

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for September 13, 2016 was called to order by Council President Mark Olstad at 5:01 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 Members Clarence Vetter, Mike Pokrzywinski, Craig Buckalew(5:04 pm), Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.

Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Mark Dragich, Interim Park and Recreation Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; 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 President Determined a Quorum was present.

1. Request to File Roll & Set Final Hearing Date for 16AJ2 Riverview 10th Add – Steve Emery

Mr. Emery informed the Council they had the costs for the paving and sidewalk construction for the Riverview 10th Addition. He stated he was requesting to file the roll and set the final hearing date. Council member DeMers asked why not all of the lots had sidewalks constructed. Mr. Emery explained that the curb stop hook up is where the sidewalk would be located so if a sidewalk was installed it would have to be torn up. He added how an amendment was added to the developer's agreement stating that Crary will be installing sidewalks after a lot was developed. Discussion followed about how there are chunks missing in the sidewalk and that Crary is planning on developing three lots per year until all the lots are developed.

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

2. Request for Preparation of Plans & Specs for Bygland Road Roundabout – Steve Emery

Mr. Emery reminded the Council that they had approved an amendment to the TIP and changed the project to the Bygland Road roundabout. He explained there were many requirements that would need to be met for this project and 2018 is not that far away. He commented there had been many questions

about the layout of the roundabout. He stated he was requesting to start the preliminary work for this project which would include a layout and would determine if the City may need to acquire properties. Council President Olstad commented how they will need to look at how the driveways to the homes are affected as well as the access to Orton's. Mr. Emery stated that everything up to this point was based on the report that Alliant had put together and that they will need to complete survey work. Council member Tweten commented that a report of feasibility needs to be completed and that engineers should appeal to the State for assistance with the funding for this project. Discussion followed about how the proposed construction costs from Alliant did not include acquisition of property, how the preliminary work should be completed by later this fall or early in 2017, and how the City may need to ask for an advance from the State in State Aid Funds to help pay for this project.

Ms. Anderson stated that the City receives approximately \$130,000 that can be used on maintenance and that another \$180,000 goes right back to the State for the 23rd Street project. Council member Pokrzywinski asked when that was going to be paid off. Ms. Anderson stated there was at least 18 years or more before that project is paid off. She added that she had spoken to Springsted about bonding for this project. Mayor Stauss commented how the Council should proceed with the preliminary work so they can see what the costs will be and if properties would need to be acquired. More discussion followed about using two cycles of TIP funds to pay for this project and how that would need to be looked into to see if that was possible.

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

3. Request for Report of Feasibility for 2017 Street Improvement Project – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl reminded the Council back in 2014 it was decided to move forward with a three year street improvement plan. He stated that 2017 was the last year of the street improvements and requested to have the engineers prepare the report of feasibility. Council member Tweten requested to have Lee's Place included in this project. Council President Olstad commented he thought that Lee's Place had already been addressed. Mr. Stordahl stated that the residents in that area had been surveyed, the chunks of asphalt had been removed, and replaced with crushed concrete. Council member DeMers asked when this process would start again. Mr. Stordahl stated in about seven to ten years.

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

4. Parking Ticket Food Shelf Program – Michael Hedlund

Chief Hedlund informed the Council that a staff member had found information about a police department in Minnesota running a program during food shelf awareness month where they collected items for the food shelf instead of collecting money for tickets. He explained that they had picked the month of December since that could be a month when the food shelf is in need of extra food. Discussion followed about how the person receiving a ticket would still be responsible for the towing charges, how this would only be done for one month, the program will be advertised as well as information given when the ticket is written, and how the Police Department will serve as a collection point for the goods that will be given to the food shelf.

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

5. Request for 30 Hour Work Week – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy informed the Council that a request had been made by Ms. Linda Vanderhoof to work reduced hours until her retirement in November 2017. He explained what her tentative schedule would be and that it would be adjusted accordingly when needed. He stated that Ms. Shirley Terrain would cover the hours that Ms. Vanderhoof wouldn't be working. He asked for feedback and if approved Ms. Vanderhoof would like to start this schedule as of November 1st. Council President Olstad commented how the Council should consider preparing someone else to take over before Ms. Vanderhoof's retirement because there are quite a few events and activities that take place at the Senior Center and that time would allow them to understand what is going on. He added what a great job Ms. Vanderhoof has done at the Senior Center.

Mr. Murphy informed the Council that based on the Affordable Care Act Ms. Vanderhoof would be eligible for full health insurance benefits but other benefits such as vacation time would be pro-rated. He added that he had informed Ms. Vanderhoof of that so she was fully aware. Council member Tweten commented on the outstanding job done by Ms. Vanderhoof. Mayor Stauss also commented on what a great job Ms. Vanderhoof does and how she handles everything well. Council member Buckalew also thanked Ms. Vanderhoof for the work she has done and reminded the Council to allow for extra funds for wages for the new person is able to train with Ms. Vanderhoof.

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

6. Request for Interim Pay for Mark Dragich – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy stated that Mr. Dragich had been the acting Parks and Recreation Director since May 4, 2016. He explained that the personnel policy states an employee should receive at least 5% higher than their current wage and since the start date had been determined for the new Parks and Recreation Director the Council could look into providing out of rank pay for Mr. Dragich. He asked for approval at the next meeting. Council member Tweten commented that Mr. Dragich certainly deserves it and asked for a special meeting to discuss term limits for commissioners and board members. Council member DeMers asked if this increase also meant an increase in PERA. Ms. Anderson stated the cost would increase some because of benefits.

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

7. Budget Information & Presentations

Ms. Anderson reviewed the current status of the 2016 budget, explained when the City received most of its revenue, and explained some of line items. Discussion followed about setting a policy on completing work orders monthly and how work orders do include materials as well as wages. Council member Tweten asked for the tax capacity update and the information about what the school and county were looking at doing with their budgets. Ms. Anderson stated she had been in contact with the County and was hoping to have the tax capacity information by the following week. Discussion followed about changes in the cost of the pool utilities, how the pool was open 62 days this year, and how they expect to be open longer next year.

a. Community Development, Building Inspections, City Hall, Transit, Sunshine Terrace, and Infill Building Budgets

Ms. Ellis informed the Council that the budget for Planning was status quo and the increases were due to salaries and utilities. She added there was an increase to professional services because it was closer to what they were actually spending with the city attorney and the Metropolitan Planning Organization. She continued with the Building Inspections which included an increase for salaries and professional services, and how there may be a change in revenues due to the change in rental registration. She went on to the City Hall budget and how there was an increase for the maintenance position and at this time there were no capital improvements being planned for the next year. Mayor Stauss asked if the dome was going to be painted and about the lights that light up the dome. Ms. Ellis said the lights have been ordered and more than likely they will go up in October but at this time she was not able to find someone to paint the dome.

Ms. Ellis started to review the Transit budget and stated that it was based on allocations prepared by Cities Area Transit. She informed the Council she expects the same amount in funds as the previous year and because funds were still available there was a zero local share. She stated the Council will need to pass resolutions approving the contracts with the State for the following year so the City is able to receive the funds associated with the transit contracts. Discussion followed about Dial-A-Ride services, how it is getting better, and that Grand Forks is not running it as of yet. Council member DeMers asked about the rates being charged and collected for building inspections. Ms. Ellis stated that the last time they were reviewed the City was right in line with the cities of Crookston and Thief River Falls for the fees set by the City and how the State sets the other fees.

Ms. Ellis stated that the Sunshine Terrace budget was reviewed at the last EDA meeting and how it had been discussed to increase the rent. She explained the EDA Board had suggested raising the rent to the breakeven point since the revenue is less than expenses. Discussion followed about how an increase would affect those that receive housing vouchers, what the average rents are for other apartments in the area, and how this would have to be approved by the EDA Board since they own the building. Ms. Ellis then continued on to the Infill Building budget. She explained the rents were set in the rent agreements, the repairs to the elevator had been paid for, and that she was looking into getting the carpet on the stairs and in the elevator replaced with a different type of flooring. Council member DeMers asked what the cash balance was. Ms. Ellis stated it was \$300,000. Discussion followed about how rents could be negotiated when the agreements are set to expire, how the salaries for these various departments need to be reviewed, and how the City could consider selling the Infill building since it is the City that owns it.

b. Park & Recreation Department

Mr. Dragich reviewed the different areas of the Parks and Recreation Department and explained that most of the increases were due to salary increases. He informed the Council how the Pool was required to have more people on duty because of the slide and that the amount for chemicals went up but utilities went down. He continued reviewing the budgets for the arenas and park areas. He explained that there was an increase in park areas for equipment because they were looking at purchasing a skid steer along with a stump grinder and grapple claw. He added that with all of the mowing being done by Public Works they were able to address overgrown areas in the parks. He told the Council that the stump

grinder would pay for itself in a couple years since the City is charged \$70 per stump and there are close to 70 stumps that need to be removed every year.

Mr. Dragich continued reviewing the budget information for the campground area, the Senior Center, and the cemetery. Discussion followed about the cost of the skid steer and implements and how there was older equipment that could be sold to help pay for this purchase. More discussion followed about salary increases which accounted for steps, additional people in some areas, and the increase in minimum wage. Council member Buckalew asked about the perpetual fund. Ms. Anderson stated there were still funds available even with the most recent expenses of improvements to the entrance of the cemetery and a columbarium. She added a percentage of each plot sale is added to this fund. Council member Vetter asked if all of the activities should be lumped into park programs instead of individual line items so the new Park and Recreation Superintendent would have some funds for new programs. Discussion followed about how there is a benefit for the department to know how much is spent on each activity, if there is available funds they could be transferred to be used for a new program, and how the funds from Altru will be decided on by a committee but that they could be used for new programs after the turf was been paid for.

c. Police Department

Chief Hedlund reminded the Council of the short narrative that he had put together explaining the increases and decreases to the different areas of his budget. He stated that he was asking for an increase in the education/training budget, there was an increase in the repairs and maintenance budget to be closer to what is actually spent, towing decreased, and the equipment line included the request for the new records management system. He continued with reviewing the purchase of new vehicles and that he would be asking to trade in two of the 2011 Crown Victorias. He also requested the purchase of an ATV and that he was also looking for grant funds for this purchase and that this would be used to better patrol the greenway area.

Council member Pokrzywinski asked about the condition of the building. Chief Hedlund commented how the roof is good, the HVAC needs attention from time to time, and the only requests for the building is to replace the carpet and paint. Discussion followed about how the air quality has improved and if the police vehicles should be kept but have the engines and transmissions replaced which would cost less than the purchase of new vehicles. Chief Hedlund stated that when he became Chief the practice was to replace the engines and transmissions after two years and then replace the vehicle after two more years but there were many maintenance issues. He continued saying he was going to be slightly over in overtime costs this year and that he doesn't know of a way to decrease overtime when trying to keep the minimum of three officers on the streets. More discussion followed about having Polk County transfer people to the jail and how currently the County is not willing to discuss that. Council member Buckalew asked about the investigation salary line and why it kept moving up and down. Chief Hedlund stated that in some years the City was unsure if the grant dollars were going to be received from the State for the Drug Task Force but now there is a separate section for the Drug Task Force information which was taken out of the Investigation section.

d. Economic Development Department

Mr. Gorte informed the Council that this budget had been presented to the EDA Board at their last

meeting. He explained that it was similar to previous years but that this was calibrated closer to actual expenditures. He added that the budget did include the funds to cover the cost of the Golden Shovel request and in the future if other departments wanted to join the cost could be split between departments. He commented that the 280 account has funds set aside for the New Home Incentive Program along with the tax abatements for homes and for Valley Golf. Discussion followed if the home incentive funds were accounted for twice. Ms. Anderson stated that she would look into that.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:52 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer