

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2013 - 5:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Regular Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for September 17, 2013 was called to order by Council President 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: 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; Greg Boppre, City Engineer; Dan Boyce, Water & Light Manager; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Karl Lindquist, Interim City Administrator; Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant; Jim Richter, EDHA Director; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present*

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**OPEN FORUM:**

*“An opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not on the current Agenda. Items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate.” If you would like to address the City Council, please come up to the podium to do so.”*

Mr. Lindquist stated that a resident had called and was upset with a fee she was charged for subordination agreements. He explained that the resident was going to try and make it to the meeting and if she couldn't he told her that he would speak to the issue. Mr. Lindquist asked to have the fee schedule brought to the next work session to be discussed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Regular Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council of September 3, 2013.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the “Special Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City

Council of September 10, 2013.

3. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council of September 10, 2013.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO APPROVE ITEMS ONE (1) THROUGH THREE (3).**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

**SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE**

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*Items under the “Consent Agenda” will be adopted with one motion; however, council members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.*

4. Consider approving the request to start a hiring register for the Police Department.
5. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-89 accepting the grant from Project Lifesaver.
6. Consider approving the request to replace a pump in life station 1 by Minnesota Pump Works for the amount of \$28,989.
7. Consider awarding the street crack sealing job to Northwest Asphalt and Maintenance to seal 200,000 feet of cracks in the streets for \$96,000.
8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-90 authorizing the implementation of the updated compensation plan for non-union employees.
9. Consider approving the application for an Exempt Gambling Permit for a raffle and paddlewheel for the Grand Forks Red River Lions Club to be held November 13, 2013 at the American Legion Club, 1009 Central Ave NW, East Grand Forks, MN 56721 and waive the 30-day waiting period.
10. Consider approving the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association Service Agreement for the Safety Management Program split 50/50 between the City and Water & Light Department for beginning October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, TO APPROVE ITEMS FOUR (4) THROUGH TEN (10).**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

**ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS:**

11. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission Meeting for August 15, 2013

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

12. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-91 approving the State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreements with the City of East Grand Forks on behalf of its City Attorney and Police Department.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-91 APPROVING THE STATE OF MINNESOTA JOINT POWERS AGREEMENTS WITH THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS ON BEHALF OF ITS CITY ATTORNEY AND POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

Council President Buckalew asked if this agreement was the same as past agreements. Mr. Galstad said that it was but now both he and the police department will have access to the State's criminal history records. Council Vice-President Leigh asked if there was a cost associated with this. Mr. Galstad said not that he was aware of.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

13. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-92 acknowledging the completion of the MNDOT projects on Demers Ave and Business Highway 2.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-92 ACKNOWLEDGING THE COMPLETION OF THE MNDOT PROJECTS ON DEMERS AVE AND BUSINESS HIGHWAY 2.**

Council Vice-President Leigh said he would like to commend the MnDOT for being very speedy and completing the project down town so quickly. Council member Tweten added that Mr. Stordahl was also very affective getting the bridge area back open. He also commented how the foreman of the project stated he never had such cooperation from a city before.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

14. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-93 approving Amendment No. 12 to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Employment and Economic Development and the City of East Grand Forks accepting \$226,443 to be used for tax reductions.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-93 APPROVING AMENDMENT NO. 12 TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS ACCEPTING \$226,443 TO BE USED FOR TAX REDUCTIONS.**

Council member Vetter asked if this was a city-wide program or only certain areas are eligible. Mr. Richter stated that as long as they qualify under the Border City Enterprise Zone they would be eligible.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

15. Consider awarding the job of replacing all four VFDs in lift station for to Integrated Process Solutions in the amount of \$46,824.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VONASEK, TO AWARD THE JOB OF REPLACING ALL FOUR VFDS IN LIFT STATION FOR TO INTEGRATED PROCESS SOLUTIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$46,824.**

Mr. Stordahl told the council how there are lots of problems with the SCADA system at Lift Station 1. He said that they were going to have the system checked over and see what needs to be changed or replaced. He added that this proposed amount is the total if all VFDs need to be replaced but there is a chance not all of them will have to be replaced. Council Vice-President asked if this repair would prevent backups. Mr. Stordahl stated that it would since this system turns the pumps on and off.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

16. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-94 implementing an increase to the fixed meter sewage rates taking effect on October 1, 2013.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-94 IMPLEMENTING AN INCREASE TO THE FIXED METER SEWAGE RATES TAKING EFFECT ON OCTOBER 1, 2013.**

Council President Buckalew stated that the council had proposed a flat rate increase but said that the increase has been changed to a percentage rather than a flat rate. Mr. Boyce informed the council that a flat rate increase is not fair and equitable. He added that the percentage increase would be based on the size of the water meter and the customer's ability to put stress on the system. Council member Leigh asked who has the four and six inch meters. Mr. Boyce said he didn't know all of them but he did know that Water and Light and the public school had the four inch meter and the DNR had a six inch meter. Council Vice-President Leigh stated that some of these rates had gone up substantially and how it was not the intention of the council to raise rates that high right away. Mr. Boyce added that the bulk of the meters were small in size.

Council member Vetter stated that in the last few years the trend had been not to raise taxes but raising fees instead. He added how the council should be raising taxes to pay for services instead of fees. He commented how residents can't deduct fees but they can deduct taxes from their taxes, how the new waste water system shouldn't be paid for by fees, and how the City needs to look into bonding. Council President Buckalew stated how it would be the same amount raised regardless of where it is coming from.

Council Vice-President Leigh asked if it was necessary to approve this resolution tonight and wait to see where the City can find funding for the waste water project. Mr. Lindquist stated the mayor would have reminded the council that the residents are going to have to pay their fair share so the City is going to have to raise rates or taxes for this project to be eligible for funding from state and federal agencies. Council member Vetter stated how he thinks the residents are already paying their fair share. More discussion followed about how funds should be raised, if it needs to be put in a dedicated fund, and how the City would like to be eligible for a grant with the USDA but residents would have to pay \$60 per month.

Council member Olstad asked why this raise would only add \$180,000 to the fund and the other increase raised more. Mr. Boyce stated that with the last raise the council also raised the usage rate for both the residence and commercial users which helped increase the amount and this time there is only an increase to the fixed rates.

*Voting Aye: Leigh, Vonasek, Buckalew, Tweten, and Olstad.*

*Voting Nay: Grassel and Vetter.*

17. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-95 selecting a waste water project for future treatment of the City's waste water.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-95 SELECTING A WASTE WATER STABILIZATION POND PROJECT FOR FUTURE TREATMENT OF THE CITY'S WASTE WATER.**

Mr. Olstad stated how there has been lots questions and discussions regarding this issue. He stated how the council really needs to take a look at how much is going to be spent on this project. He asked if the council can count on bonding money from the State or money from grants. He added how he thinks most of the cost will have to be paid for by the residents. Council member Olstad commented how it is optimistic to think the State will approve funds for the project and then hold on to them. He continued by saying how eventually tertiary treatment will have to be added, the interconnect project will alleviate regulations from the MCPA, an agreement can be worked out between the two cities, and how the council needs to do what is best for the City since there are other projects that also need to be addressed.

Council member Tweten said that the State typically pays 50% of a project and sometimes includes a separate allocation for projects which are trying to eliminate phosphorus. He added that the governor and current leadership in the state legislature are emphasizing sewage projects and he is confident they will live up to what they are saying. Council member Tweten asked Council member Vetter if he is suggesting the present site is used and not a complete replacement. Council member Vetter stated that

was correct and said the engineers will have to decide what needs to be done to bring the ponds up to code.

Council President Buckalew asked if there were any more comments from the council. Council member Olstad asked for more clarification on what Council member Vetter is proposing. Council member Vetter stated that he is asking for the engineers develop a plan for stabilization ponds to meet MPCA requirements. He added that if that calls for a complete replacement of the lagoons then that is what will happen. Council member Olstad stated how this was not voting on a system. Council member Vetter stated that this is for a lagoon system and this will give the engineers direction so they can move forward with a plan for a lagoon system and the interconnect will no longer be an option.

Mr. Boppre stated that if the stabilization ponds are selected by the council he will make sure the MPCA requirements are met. He added that it is also his job to fine tune the plan and deal with the regulatory agencies. He ended by saying if it is possible to save money on this project, he will try to do that to.

Mr. Lindquist asked for some clarification on the motion and asked Council member Vetter if his motion will address tertiary treatment. Council member Vetter said not at this point. Mr. Boppre stated how there is time to develop the plan and how he will be including tertiary treatment in the facility plan for the future and be watching for new regulations from MPCA.

*Voting Aye: Leigh, Grassel, Vetter, Vonasek, and Tweten.*

*Voting Nay: Buckalew and Olstad.*

#### **CLAIMS:**

18. Consider adopting Resolution No. 13-09-96 authorizing the City of East Grand Forks to approve purchases from Hardware Hank the goods referenced in check numbers 16823 for a total of \$698.23 whereas Council Member Buckalew is personally interested financially in the contract.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LEIGH, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 13-09-96 AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS TO APPROVE PURCHASES FROM HARDWARE HANK THE GOODS REFERENCED IN CHECK NUMBERS 16823 FOR A TOTAL OF \$698.23 WHEREAS COUNCIL MEMBER BUCKALEW IS PERSONALLY INTERESTED FINANCIALLY IN THE CONTRACT.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Abstain: Buckalew.*

19. Consider authorizing the Interim City Administrator to issue payment of recommended bills and payroll.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, TO AUTHORIZE THE INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ISSUE PAYMENT OF RECOMMENDED BILLS AND PAYROLL.**

Council member Olstad asked if the payment to the Drug Task Force was from the vehicles sold. Chief Hedlund stated that it was their portion of the proceeds from the vehicles of the most recent auction.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

**COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:**

Council Member Vonasek thanked Mr. Stordahl for doing such a good job with mosquito spraying this year.

Council Member Tweten also thanked Mr. Stordahl regarding mosquito spraying. He added that the general public was very aware of the effort by both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks to eliminate disease in the community.

Council Member Leigh thanked Mr. Stordahl for cleaning up some areas that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Lindquist thanked the Home Run Club for having two new scoreboards installed at Stauss Park. He stated these score boards will have LED lighting and cost around \$30,000. He commented how they might be asking the City for about \$5,000 to help with this project. Mr. Lindquist stated again that he would like to thank the Home Run Club on behalf of the City.

Mr. Boppre told the council that he will be updating the facility plan which will be sending to the MPCA and bring it before the council so they can review it.

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VONASEK, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2013 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:37 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer