

WEEKLY MEMO

Date: June 3, 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:

June 7, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

June 14, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Work Session – Training Room

June 21, 2011 – 5:00 pm – Council Meeting – Council Chambers

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

WEEKLY UPDATE:

Downtown Parking

Staff is working on a draft proposal that could implement a downtown parking district. As proposed, property owners (including the City) would contribute to a dedicated fund that would be used for long-term parking maintenance and/or expansion. The next step will be to discuss the draft plans with downtown businesses. City Council would then consider the consensus of the area businesses as an agenda item.

Sherlock Park

The Police Department concluded its investigation this week of the Sherlock Park fire. Suspects in the accidental fire have been identified. City staff is focusing on rebuilding. A small committee of city staff and volunteers will meet early next week to begin the rebuilding efforts, including fundraising and volunteer outreach. Meanwhile, the City's insurance adjuster has given a primary insured value on the property of \$373,383. The visual inspection indicated a loss of 70 percent of the total structure. These estimates are subject to change as the City can conduct a more thorough assessment and can obtain bids for reconstruction.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Department, Chief Mike Hedlund HVAC System

Work on the replacement of the PD Building HVAC system continues and could be finished this week. This is a significant project that will significantly enhance the quality and efficiency of the heating and cooling within the building.

Sherlock Park Playground Fire

On Friday, May 27, 2011, a large portion of the Sherlock Park Playground was destroyed in a fire. This playground, which was built primarily through donations and volunteer labor, had been a well used attraction in EGF for a number of years. It now appears that the fire was started negligently rather than intentionally. A small fire, which was thought to have been put out the

previous day, apparently smoldered in the cedar chips, before reigniting and catching the playground itself. The original fire was started by local youths who were observed by an adult who had them put the fire out. All indications at that time were that the fire was completely out but unfortunately it was not.

Police Training

Officer Tony Reznicek recently attended a two week “Use of Force Instructor” training course. This course allows Reznicek to provide training for other members of the Department in the areas of firearms, baton use, pepper spray and general use of force. Sgt. Michelle Manias also recently attended a Domestic Violence Instructor course that will allow her to teach EGFPD officers in the best tactics to respond to incidents involving domestic violence. The Police Department is attempting to get officers certified to teach a variety of the main types of required training so that training can be conducted locally at a lower cost.

School’s Out

With school ending in East Grand Forks there will be many children biking, walking and rollerblading around town. Drivers need to slow down and be careful to avoid any collisions. On that same note, parents should remind their children that they need to obey the traffic laws when they are biking or crossing roads on foot or rollerblades.

Fire Department, Chief Randy Gust

As you all know we had a fire at the Sherlock Forrest Playground on Friday, May 27th. 22 Fire Fighters responded and we had the fire out in 20 minutes and were able to investigate the fire scene the same day.

Although the playground received extensive damage (approximately 75% of the equipment) there were some positive things to come out of the fire.

- First and foremost there were no injuries reported.
- The play ground can be rebuilt, with planning already taking place.
- Because of great cooperation between the Fire Department and Police Department personnel, we were able to investigate the fire and speak to witnesses enabling us to find the responsible parties and are in the process of dealing with them.

I want to thank the two departments for their good work in responding to and investigating the cause of the fire. Job well done.

AGENDA ITEMS

The consent agenda contains several items previously discussed at work session including the purchase of a new transit bus, the Safe Routes to School grant application for the west side of Bygland Road, and O’Leary Court tennis court repair. The consent agenda also contains several event permits and the annual liquor license renewals.

Item 18 under New Business is a Memorandum of Understanding with Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS), the Police Department union. This MOU clarifies the two parties’ positions regarding the laundering of street clothes for plainclothes officers. The agreement sets a maximum amount that can be spent on detective clothing laundering along with the

understanding that the benefit is considered taxable income. The MOU would be effective through December 31, 2012, which is the expiration date of the current labor agreement with LELS. Previously, the City did not set a maximum allowance.

Item 19 requests approval of an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) that provides funding to the City to install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility improvements at the intersection of Highway 2 and 220. The improvements will be installed in conjunction with the planned sidewalk and trails Transportation Enhancement project along Central Ave and Highway 220.