a new grade is by receiving a promotion. He added that the grades and steps were based off of the information put together by Springsted.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

4. Street Crack Sealing – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl stated he is putting in a request to council to have approximately 200,000 feet of crack sealing completed and that this was a budgeted item. He explained the two quotes he received and recommended to award the job to Northwest Asphalt because they had the lower quote. Mr. Stordahl also added that Northwest Asphalt has done this job for the City the last few years in our community and commented on the excellent job they do since all of the seals have held very well. Mayor Stauss asked what happens when the blades run over the seals. Mr. Stordahl explained how so far it has hardly any affect of the seals. Council member Tweten asked if the sites had already been selected and if the cemetery roads were ever considered for

this. Mr. Stordahl said yes and explained how some north end areas will be finished up, most of the work will be completed in the south end of town, and including the cemetery is something they can look at in the future. Council President Buckalew asked if the ICON system was being utilized for this project. Mr. Stordahl said not at this time because he has had limited time to use the system.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

5. Lift Station 1 Pump Replacement – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl informed the council that there was a damaged pump in lift station number 1 which is the primary lift and how that is the lift which pumps everything out to the ponds. He stated that repairing this pump would cost over \$20,000 and to replace the pump with a new one with a 5 year warranty would be approximately \$29,000. Mr. Stordahl pointed out that this pump was scheduled to be replaced in 2014 but he is recommending purchasing a new pump and replacing the pump this year. He added that there was enough money in the waste water fund for this purchase.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

6. Discussion of Increase in Fixed Sewage Rates – Craig Buckalew

Council President Buckalew started by saying this item had been tabled and added how it needs to be brought back up. He stated how the council raised rates a year or so ago and added a gradual increase to rates would be better than making a huge increase all at once. Council member Tweten said that with increasing water rates water usage going down the council should monitor the amount of funds being raised. He added that the new developments in the City will help add to the fund balance. Discussion followed on how many households are in the City, how apartment buildings will be affected by this increase, and if the City has this projected bonded funds will need to be raised in order to pay it back. Council member Vetter explained the council needs to be careful so the sewer rates don't get out of whack. Council member Olstad asked what the balance what had been raised so far. Ms. Anderson stated she would get that to them for the next meeting.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

7. Waste Water Treatment System Discussion – Mayor Stauss

Mayor Stauss stated how the council has had many discussions about what project to move forward with for waste water treatment and said how the council should make a decision. He explained how representatives from the City will be presenting to the Capital Investment Committee on September 18th and will be asking for funding for a waste water project. He added how the City would be better off asking for funding if they had a project picked. Mayor Stauss also commented how he has been speaking with representatives at both the state and federal levels to see if there is any funding available to help with a waste water project.

Council member Olstad stated how the timeline the council was looking at would not require the council to pick a project until the fall of 2014. He stated the council should continue discussing and be comfortable with the decision they have to make. He asked if this was for bonding in 2014 because the project won't start until 2016. Mayor Stauss stated he was told the funds could be set aside for the 2016 project. Council member Olstad asked to push back and offer an olive branch to Grand Forks to see what will happen. Mayor Stauss asked the council who they have reached out to because everyone has had lots of time to speak with residents. He again asked the council to vote on this project at the next council meeting. More discussion with questions if the council should have the COSA updated, how much was spent on the last COSA to update the information, and how the media has not gotten the new information out to the public so they are not aware of what the new proposed costs are. The mayor then again asked to have this voted on at the next council meeting.

This item will be referred to City Council for action.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2013 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:25 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Karl Lindquist, Interim City Administrator