

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2015 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for April 14, 2015 was called to order by Council President Mark Olstad 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 Mark Olstad, Council Vice-President Chad Grassel, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Mike Pokrzywinski, Craig Buckalew, Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.*

*Dave Aker, Parks & Recreation Superintendent; Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Dan Boyce, Water & Light Manager; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Paul Gorte, EDA Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present*

**1. Bid Results for 15AJ2 Paving in POW 5<sup>th</sup> Addition – Steve Emery**

Mr. Emery explained the bids had been opened for the 2015 Assessment Job No. 2 for paving out in the Point of Woods 5<sup>th</sup> Addition. He stated there were two bids that were fairly competitive but came in high. He said the estimate was approximately \$155,000 for this job and the lowest bid was 19% higher than the estimate. He informed the Council he had spoken with Mr. Murphy about this and one option would be to hold the final hearing so the residents would be notified about the increase prior to the work being done. He also told the Council he had received a phone call from Mr. Peabody who still owns the majority of the lots in this addition and stated he would like the bids rejected and rebid at a different time.

Council Vice-President Grassel asked if there was anyone at the hearing for this project. Mr. Emery stated there wasn't. Council member DeMers asked what the completion date was for this project. Mr. Emery stated it was set for the end of July or early August. Discussion followed about the increase in demand for employees, how flexibility in the project may help with the costs some, and how more than likely the overall costs won't be going down. Mr. Emery stated some contractors were busy now but they might be able to bid later on in the year.

Ms. Anderson asked if this project could be done in conjunction with the project in Point of Woods 6<sup>th</sup> addition. Mr. Emery stated that project was being advertised for bids and would be opened at the end of the month. Discussion followed about how the crush may not be available for the Point of Woods

6<sup>th</sup> project so the cost of removing the crush would be a cost to the City. Mr. Emery stated that the estimate for removal of the crush is around \$6000 that the City would have to pay for. More discussion followed why these projects were bid separate and if the sub contractor working on the curb and gutter in Point of Woods 6<sup>th</sup> might be able to complete the paving in Point of Woods 5<sup>th</sup>. Council member DeMers commented that there would be a mark up because it would be a sub contractor completing the work. More discussion followed about how this item will be tabled until the other bids for the Point of Woods 6<sup>th</sup> project have been received.

This item will be tabled and brought back to a future work session.

## **2. Request to File Plans & Specs for 15CP3 Sidewalk Improvements – Steve Emery**

Mr. Emery stated this project was to make the sidewalks through the driveways along 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE ADA compliant. He said they will be asking for authorization to file plans and specs at the next meeting and advertise for bids. He added that there would be approximately \$63,000 in transit funds that was going to be used on this project and WSN took care of the costs for plans and specifications for this project.

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

## **3. Coffee Shop Site Plan – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis reminded the Council that a site plan had previously come before the Council for a proposal for a coffee shop in the old bank building and how the site plan needed more detail. She said that this was the new site plan that included parking, the location of the dumpster, where the easements are, and more. She explained to the Council that some concerns with this project which included the possibility of traffic congestion and traffic going through the parking lot of the Fire Department. She explained how she and Mr. Stordahl had inspected the site and found issues that would need to be addressed or fixed such as the removal of an asphalt patch as well as being able to get in and out of parking spots and that it was difficult right turn into the drive-thru area from Demers Avenue.

Ms. Ellis explained that this is a non-conforming use lot that had been grandfathered in because the lot had been designed as a drive-thru which are no longer allowed in the downtown area. She said at this time they would not need a special use permit or approval from the planning commission. She said the City Council would need to decide if they will allow an easement, if so public hearings would need to be held, and once approved the site plan then could be reviewed by the planning commission. Discussion followed about how wide the easement would be and how two cars would be able to fit at the entrance of the fire department parking lot. Council member Buckalew asked if on street parking would be allowed on Demers in front of this property. Ms. Ellis stated that on street parking is not allowed within a 35 foot radius from the corner. Council member Buckalew asked where employees would be parking. Ms. Ellis stated that off street parking is not required in the downtown area.

Council member Vetter asked if the old curb cut would be required to be removed. Ms. Ellis stated that would be up to the Council. Council member Vetter asked if the City would receive payment for the easement. Ms. Ellis said again that would be up to the Council. Council President Olstad asked what the standard fee that had been charged before. Council member Vetter said he didn't know. More discussion followed about the removal of the old curb cut, if trees were going to be replaced, how 19 feet is the standard length of a parking stall and that it would fit most vehicles. Council

President Olstad stated items that would need to be addressed include closing off the old curb cut and determining what is needed for the easement. He asked if there was anything else that would need to be addressed.

Council Vice-President Grassel asked if there are problems how can those problems be solved. Discussion followed about how to keep traffic from turning left into the fire department parking lot. Ms. Ellis stated there will be issues with traffic with people seeing congestion and will try and take a different route. Mr. Murphy stated that the issue with this site is that it is so small, anything that is put here will have issues, and that staff wants to make Council aware of that. More discussion followed about who uses the fire department parking lot and the issues that may come up. It was also determined that staff would have the issues addressed and then bring information back to the Council.

This item will be brought back to the future Work Session.

#### **4. Request to Increase Rent at Blue Line Arena – Dave Aker**

Mr. Aker told the Council that he was proposing an increase to the fee for the rental of the Blue Line Arena for the months of April and September. He reviewed the costs of running the arena and that they are greater than \$5000 which is the current rental amount. He stated that Crookston rents their arena for \$4200 per week and Thief River Falls rents their arena for \$20,000 for the month. Mayor Stauss stated there might be an impact to the Blue Line Club this year with Grand Forks holding a camp at the same time but that it is necessary to have the rent cover the expenses. Council member DeMers asked that the purpose of raising the rent for two months. Mr. Aker stated that these were the only two months it is rented and that the hockey school rent was going to stay the same.

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

#### **5. Request to Purchase Mower – Dave Aker**

Mr. Aker explained he had a state bid in the amount of \$16,680.68 for a 72 inch mower. He stated the mower that had been used at the cemetery was a 1991, the transmission went out, and parts are no longer available. He added that \$25,000 had been budgeted for this purchase.

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

#### **6. Promotional Approval Request – Mike Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund informed the Council that Sergeant Mike Anderson will be retiring on May 1<sup>st</sup>. He explained the roster was still in place from the last promotional process that was done and there are two people that he is requesting to promote which are Officer Schrage and Officer Gahlon. He said that Officer Schrage is currently the commander of the drug task force and with the expansion he is needed as the leader. Chief Hedlund added that he was not fair to deny him a promotion so he is asking to promote both officers. He said that there wouldn't be an impact to the budget since Officer Schrage is being paid by the drug task force. He stated that since Officer Schrage will stay in his position with the task force he is requesting to promote Officer Gahlon into the sergeant position in patrol. He added that there may be an effect to the budget when Officer Schrage is no longer on the drug task force but again didn't want to remove him from that position because they are in need of his leadership and experience. Council President Olstad commented what a tremendous job Officer

Schrage had done on the drug task force and it is the right move keeping him on the task force.

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

### **7. Request to Use Public Parking Lot – Megan Nelson**

Ms. Nelson explained the City had been contacted by a gentleman who wanted to start up a classic car club in East Grand Forks. She said how there are two locations in Grand Forks for these cars to go to and he was looking at finding a location in East Grand Forks. She stated a map along with other information had been sent and how they had spoken with the Blue Moose who wanted to help promote this event. She pointed out the area where they would like to park on the wet side of the flood wall on Wednesday evenings from 6:00pm until 8:00pm and that Mr. Frost was attending the meeting to answer any questions the Council had.

Council President Olstad asked what the discussion had been with the Blue Moose. Mr. Frost stated the Blue Moose thought it was a great idea, how the car club would have get permission from the City to use the parking lot, and that the Blue Moose would include the car show in its advertising. He explained how this area was a scenic area to display the cars. Discussion followed about how the handicap parking was in the middle of the parking lot by the ramps, how the group had only talked with the Blue Moose at this point, and the car club was considering this area because of how beautiful downtown is. Mayor Stauss commented there are other businesses and how often this parking lot fills up.

Council member Buckalew commended Mr. Frost for getting this put together and added how people tend to walk around at these events. He said he was concerned about public safety with cars on both sides of the parking lot and cars driving through. He added that this will be a draw for people to come down town and will help the businesses. He suggested to try the area for a couple weeks and see how things go and if needed it could be moved to a different area that works for the car club. Mr. Frost stated they suggested this location because they were working with the Blue Moose. Council Vice-President Grassel asked if they would be willing to go to the other businesses, let them know about the car show, and ask them if they would be interested to be a part of it also. Mr. Frost stated nothing had been signed with the Blue Moose and that they would be open to talking with the other businesses in the area. Council member Pokrzywinski said it would be a courtesy to inform the other businesses so they know what is going on. Discussion followed about how the car club will be contacting other businesses, how the cars will be parking along the same side of the parking lot, how the parking lot will be marked off, and how this will be reviewed after a few weeks.

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

### **8. Request for Parking Space – Megan Nelson**

Ms. Nelson stated that the City had been contacted by Little Bangkok about getting a reserved parking space in the downtown area because they are starting a delivery service. She explained the spots on the map that were potential places they would like to park. Discussion followed about how many signs there are reserving spaces in the downtown area and how the City cannot be paid for a parking spot that has been dedicated as a public parking. Ms. Ellis stated that the Council would be able to dedicate a spot in a public parking lot. Council Vice-President Grassel asked what the time frame would be. Ms. Nelson said she was told it would be from the time they opened until the time they closed. More

discussion followed about which spot the Council would allow as a designated spot. Council member Pokrzywinski stated that he voted not when Altru came in with this request and he will vote no for this as well.

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

### **9. Greenway Application & Other City Licenses – Megan Nelson**

Ms. Nelson stated that included in the packet was the Greenway Application she had been working. She asked the Council for their input and if there were any changes that should be made. She said they didn't need to tell her right away but by Friday so the changes could be made and the Council could vote on the application at the next meeting. She added that she will be meeting with people from Grand Forks, review the application with them, and also discuss the communication between the two cities when it comes to events. Ms. Nelson stated that she also wanted to review the current applications, make updates, or even create renewal applications. She asked if that would need to come back before the Council or if that is something that can just be done.

Council President Olstad asked about liquor liability for events taking place in the greenway. Ms. Nelson explained that if a group was serving alcohol they would need to apply for a temporary liquor license and that is where they would get their liquor liability coverage. She added that another portion that was not included was the boat and water permit since the counties were still working on the application so they have one application that works for both counties. Discussion followed about if portable fire pits are allowed at shelters which have been allowed before and that at some point the Council may be requested to set the guidelines for when an event may need to be shut down if the river gets too high. Ms. Nelson stated that if there are any major changes to any applications she will bring it back before the Council.

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

### **10. Other – Civic Center**

Mr. Murphy stated that he had met with the school about the costs of the Civic Center improvements. He said the total project cost is \$750,179 which will be reduced by the Mighty Ducks Grant. He said the School Board has agreed pay up to \$300,000 for this project which would be fronted by the City but paid back within three years. Ms. Anderson reviewed the funds that would be used for this project. She explained the City's portion would be paid from the building maintenance fund. She reviewed the current balance, planned expenditures, and what the balance was going to be at the end of the year. She added that this was not a part of the general fund. She stated the School's portion would be paid from the capital financing fund which is used for capital purchases and is a revolving fund. She reviewed the balance available, planned expenditures, and how the school will be making their first payment on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Council member Pokrzywinski asked about the garbage truck that was going to be purchased and how that was going to be paid for. Ms. Anderson stated the payment would be paid for by the refuse fees that are collected.

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

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER BUCKALEW, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 14, 2015 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:12 P.M.**

*Voting Aye: DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Buckalew, Tweten, Olstad, and Grassel.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer