

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: January 21, 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 24, 2011 – Senior Citizens Board Annual Lunch

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

February 1, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

February 8, 2011 - 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room – (If Needed)

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

February 15, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Labor Update

As the Water and Light General Manager notes below, the Water and Light Commission will meet in mediation next week with the Teamsters Local 120 regarding the proposed Labor Agreement for 2011-2013 as proposed. The City offer is virtually identical to the agreements already established with the City's four other labor groups and the non-union staff in terms of the compensation plan and benefit levels.

LGA Update

Legislators introduced several budget cutting bills at the Capitol this week including HF 129, HF 130, and SF 60 – the latter two are companion bills. Each bill would cut approximately \$1 billion of the total \$6.2 billion projected state budget deficit. The primary cuts would affect almost exclusively local aids and credits, higher education, and health care. For East Grand Forks, the total cut to both the Local Government Aid (LGA) and the Market Value Homestead Credit (MVHC) would be \$578,885, leaving a total of \$2,450,702 in total state aids and credits. These numbers are comparable to the cuts that the Legislature adopted in the middle of the 2010 session. The worst part of the proposed law is that, similar to 2003, the enacted cuts would this time become permanent. In other words, while the state budget continued to grow throughout the last decade, the state continued to cut Cities. Unsurprisingly, this has resulted in property tax increases statewide of approximately 63 percent during the same period (note: East Grand Forks tax rates actually decreased every year in 2006-2010).

Statewide, according to the League of Minnesota Cities, “In total, city LGA and MVHC reimbursements would be reduced by \$143 million for 2011 and these reduced funding levels for LGA and MVHC will be made permanent, saving the state approximately \$286 million for the biennium. These cuts are on top of the \$56.5 million in cuts already imposed for 2011 in last year's supplemental budget bill.”

Spice Update

A State House committee approved HF57, which would ban synthetic cannabinoids, aka “Spice,” in the state of Minnesota. The Senate companion bill is SF 7.

23rd Street project receives award

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has notified the City that the 23rd Street paving project received an Merit Award from its Concrete Rating Panel. I have attached the award letter from MnDOT.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Department, Chief Michael Hedlund

EGFPD Dispatch Remodel Underway

The physical remodel and technology upgrades for the East Grand Forks Police Department Dispatch Center are currently being conducted. The upgrades include new cabinets and counters and a wide variety of technology upgrades. In addition to dramatically enhancing the professional appearance of the center, the remodel and upgrades will help the center to operate more efficiently and effectively. The old cabinets are being recycled and used to enhance storage in other areas of the Department.

Parking Reminders

The EGFPD continues to have problems with people violating the ordinances regarding Calendar Parking and Snow Emergencies. Parking is prohibited one day a week in each of the City’s five districts from 7:30 AM until 12:00 Noon. Specific information on which neighborhoods are affected on any given day can be found on the city website at www.egf.mn. A Snow Emergency takes place any time we receive two or more inches of snow and mandates that there is no parking on any city street until that street is plowed to its full width. With the abundance of snow that we have received this winter it is important that our residents assist the Police and Street Department’s by following these ordinances. For further information go to www.egf.mn or contact the EGFPD at 218-773-1104.

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

Snow has been removed from the library’s meeting room roof. The ice is still quite thick. Estimates are still being gathered and plans are being formulated for the roof’s recovery.

Public Library Services of the Department of Education are in a second review by the Legislative Auditor’s Office. Denial of services to libraries (East Grand Forks) not included in a regional system has been emphasized again.

Submissions are being accepted for our poetry and photo competitions. Information online.

Water and Light Department, Dan Boyce

The department is conducting various year- end report preparations such as MN DNR water appropriation annual report, electric service territory payment reports, and background data for annual electric energy reports for Department of Energy and MN Office of Energy Security.

The Department is working with the floodwall vendor to update certain floodwall components.

Power agency's contractors due in this week for some planned maintenance work on wind turbine.

