

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: March 25, 2011

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

From: Scott Huizenga

RE: Weekly Update

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

March 28, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Special Work Session – Training Room

March 29, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Special Work Session – Training Room

April 5, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

April 12, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

WEEKLY UPDATE:

The City Council will hold interviews for the Ward 2 Council vacancy next week. The next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, April 5.

Downtown parking survey

The Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is conducting a downtown parking survey for East Grand Forks in conjunction with a larger-scale study in Grand Forks. Interested persons can participate in a survey on downtown parking that is accessible via the City web site. Users can find the survey either on the web site News Flashes or by navigating to the “Planning Documents” section of the Planning and Zoning page. A draft of the study is due in mid-April. The study is being provided at no cost to the City.

Campground

The Senate passed an omnibus DNR bill with one year of additional maintenance funding – about \$35,000 for the Red River State Recreational Area (RRSRA). The City is pleased that the Senate was able to provide some level of funding given in the relative lateness of the City’s request. However, all parties agree that this is a short-term solution to the RRSRA funding issue. The City will continue to work with the DNR, and the legislature, as necessary, on a long-term solution. One should note that the Governor will likely veto the final legislative passing of the DNR bill due a high level of projected cuts. Nonetheless, the City is confident that some level of RRSRA funding will be retained when a bill is signed by the Governor.

Labor update

The City, via the Water and Light Commission, and Teamsters Local 120 tentatively agreed on a labor agreement on Monday evening. I am very confident that both sides will agree to the latest offering that adopts the citywide pay scale and reduces leave benefits for future employees.

Legislative Update

The Legislature continued at feverish paces to meet its self-imposed deadline of this week to pass all of its tax bills. The Senate version differed significantly from the recent House version in terms of impact to LGA. The latest House version retained LGA funding for 2011 while cutting in 2012 and phasing out LGA for the largest cities in the state. The Senate version, ironically, largely mimics the original House proposal. The Senate version cuts all cities, including East Grand Forks, in both 2011 and 2012 while retaining LGA funding for the large cities. I do not expect a final answer any time soon.

Congrats, Michelle

Our own Michelle French, Executive Assistant for the City of East Grand Forks, recently completed all requirements and earned her status as a Minnesota Certified Municipal Clerk (MCMC). The related article from the League of Minnesota Cities [is here](#).

Flood Links

The City provides several online mechanisms to keep up with the latest flood developments and closings as they occur.

web site: www.egfflood.info

Twitter: [@egfflood](https://twitter.com/egfflood)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/egfflood

The standard City links also contain the flood updates as well including [@EGGrandForksMN](https://twitter.com/EGGrandForksMN) on Twitter and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EGFCity.

The latest snowfall that primarily affected the southern region of the Red River Valley is expected to have some effect on the northern flood outlook according to the National Weather Service. The predictions have increased by approximately one foot. However, the predictions remain well within the city's protection levels with a 50-percent chance of reaching 52 feet.