

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015 – Following Special Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for November 10, 2015 was called to order by Council President Mark Olstad at 5:52 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; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, EDA Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Teri Kouba, MPO Planner; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; and Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present

Council member Tweten introduced Mr. Charles Murphy to the Council and asked him a few questions. Mr. Murphy informed the Council that he has lived in the community for nine years, that he is thankful for living here, and explained the Fire Department helped save his life. He said they did good work, had good training, and the ambulance service was very complimentary of them also and wanted to praise them for a good job. Council member Pokrzywinski added it is a good service and how he had to call them for help recently for his father. A brief discussion followed about how the Fire Department had been on approximately 850 calls already for the year. Council member Buckalew commented that Mr. Murphy was a great example for the younger people of the community because of how he gives back to the community.

1. Downtown Tenant Parking Request – Megan Nelson

Ms. Nelson stated she was going to turn it over to Mr. Raymond. Mr. David Raymond introduced himself as the general manager of Whitey's. He explained the tenants that lived above Whitey's had parked in the Cabela's parking lot. He stated there had been an understanding with previous management of Cabela's but that was no longer allowed. He stated how there isn't a place to park downtown overnight without being ticketed or towed. Council member DeMers commented how he is not in favor of designating parking spots. Discussion followed about how currently there are not any areas in the downtown that allow overnight parking, how if there is overnight parking allowed they may be issues with snow removal, and how the parking lot just west of the Cabela's parking lot may be the location to use.

Mr. Murphy stated this area could be declared as overnight parking. Ms. Ellis asked that one side of that parking lot be allowed to have overnight parking. Mr. Galstad commented the Council may want to consider revisiting the parking ordinances at a future meeting. Chief Hedlund stated the only issue he sees is with maintenance which may cause more work for the Public Works Department. Council member Vetter asked to have an understanding that this area will not be ticketed, towed, or signed, and that they will work with Public Works regarding snow removal.

2. Bygland Road Study – Teri Kouba

Ms. Kouba reminded the Council recommendations were brought forward, that some had been changed some of the items to near term. She added that input from the public was included in the executive summary. She said she was asking the Council to move forward and adopt these items and include them with the long range transportation plan.

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

3. Sunshine Terrace Purchase Offer – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis informed the Council that a proposal had been received from the Northwest Minnesota Housing Authority regarding their interest to purchase the Sunshine Terrace. She said the City does not currently have a policy on selling property and that the EDA Board wanted to see if the City was interested in selling before moving forward with anything. Council member Tweten informed the Council about the establishment of the housing authority; that Ms. Ellis was handling things well, and the City should not sell Sunshine Terrace. Council Vice-President Grassel told the Council that the EDA Board didn't want to spend any money before making sure the Council would be interested in selling the building and they had voted six in favor with one opposing to sell Sunshine Terrace. He said the building is currently cash flowing but there may be things coming up since the building is aging. Discussion followed about how Sunshine Terrace is owned by the City, the City should make the decisions regarding if there should be a sale or not, if there are any stipulations that may prevent the sale of the property, and how the City would have to see an offer before moving forward with anything else.

4. Rental Lease Agreement with NWMNHRA – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis reminded the Council how the Housing Authority had space in City Hall and the first year only paid for their IT, phone, and other utilities. She explained she had received a proposal from them to rent their current space for \$600 per month which was approximately \$7 per square foot and asked the Council for their input. Discussion followed about how the rent was going to be increasing at the Infill Building and other renters at City Hall were paying over \$10 per square foot. After some discussion staff was instructed to bring back what others were paying in the building.

5. 2016 City Budget Update – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy informed the Council that based on the proposed levy there was still going to be a shortfall of approximately \$50,000 in the budget. He stated staff had been working on ideas and there were four items that would be pushed back or reduced like the suburban for the fire department and publicity for the Park and Recreation Department. He said these reductions totaled \$56,700 which

covered the difference and asked for questions. Council Vice-President Grassel asked to have information brought forward on what impact the levy had over the last few years. Ms. Anderson stated she had handed the information about the tax rate out an a meeting but would get that information for the Council again.

6. Sales Tax Discussion – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy asked for final direction from Council in regards to the sales tax since it is close to the time when the City would need to notify the County about the election. Council member DeMers stated he had asked to have an agenda item added about the feasibility study for a splash park. Ms. Nelson apologized for not including that item on the agenda. Discussion followed about how the engineers had some information since a splash park had been included in one of the designs for a north end park, how the City could get information about the costs for the Grand Forks Splash parks, and that the City would need more specific numbers. Mayor Stauss added that the Council will also need to pick out a location to determine if other facilities such as a bathroom would also need to be included. Council member DeMers suggested building a splash park behind the VFW since there were already shelters and bathrooms available. More discussion followed about making sure the information includes an operations budget as well as a replacement budget. Council member Buckalew also suggested a location of Nash Park for a splash park.

7. Discussion about December 8th Meeting – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy reminded the Council that the City’s truth and taxation hearing is usually the first Tuesday in December. He stated Polk County was scheduled to hold their truth and taxation hearing on the same day and asked the City to change days. He added the City will be holding its truth and taxation meeting on December 8th instead. Ms. Nelson also asked if the Council would like to hold the work session at the same time as the hearing or if they would like to hold the work session at the regular time and come back for the 7:00pm hearing. After a brief discussion the Council decided to hold the work session at the regular time and return for the hearing at 7:00pm.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADJOURN THE NOVEMBER 10, 2015 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 7:05 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer