

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: January 7, 2011

To: Mayor Lynn Stauss. Council President Dick Grassel, Vice President Henry Tweten, Council Members Marc Demers, Craig Buckalew, Wayne Gregoire, Greg Leigh, and Mike Pokrzywinski.

From: Scott Huizenga

RE: Weekly Update

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

January 11, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

January 13, 2011 – Chamber Annual Dinner

January 15, 201 – Rally for Ryker

January 17, 2011 – City Hall Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 18, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

January 24, 2011 – Senior Citizens Board Annual Lunch

January 25, 2011 - 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

February 9, 2011 – CGMC – Greater Minnesota Day at the Capitol

WEEKLY UPDATE:

City transportation grant application not funded

The City Council may recall that the City applied for a pilot program through the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) called the Transportation Economic Development (TED) program. MnDOT notified the City that MnDOT did not fund the application, although it was “on the bubble.” The application requested for funding 10th Street NW toward the industrial park and into the American Crystal Sugar facility. MnDOT encouraged the City to contact the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) regarding the Business Development and Public Infrastructure (BDPI) program. The City recently received a BDPI award of \$250,000 to facilitate infrastructure development in the industrial park.

Civic Center Scoreboard

Most of you are probably aware that the new Civic Center scoreboard encountered difficulties during some earlier events in which the display momentarily shut down the games. Fortunately, no data was lost during events. The vendor worked diligently to correct the issue. And, we believe the issue is related to communication gaps between the control board and the display. There were several recreation programs games over the holiday in which the scoreboard ran without error. And, the scoreboard functioned without error again at Thursday evening’s boys high school hockey game. I am disappointed that the new scoreboard has encountered these “growing pains.” I am somewhat encouraged, however, by the vendor’s diligence in working to correct the issue. We may have crossed major hurdle with recent corrections (but no “Mission Accomplished” banner just yet!).

River Road NW

MnDOT informed me this week that the River Road speed study “clearly” indicated an appropriate speed of 35 miles per hour. I expect a formal letter from MnDOT in the coming days. The new 35 miles per hour speed limit can become effective as soon as City staff can install the appropriate signage. That may take some time with existing weather conditions.

Civic Center Improvements

I have forwarded a proposed lease agreement to the school district. Meanwhile, the design team is proceeding on Option 3, which includes locker room facilities under the west bleachers, along with ADA improvements, and roof rehabilitation.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police, Chief Michael Hedlund

Snowmobile Operation

With the recent snowfall in the GF/EGF area more and more snowmobiles are using the area trails. The EGFPD would like to remind snowmobile operators of some local laws as well as some safety reminders. A number of snowmobile drivers have been driving on the Red and Red lake Rivers in recent days. While not illegal this is extremely dangerous. There are still areas of open water on both rivers and the combination of the river currents and heavy snowfall (which insulates the ice and limits the amount of ice formed) has resulted in poor ice conditions in many areas. Riding on the rivers is always potentially hazardous but the conditions this winter make it even more dangerous than in a typical winter. The EGFPD strongly recommends that riders stay off of the rivers.

While snowmobiles are allowed to be driven on city streets in EGF if drivers choose to do this the snowmobiles must be kept as close as possible to the right hand curb, kept under 10 MPH and must obey all other traffic regulations. In addition, snowmobiles are not allowed to be driven on any flood control levee, bike path or other public area with the exception of designated snowmobile trails.

To view the complete EGF City Ordinances regarding snowmobile use go to the City of East Grand Forks website at www.egf.mn

Traffic Safety

Recent snowfalls have created many icy roads and hazardous traffic situations. Plan ahead and allow yourself extra travel time so that you do not have to be in a hurry. A few extra minutes could actually save you time, money and maybe your life.

Code 3 For Christmas

This holiday season Off. April Hansen of the EGFPD coordinated a toy drive for underprivileged children in the EGF area. Drop boxes were set up at the EGFPD and East Grand Forks Fire Stations and the drive was supported by the EGF Police and Fire Associations. Public response was overwhelming with dozens of gifts and cash donations being received. The gifts were given to children in families that were identified as being in need through Polk County Social Services. The generosity of our community helped make this season a much brighter one for many local families. Congratulations to Off. Hansen on a job well done and thank you to the citizens of East Grand Forks for your generous donations!

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

The Library is back on schedule for regular activities.

Story Time -Tuesday, Wednesday 10 a.m., Thursday 7 p.m.

Readers Theatre (who just performed at Valley 4000) Every other Monday at 4:30

Writers Groups - Every other Thursday at 7 p.m.

Sack Lunch Book Club - Second Tuesday at 11:30 a.m.

The Friends of the Campbell Library will be looking for new board members this year. Anyone interested may attend January 19 at 5 p.m. at the library.

The Library is waiting on bids for spray-on insulation as our next step in roof repairs.

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

The cross country skiing in East Grand Forks is getting compliments for their short little trail in the RRSRA.

The Parks and Recreation crew are busy clearing downtown, City Hall, outdoor rinks, arenas and Library of snow.

Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust

The hiring process has finished for a new firefighter and are waiting for results from SAFER Grant before informing new candidate. The SAFER Grant will possibly pay for wages and some benefits if we are successful in obtaining the grant. We lost an additional Paid on Call Firefighter when Darrin Schimke resigned effective the 31st of Dec. Darrin had been a member of the department since 1985.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is asking cities to pass a resolution in support of LGA. The City has passed similar resolutions in the past. But, this measure is a little more focused given the attention that has been generated on the issue from numerous sources including the Minnesota State Chamber of Commerce. Many cities are requesting that local Chambers of Commerce issue resolutions to support LGA. I communicated this to Barry Wilfahrt, Chamber Director. Wilfahrt plans to attend the work session.
2. On related note, I have prepared a list of potential legislative priorities for the currently state legislative session. The City Council can add, modify, or delete from the proposed list. The final list will then be formalized by resolution at the next regular Council meeting.
3. Police staff will present options and recommendations for replacement to the HVAC system. The system has been delayed for several years, largely due to budget issues. As such, the prices have escalated from the previous budgets. Estimates range from approximately \$40,000-\$74,000 depending on the type of system to be installed. The City procured an energy-efficiency study last year by EAPC architects. That study, which is attached to the packet, recommended a system with four indoor furnaces rather than rooftop units as in the current system. The furnace system is much more expensive in the short term than the rooftop option. However, EAPC estimated a payback period of 10.5 years on energy savings. However, the incremental cost above purchasing a rooftop system cuts the payback period approximately in half, assuming the estimates are accurate. A combination of the Building Maintenance Fund and the city energy conservation fund will pay for the improvements if approved.