Monday 24th – Department interviews of finalists for Water Plant Operator vacancy following Civil Service interviews

Tuesday 25th – Minnesota Municipal Power Agency monthly board meeting at Chaska Water Plant 10 AM

Wed 26th – 1 PM mediation with Teamsters Local 120 representing Water and Light union employees

Thursday 27th – 10 AM MMUA Grow with your City Committee meeting – MMUA headquarters, Plymouth, MN

Friday 28th - PM – meeting with MN Department of Health representatives at the Water Treatment Plant – updates on various matters

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. The engineering consultants for the Cities of East Grand Forks and Grand Forks will present an update to their presentation from March 2010 regarding the proposed Waste Water Interconnect project. The same team will present to a Grand Forks City Council committee later in the evening on Tuesday. Staff will ask the City Council to consider amending the City's facility plan to include the proposed waste water interconnect project rather than the lagoon expansion project. The City Council would not commit to a formal intergovernmental agreement by changing the facility plan. Rather, the Council would agree to amend its facility plan with the state of Minnesota, and would commit to pursuing option as a formal design with Grand Forks. It is important to have the Council's commitment to pursuing the project before investing significant resources in both cities on design and operational plans and specifications. There are several advantages to the interconnect project.
 - a. The estimated cost of the interconnect is approximately \$7 million (some of which can be deferred) versus over \$10.5 million for the lagoon expansion.
 - b. A mechanical treatment plant solution offers better protection for the city versus potential future regulations than a lagoon can offer.
 - c. There is more variance in the estimate of the lagoon project due to unknown soil conditions at the site. In other words, the estimate of \$10.5 million could be much higher depending on how much seepage as occurred at the facility.
 - d. The City's collection system (pipes and lift stations) would remain "as-is" under the jurisdiction of East Grand Forks. No city positions would be eliminated by this initiative. Only the treatment portion would be moved to Grand Forks. The solution is similar to the current refuse collection model in which the East Grand Forks collects the waste; and then disposes the waste at the Grand Forks facility.
2. MPO will present the amended intergovernmental agreement between East Grand Forks and Grand Forks for transit operations. The City Council tabled this action in December and extended the previous agreement in order to clarify terms and conditions of the agreement. City Attorneys from both cities have reviewed the proposed agreement.

3. The EDHA Director will ask the City Council to consider a request to sell a city-owned lot in Folsom Court, which is located at the end of James Ave SE. City staff is currently reviewing the plat to ensure that a proposed lot sell does not interfere with flood protection system.
4. The EDHA Director will ask the City Council to consider a replat of a portion of Industrial Park First Addition. The City owns a road and utilities easement on the east side of the Industrial Park. The easement was not used, and the EDHA Director, with the concurrence of the EDHA Board of Directors, would like to deed the land to the respective lot owners adjacent to the easement. The replat would appear before the Planning Commission if the City Council chooses to proceed with the request.



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Materials & Road Research

1400 Gervais Avenue
Maplewood, MN 55109-2044

Office Phone: 651-366-5592

Fax: 651-366-5461

January 12, 2011

City of East Grand Forks
PO Box 385
East Grand Forks, MN 56721

Dear Mr. Emery,

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is pleased to announce that the Concrete Rating Panel has determined that the following project, completed during 2010, is to receive a Merit Award.

Category Four Urban Arterials and Collectors

119-121-002 Located on 23rd Street in East Grand Forks

The award for this project will be presented at the Concrete Paving Awards Banquet on Thursday, March 10, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. The awards banquet is held in conjunction with CPAM's Annual Concrete Paving Workshop scheduled for March 10-11 in the Harbor Side Convention Center within the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC) in Duluth, Minnesota. Pictures will be taken of all award recipients beginning at 5:30 P.M. on March 10. A photo schedule will be available at the registration desk.

Please complete the enclosed form and send it to Deb LaValle at the Concrete Paving Association of Minnesota by February 1 with award acceptance and banquet registration information. If you have any questions, please contact Deb at the CPAM office (651-762-0402). **Please note that the Awards Banquet registration does not include the CPAM Annual Workshop. If you would like to attend the workshop, you must register separately.**

As a local award winner, this project is automatically eligible to be considered at the national level for an American Concrete Pavement Association (ACPA) Excellence in Concrete Pavement Award. To be considered for a national award this year, the contractor, agency, and/or consultant may coordinate a submittal using the online form available from the ACPA's website (www.pavement.com). The submittals are typically due in mid-July.

Historically, projects with good quality control/quality assurance plans and good ride quality have fared well. Project photos also do a great job of telling the story. Photos should include construction and finished product. Keep in mind when taking finished product photos that the background of the photos will help sell the project.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Golish, PE
Assistant Concrete Engineer

cc: Deb LaValle, CPAM

An Equal Opportunity Employer

