

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: April 21, 2011

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

From: Scott Huizenga

RE: Weekly Update

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

April 26, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

May 3, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

May 10, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

May 11, 2011 – 6:00 pm – Tri-Cities Meeting – Mamma Maria's

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Legislative Update

Most legislative committees were in recess this week for the traditional Passover/Easter break. I had the opportunity to catch up with Rep. Deb Kiel during her visit to the Senior Center on Tuesday. We discussed several issues including Local Government Aid (LGA), Parks and Trails Funding, Street Improvement Districts, and proposed changes to the Disparity Reduction Credit (DRC). The DRC provides tax relief to western border cities, including East Grand Forks. The Senate Tax bill currently proposes the phase-out and eventual elimination of the DRC. Commercial property tax rates would increase by approximately 10-75 percent without the DRC depending upon property value and the magnitude of any DRC reduction. I have been in contact with the City of Moorhead, the Polk County Assessor, and business interests regarding this proposal in order to compile more information about the potential impacts of the Senate tax bill. I will provide additional information in the next several days.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. The Big Event is set for April 30, when UND students help and clean up the town. They are standing by this date and cannot go to a different date if it is canceled.
2. Jim Neil's retirement party will be at the Parks and Recreation shop April 29 from 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm!
3. The campground is set to open May 13. This is a week later the original thought.
4. The playground equipment has been moved back to May 9 to put the equipment in.
5. Arbor Day has been moved to May 13 in the campground, we are dedicating a tree for Dick Grassel.

6. - The Senior Center Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27 at noon. Please RSVP if you plan to attend and want lunch 773-0821.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. American Crystal Sugar representatives will provide an update on current processing operations.
2. The City Engineer and the Public Works Superintendent will discuss several aspects of the proposed waste water Phase II improvements. This will be the final work session before a scheduled public hearing on the proposed Facility Plan that is scheduled for the following Tuesday, May 3. The City Engineer will discuss the results of the recent soil boring tests as directed by Council. The City Engineer will also discuss the latest cost estimates of the proposals. The estimates have increased significantly due to the volume of sludge (biosolids) that the boring tests revealed. Finally, the City Engineer and the Public Works Superintendent will discuss the waste water permit renewal, which takes effect in May. On a related note, the city delegation will meet with MPCA officials on Monday to discuss all of the proposed waste water solutions including: a standalone lagoon reconstruction, an interconnect with Grand Forks, and the “do nothing” alternative. We will report on this meeting at Tuesday’s work session.
3. The Civic Center locker room expansion project is back on the work session agenda per Council directive.
4. Earl Haugen, MPO Executive Director, will discuss the preliminary findings of a downtown parking study conducted by Rich and Associates. This discussion will transition to a discussion of a proposed parking lot expansion project along River Street on the western edge of the boardwalk.
5. Staff will briefly present the 1st Quarter analysis of the 2011 Budget and Expenditures. Most items are tracking as budgeted for the 1st quarter with no major revisions necessary. The primary items of concern include the ongoing Local Government Aid (LGA) debate in the legislature and the uncertainty of energy and fuel costs.