

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014 - 5:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for March 11, 2014 was called to order by Council Vice-President Greg Leigh 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 Vice President Greg Leigh, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Dale Helms, Henry Tweten, Mark Olstad, and Chad Grassel.*

*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; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant; and Jim Richter, EDHA Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

*The Council Vice-President Determined a Quorum was present*

**1. 2013 City Project No. 1 Sidewalk Improvements – Greg Boppre**

Mr. Boppre informed the council that this job needed to be re-bid. He explained how Paras Contracting was denied the bid from MNDOT because they did not meet their DBE requirements. He then went over a timeline of advertising for bids, having the bid opening, and awarding the bid so the project can still move forward this year. Mr. Boppre also explained to Council member Helms how he likes to include a breakdown of the costs of the project and where the funding is coming from on the RCA the council receives. He said he would be asking at the next meeting for permission to move forward with this plan.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

**2. 2015 City Project No. 1 Stabilization Ponds – Greg Boppre**

Mr. Boppre told the council the meeting between the MPCA, the PFA, and council members and staff went well. He added how they are encouraging the City to move forward with this project. Mr. Boppre also told the council that he has been notified the facility plan submitted to the MPCA for review will be approved so with council permission he would like to start the designing phase of this project. Council member Tweten commented how much ground work has already been done for this project and how the council needs to stay diligent on this project. Council member Olstad added that it was nice to sit face to face with this group of people, to be able to know what they think of this project and how they helped brainstorm to find ways of funding. Mayor Stauss commented how a meeting is

better and makes more of an impact than sending a letter asking for help. More discussion followed about how the City might be able to receive some funding for phosphorus removal and how the project needs to move forward with interest rates still low.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

### **3. 2014 Assessment Job No. 1 17<sup>th</sup> St Reconstruction – Greg Boppre**

Mr. Boppre stated he had the plans and specifications prepared for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street reconstruction project prepared along with an estimated budget and report of feasibility. He reminded the council this project is being paid for in part by federal funds the City receives every four years. He then explained the proposed timeline for this project. Council Vice-President Leigh asked where the money to cover the \$605,000 will be coming from. Mr. Boppre stated by assessing the affected properties. He added how the City can decide to only assess 30% or 40% of the project to the affected properties and explained how state aid maintenance funds could be used to help cover some of these costs. Discussion followed about what would have to happen to make this a state aid street, why the cost estimates include a 5% cost for administration, legal, and contingency, and how half of the properties on the frontage road will be charged end benefit for this project.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

### **4. In-Depth Inspections Contract – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis began by informing the council the end of the contract with Indepth Inspection was coming up. She explained how she is very pleased with their work and how they have not missed an inspection. She added how they do receive half of the amount collected in permit fees which has grown with the larger projects being completed in the City. Council Vice-President Leigh asked if Ms. Ellis was seeking another 12 month contract with Indepth Inspections. Ms. Ellis told the council that at this time the Community Development office is still changing, how they might be taking on more rental inspections, and will have to start storm water inspections. She stated she would need time to complete a job description that would cover all of the duties.

Council member Tweten stated he disagreed 100% with renewing the contract and explained how the City needs to hire a new building official. Council member Vetter asked if the City did not continue with the contract, if Indepth Inspections would finish the jobs they have already collected on. Ms. Ellis said that is something she would request and commented how they completed the inspections on the Minnesota New Heights Building even though they did not get any portion of the permit fees for that project. Mr. Murphy told the council about his previous experience changing from a contracted service to the hiring of a building official. He explained how they pro-rated the final projects and paid accordingly. Council member Olstad said he understands Council member Tweten and added how there is not enough time to hire someone for this position because everything needs to be set up correctly.

Ms. Ellis informed the council of the changes coming in the office with the permit technician possibly retiring, how transit is changing and requiring more time, and how she wants to figure out the rolls of the people working in the office. Council member Helms said he was in favor of extending the contract. Discussion followed about how different each year can be since a few years ago there were very few house permits and no commercial permits so the amount that would be collected in fees would be minimal and if there is something in the contract the City would like changed they could try

and negotiate a change.

Ms. Ellis proposed a six month extension to the inspection contract; she would create a list of job duties, bring it back to the council, and the council can decide how they would like to move forward with building inspections. Council member Grassel stated how this would need to get done and be brought back to the council within a couple months. Ms. Ellis stated the contract would be up in September so she would try and bring back the information by May. Mr. Galstad told the council if they choose to move forward with hiring a building official he would request a document that would settle the issue about payment of the permits and who was completing the inspections on those permits.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

#### **5. Organization of EDHA and City Involvement – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy told the council that when they were reviewing the building inspections he thought they could also handle all of the rental inspections which would include the inspections that the EDHA completes. He stated that he started looking into the EDHA and what the City's role is. He added how Mr. Galstad gave him some documentation about the formation of the EDA which he still had to review. Mr. Murphy asked the council for their input on what should be looked into. Council Vice-President Leigh commented how Economic Development and the Housing Authority were separate and then joined together. He added that he should work with Mr. Richter on this. Mr. Galstad stated he could also ask Mr. Wogaman about it since he was there when the EDA originally formed. Mr. Wogaman stated how they worked hard on getting businesses into East Grand Forks and how there were problems in the beginning but things are now worked out.

#### **6. Adoption of New Adult Use Ordinance – Nancy Ellis/Ron Galstad**

Mr. Galstad stated this change in the ordinance stems from an issue brought up by Fantasy's. He explained the proposed new ordinance includes new zoning to include I-1 and I-2 zones for businesses that are classified as sexually oriented businesses. He went over the maps and explained how there has to be a place where these businesses can be located which has to be a minimum of 250 feet away from receptors such as a school. He added they worked with experts in the Twin Cities on this issue. Council member Helms asked if Fantasy's was okay where they were located. Mr. Galstad stated they were always okay since they are not considered a sexually oriented business.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

#### **7. Street Improvement Districts – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy stated how this item had been discussed at the last work session and both Council members Vetter and Helms were provided the information on what street improvement districts are. He reminded the council street improvement districts could be used for street maintenance, overlays, milling, etc and asked if the council wanted to take action on this issue. Council member Olstad stated how the council has been looking at this issue and it would have to be determined how to charge for this. He explained how he had listened to hearings that discussed issues how schools and non-profits would be affected. Council Vice-President Leigh also commented on how this would affect state aid roads. Discussion followed about how rental units could be charged, how this is a good idea but it has to be done fairly, how there are many constituents currently paying specials, and how this could turn into political based street repairs instead of needs based street repairs.

Council member Vetter stated that parking districts might work since the City has the ability to assess for services. Mr. Galstad informed the council that they would have to pick street improvement districts or to use special assessments because they are not able to use both. Ms. Ellis stated that the City has the ICON Pavement system so every year they can see what projects they could complete with the amount of money available they have so if the council decided to move forward with street improvement districts it should be based on needs of the community and not become political. More discussion followed about how the state government would still need to approve the legislation before cities can set up and start utilizing street improvement districts. Council member Grassel commented how it would be hard to tell residents they are paying for streets that are blocks away from where they live. Council Vice-President Leigh stated this could be another tool for the council to utilize to keep up the streets in the City. Council member Vetter stated it is a big issue.

#### **8. Review of Assessment Policy – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy told the council he had looked over the current assessment policy the City uses and asked the council if he could review the policy and bring back an updated version. He explained some of the issues with the current policy which included not being able to specify between a new street and a reconstruction and how it does not specify how the assessments are assessed on the property. Council Vice-President Leigh told Mr. Murphy to take a look at the policy and bring back proposed changes to another work session. Mr. Boppre added that whatever the City would like to do they will implement on projects.

#### **9. Civic Center Expansion – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy explained how there is a Title Nine issue with the locker room situation at the Civic Center. Council Vice-President Leigh added how the locker room situation at the Civic Center which the City has discussed for years now. Mr. Murphy continued by telling the council he had met at the Civic Center with Mr. Scanlan, Mr. Aker, and Mr. Hajicek and discussed possible options to add in a girls locker room. He stated he met with staff on January 29<sup>th</sup> and tried to find the most effective way to add a girls locker room at the Civic Center. Mr. Murphy then explained how he had asked for a drawing and estimates of an option he and staff had come up with and is asking for direction from council. Discussion followed about who should be hired to complete the design for any proposed changes to the Civic Center, how long the council has been discussing this issue, and how there have been numerous options for the council to consider. Council Vice-President Leigh stated how three options will be brought back to the next work session for discussion.

#### **ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 11, 2014 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:12 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer