

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2014 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for October 14, 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; Dan Boyce, Water & Light Manager; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; 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 Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

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

**1. Future of Parcel 40.00149.00 – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy explained that the City had been contacted by Huntsville Township asking who the current owner was of the property that was being used for storage. He added that there is no lease agreement for this property and asked how the Council would like to move forward. Representatives from Huntsville Township explained how this property is in violation of the zoning ordinance and they would like to know who to deal with to have it brought back into compliance. Discussion followed about what this property is going to be used for, what the future zoning might be, what the restrictions might be on this property, and that it was transferred to the City from the County. Council Vice-President Leigh asked for more research to be done on this item and have it brought back to the next work session.

**2. Bygland Bike Lanes – Steve Emery**

Mr. Emery informed the Council that they had been working to try and include sharrows on Bygland Road from Business Highway 2 all the way out to South Point Elementary School and Central Middle School. He explained how the sharrows would work and the signage that goes along with them. He told the Council that if the project changes and the construction cost increases to about \$62,500 the City would then be eligible to apply for TAP funds to help pay for

this project. He stated how there would be an 80/20 split on construction costs and explained where a sidewalk could be made wider and turned into a trail to increase the costs. He added that there are specific deadlines they have to meet in order to apply for the funds. Ms. Erickson stated that a letter of intent needed to be sent in by October 31<sup>st</sup>, applications were due by January 9<sup>th</sup>, and the Council would know by April 15<sup>th</sup> if they were going to receive funding.

Mayor Stauss asked what the cost of repainting these every year would be. Mr. Emery estimated around \$24,000 for paint. Mr. Stordahl added that they might not have to repaint every year if the sharrows were not painted the path of the traffic or they could put the paint inside of milling so it is not scraped off during snow removal. Discussion followed about if this as requested by the taxpayers, how there are more people biking around town, that Bygland Road is busy, and safety was a big concern. Mr. Emery reminded the Council that if they moved forward with a designated bike lane the street was not wide enough to also allow parking so no parking would be allowed Bygland Road. He added that the sharrows would allow parking so the Council will have to decide one which one to move forward with.

Council Vice-President Leigh said his concern was the ongoing costs. Council member Vetter commented that the signage was more than the striping. He also suggested that the City obtains a template and can do its own striping to help cut down costs. Council member Helms asked how the TAP funds work. Mr. Emery stated how the City would have to pay for everything and then be reimbursed by the TAP program. Discussion followed about if the City should move forward with sharrows or a bike lane with many council members not wanting to restrict parking on Bygland Road. Council member Vetter said he was not in favor of the bike lanes or making the sidewalk wider. He suggested extending the sharrows down Greenway Boulevard to Rhinehart Drive.

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

### **3. COPS Office Grant – Mike Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund explained how there had been an officer in the schools up until 2009 and that they have been applying for the grant to get an officer back into the school system the last few years. He reviewed how this is a four year grant with the first three years having a federal match but the 4th year being only covered by the local funds. He added how he will be asking the school to once again partner up with the City and help pay the local share for this position. Council member Tweten commented that Officer Swang had done an excellent job when he was in the school and that he supports this. Council member Grassel said how there have been more issues and this is needed. Discussion followed about what the duties are for this position, how they can bring in a drug sniffing dog, and how this position will be working with the 5th grade classes.

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

### **4. Request for Towards Zero Deaths Grant – Mike Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund told the Council that the grant they are applying for was formally known as Safe and Sober. He explained how they can use these funds for traffic safety like seat belt, DWI, and

speeding enforcement. He said that the Crookston Police Department, Thief River Falls Police Department, and Polk County Sheriff's Office have partnered with East Grand Forks to share this grant. Council member Vetter asked if East Grand Forks was the fiscal agent and if a percentage of the grant can be used to cover administrative costs. Chief Hedlund said they have not done that in the past but it is something he can ask about. Council member Vetter suggested a 5% to 10% administration fee. Council member Helms asked if the amount is split equally. Chief Hedlund said that it was but if one of the entities does not use their full amount it can be utilized by the others in the group.

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

#### **5. Request to Purchase Radios – Mike Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund explained that Chief Larson had done lots of research on radios and the issues they have been having with the radios they are currently using. He commented on how Polk County already is using the 800 system radios. He continued by saying there is was \$20,000 budgeted for a radio console that could be used for the purchase of these radios with funds available from Polk County since the City is spending its own funds. Discussion followed about how dispatching works between Crookston and Polk County. Council member Olstad said that with the expanded drug task force they would benefit if they could communicate without needing assistance.

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

#### **6. Parking by Neil Law Office – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis explained how there have been issues in the public parking lot by the Neil Law Office. She stated how some there have been cars parked right in front of the door which has almost completely blocked off the entrance. She said how staff had met with Mr. Neil and reviewed how the parking lot could be striped with hatching by the entrance taking away that parking spot, adding a handicap spot, striping the rest of the parking lot, and adding signage. Council member Tweten stated that he was in favor of moving forward with this. Discussion followed about previous discussions to purchase part of the parking lot and why Mr. Neil was not able to.

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

#### **7. Request for Cell Tower Location – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis stated that Verizon is proposing to put up a tower by the VFW Arena. She added how they were looking at the area between the Quonset and VFW Arena and that this is still in the planning phase of this process. Council Vice-President Leigh said he was not against this but did not want this located in an area that has the potential to be developed. Mr. Buell stated that they would be able to move it back and out of an area that could be developed. Discussion followed about where the tower could be placed without being in the way of utilities and how 80% of East Grand Forks is residential so it will be difficult not to have a tower located in a residential area.

Council member Helms asked why a tower should put in a park if it could create health issues. Council Vice-President Leigh said the literature he read said there were more frequencies coming from cell phones than a cell phone tower. Ms. Ellis stated that the Cancer Society page has useful information about this. Council Vice-President Leigh asked to have a new proposal brought back to the next work session for more discussion.

#### **8. Request for Carpeting at Fire Station No. 1 – Gary Larson**

Chief Larson stated that the carpet was wearing out at the fire station and was in need of replacement. He asked to replace it with carpet squares so portions could be replaced when needed. He said that \$15,000 had been set aside for this project and recommended to move forward with getting carpet squares from Brian's Flooring with a quote of \$11,950.00.

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

#### **9. Request for Street Repair – Jason Stordahl**

Mr. Stordahl explained how the street by the Fire Station might be tore up next year for a water main project so that portion of the project will be put on hold. He continued by explaining how there broken panels that need to be fixed on the off ramp of Highway 2. He added how there might be an issue with the storm water system that goes through this area that caused the broken panels and that will be determined once they are removed. Council member Vetter asked if that was the State's responsibility to fix this. Mr. Stordahl said that both he and Mr. Boppre had called to check on that and they were told the City maintains this. He added that he would check again. Mr. Stordahl said that he would recommend awarding the job to Miller Motivations for the repairs by Highway 2.

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

#### **10. Seasonal Pay Plan – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy stated that this was more of a formality but official council action was needed. He stated how there was an increase in the State minimum wage which is reflected in the new pay plan. Council member Vetter commented on how this has impacted the City Budget.

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

Chief Hedlund rejoined the meeting. Council Vice-President Leigh asked Chief Hedlund what happened at the School Board Meeting. Chief Hedlund stated they approved the partnership with the City unanimously to put an officer back in the schools.

#### **11. Selection of Auditing Services – Karla Anderson**

Ms. Anderson informed the Council that three proposals were reviewed by the committee and all three met qualifications but they sent two for the Council to consider. Council member Tweten commented on the good job that BradyMartz had done for the City and the Water &

Light Department. He requested quarterly reports from whoever is awarded the contract. Council member Vetter asked how much was spent on the audit this year. Ms. Anderson stated it was about \$50,000 per year but that included other services also. Council member Vetter reminded the council that there had been a previous discussion on auditing services and how it is good to have a new set of eyes looking at the finances. A discussion followed about how both firms are reputable, both would do a good job, and how there is a price difference between the two proposals. Council member Vetter stated that usually the council only meets with the auditors once a year and how it was included in the proposals that they would be meeting with the council and staff on a more regular basis.

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

### **12. October 28<sup>th</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup> Meetings – Megan Nelson**

Ms. Nelson reminded the Council of the League Regional meeting that was taking place on October 28<sup>th</sup> which was the same night as the work session. She asked if they would let her know by the next day if they would like to attend so it could be determined if there would be enough for a quorum or if the work session needed to be moved to another day.

Ms. Nelson also reminded them that November 4<sup>th</sup> was the day of the election and asked if they would like to hold the Council meeting or if they would like to change it to a different night. She added that they could hold the meeting as long as they were done by 6:00pm. After a short discussion the council said they would like to hold the meeting on the regular day and time.

Ms. Nelson said the last meeting she had a question about was work session that was supposed to take place on November 11<sup>th</sup>. She explained that it was Veteran's Day and no business is conducted on that day. After another short discussion the Council decided they should move it to November 10<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Nelson stated that she would get it posted.

### **ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 14, 2014 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:34 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Buckalew.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer