

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: February 25, 2011

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

From: Scott Huizenga

RE: Weekly Update

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

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

March 8, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

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

March 22, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Legislative Update

- HF 57, relating to the banning of the substance known as “Spice,” overwhelming passed in the House of Representatives this week. The Senate has not yet scheduled action on the bill.
- The House Property Tax Committee added an amendment to HF 481, which would freeze property taxes for cities and counties (but not for schools or townships). The amendment would freeze property taxes for **two years**, 2012-2013, rather than for one year. Similar to the City’s adopted position on levy limits, this proposal is an unnecessary state intrusion into local matters that we will continue to oppose in the Legislature along with the League of Minnesota Cities and the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities.
- This week’s *Cities Bulletin* from the League can be accessed at <http://www.lmc.org/page/1/cities-bulletin-newsletter.jsp>. It contains information on the items above along with updates on public pensions, well digging in cities, labor arbitration disputes, and the Governor’s proposed bonding bill.

State Aid Task Force

The State Aid Task force met on Thursday to adopt its final recommendations back to the City Council. The Council is expected to review the recommendations at its work session on March 22.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Library, Charlotte Helgeson

Cynthia Long, an Investigative Engineer specializing in roofs, from Inspec out of Minneapolis has agreed to review materials and present a proposal soon. Materials will be sent out today. She is willing to work with local contractors.

Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker

1 - We are sending four teams to Regions in Minnesota Hockey: Bantam A VFW, PWA Blue Line, PWB American Federal Bank and the 14U Blue Line.

2 - This weekend we have the Peanut Jamboree in town, there are 26 teams.

3 - We have two races in town this weekend, The YMCA and the winter triathlon.

4 - We are busy putting two bleachers together and moving sandbags, generators and pumps.

5 - We received two pallets of fertilizer from Lowe's.

Public Works, John Wachter

DIESEL UPDATE-

Initial findings that showed the issue with the high pressure rail fuel systems seems to be correct. BG and our mechanics cleaned out the fuel system on one of our high pressure trucks. The cleaning had initial positive results and we will continue to monitor the situation. The fuel tank cleaning was postponed until March 7th. As we investigate further I will keep you apprised of the findings.

-FLOOD CONTROL-

All of the stand-by pumps, generators, and other flood fighting equipment have been serviced and readied in advance of the upcoming flood fight effort. We have also purchased two additional 2" electric sump pumps to clear standing water on the highway and at the flood closures.

The RFP's for contractor support have been advertised and mailed out with a due date of March 7.

The compression angles for some of the flood walls have been changed so that they are uniform. The work has started and should be completed by February 28th. This should save some time and effort on the construction of these closures.

-WASTEWATER-

The SCADA upgrades to all the lifts are approximately 90% complete. We will be exploring new software options with our vendor in the next couple of weeks. The upgrades will greatly enhance the SCADA systems reporting and operating capabilities.

The Fire Department had its biannual EMT refresher this month. We are also in the middle of training our Confined Space Rescue team.

We are converting our grass fire equipment so it can be installed in different vehicle.

John Wachter and myself attended the Polk County Flood meeting in Crookston on the 23rd and we feel that the surrounding Townships are making progress in protecting themselves with minimal impact to the City's flood fight efforts. We did inform them that we would help any way we could if an emergency would arise.

Next National Weather Service flood forecast will be made March 2nd.

Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust

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AGENDA ITEMS:

The Council will consider a resolution to formally dedicate to Council President Dick Grassel the soon-to-be-completed playground in the Red River State Recreational Area campground. The area will be known as "Richard L. Grassel Park."

The consent agenda contains quotations for airborne insect spraying, an ice resurfacers, and HVAC improvements at the Police Headquarters. There is also an off-sale liquor application.