

# WEEKLY MEMO

**Date:** April 29, 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*

*April 30, 2011 – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Drug Drop Off*

*April 30, 2011 - Big Event*

*May 2 – May 6, 2011 – Spring Cleanup*

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

*May 6, 2011 – 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Book & Treasure Sale – Campbell Library*

*May 7, 2011 – 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Book & Treasure Sale – Campbell Library*

*May 7, 2011 – Household Hazardous Drop Off*

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

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

## **WEEKLY UPDATE:**

### **Downtown Parking Study**

Earl Haugen, Executive Director of the Grand Forks – East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presented the preliminary findings of the downtown parking study at last Tuesday's work session. Council members can submit any comments on the preliminary findings to me or directly to Earl. The comments, as applicable, could be incorporated into the final draft. The MPO will submit the final recommendations to the City Council in late May. There is no scheduled action next week on either the study or the proposed parking expansion.

### **Flood Wrap-Up**

As the river recedes (slowly), the operations team held its last regular flood meeting on Tuesday for wrap-up items, which Chief Gust discusses below. River Road will remain closed – in whole or part – until the river recedes below approximately 36 feet.

### **Finance Director to retire**

Finance Director Jerry Lucke submitted his letter of resignation this week indicating his intention to retire. Jerry was most gracious in providing the City nearly four months of notice so that the City can begin the transition as soon as possible. Jerry was a stabilizing force in the Administration and Finance office during a period of significant turnover. His guidance has been much appreciated while the “new blood” (myself included) learned the ropes. Jerry's projected date of retirement is August 20.

This leaves the city with three current or pending vacancies. Jim Neil, Parks Foreman, retires today. And, the Police Department currently carries a patrol officer vacancy that will appear soon for Council consideration.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

### **Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust**

As you know the flood crested at 49.87ft. This was the third largest crest in recorded history. There were some problems that were corrected during the flood fight, along with some that need to be corrected after the water recedes. We found that there was some scouring on the piers located on the northwest end of the Murray Bridge, along with some movement in the connecting joint located at the foot of the Point Bridge. Both are being addressed by Engineering and Public Works to find a solution or fix. The City Crews that installed the walls and closures did an outstanding job once again along with all City Employees that stepped up and helped with this year's event. Every year we find that this work becomes faster and more efficient. We should give them all a big thanks and job well done.

At this time we have not been declared a federal disaster area but that may change in the future. We have turned in our preliminary damage assessment and the County Emergency Management will be giving this to the State. The County Emergency Management will keep us posted if it changes.

### **Fire Department:**

The Fire Department responded to the American Crystal Sugar Company for a fire near the boilers. This is the third time in the last 10 years that they have had a fire in this area. We were able to extinguish the fire with minimal damage. Although there was damage to the roof of the building we were able to contain the fire as to not interrupt the production of the plant. I have already stated that the Aerial Platform Truck did not work properly and should be addressed in the near future. As a footnote, Crystal Sugar Company is working at trying to get some funding for rescue equipment for the department with help from Lloyd Kennedy.

### **Library, Charlotte Helgeson**

Current Summary from Inspec, Inc. concerning Library roof.

- [Anticipated completion of report by May 6, 2011.](#)
- [Known deficiencies likely resulting in direct roof leakage were observed at the northwest and southeast portions of the area.](#)
- [Other potential leakage creating deficiencies observed in field of roof.](#)
- [Issues related to insulation/vapor retarders/ventilation were also observed.](#)

While attending EGF High School, Andy Nelson volunteered with puppets at the Library for summer reading. Now as Andy Hayward, professional puppeteer and puppet designer, he will return to his hometown library for a public presentation from 6:30-7:30 on Monday, May 2 at the Library. He will be entertaining and instructing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at the Library on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund**

### **HVAC System**

The PD Building HVAC system replacement is underway. The old system is being replaced with a new high efficiency system that will save on heating and cooling costs and which should resolve some long standing heating and cooling problems in the PD Building.

### **2011 Flood & Traffic Issues**

Anytime the Greater Grand Forks area experiences a flood that involves bridge closures there is going to be a certain amount of traffic delays and disruptions. This year, with one of the highest floods in history and four of the five bridges in GF & EGF closed, one could have expected significant problems. Instead, thanks to the efforts of city workers, the MN Highway Patrol and the MNDOT there were very few issues or significant delays. The EGFPD would like to thank those organizations and the citizens of GF and EGF for their patience and assistance in making this flood a relative non-event in the area of traffic problems.

### **Northland College**

Officer Darren Szczepanski assisted with an alcohol awareness event at Northland College in East Grand Forks on April 27, 2011. Officer Szczepanski conducted field sobriety tests on volunteers who wore glasses that simulate the effects of alcohol impairment.

### **Prescription Drug Take Back Day**

The East Grand Forks PD, along with the Crookston Police Department and the Polk County Sheriff's Office are conducting a prescription drug take back day from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Saturday April 30, 2011. This event allows people to get safely rid of unwanted, expired or unused prescription medicines. Prescription medicines are amongst the most commonly abused drugs and are commonly stolen from family and friends or during residential burglaries.

### **Parks and Recreation, Dave Aker**

- 1) The Big Event is Saturday, April 30, if there is rain or snow, it will be canceled for this year. Students have finals and graduation coming up at UND.
- 2) The Park and Recreation Department is putting the flower pots out.
- 3) The trail heads will open May 13!

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

The consent agenda includes the annual sponsorship of the snowmobile trails maintenance program. This a pass-through grant awarded by the Department of Natural Resources to the Red River Snowmobile Club with the City as the financial sponsor. The City recently met with officers from the snowmobile club to review annual financial statements and reporting requirements. I find the financial reports to be in order.

3. The Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed amended waste water facility plan. The amended facility plan includes the proposed interconnection with the City of Grand Forks, North Dakota for waste water treatment as directed and passed on February 1, 2011 by Council Resolution 11-02-17. If approved, the amended plan must be submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) by June 4 for inclusion on the Minnesota Public Finance Authority (PFA)'s Project Priority List (PPL) and Intended Use Plan (IUP).

If the amended plan is not approved, the City's current facility plan will remain on the IUP. The Council also received word this week via the City Engineer that the both projects could be eligible for partial grants from the PFA due to the high cost of the projects. Based on current funding levels, the projects could garner \$2.5 million - \$3.0 million in grant funds. Any potential legislative action or project scope changes could affect those amounts. Depending on those variables, projected service rate increases could be reduced by 20-25 percent, or approximately \$3-4 per month for the "average" household user. Also, I have sample intergovernmental agreements from other cities that cooperate on waste water treatment. They are available in my office or electronically for anyone interested.

9. The proposed transit agreement with Northland Community and Technical College (NCTC) is a two-month extension. The extension will allow the agreement to coincide with the college's fiscal year that starts on July 1. The extension will also facilitate negotiation of terms on a new agreement. Representatives from NCTC and Cities Area Transit (via MPO) are currently negotiating a new agreement.