

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2017 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for January 16, 2018 was called to order by Council President Olstad at 5:00 P.M.*

**CALL OF ROLL:**

*On a Call of Roll the following members of the East Grand Forks City Council were present: Mayor Steve Gander, Council President Mark Olstad, Council Vice President Chad Grassel, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Mike Pokrzywinski, Tim Riopelle, Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.*

*Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Keith Mykleseth, Water & Light Manager; Megan Nelson, City Clerk; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.*

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**OPEN FORUM:**

*“An opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not on the current agenda. Items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate.” If you would like to address the City Council, please come up to the podium to do so.”*

Senator Mark Johnson thanked the Council for their time, how he would like to do a quick review of the 2017 legislative session, and take any questions or concerns before the 2018 session begins. He said one thing he was hoping the City was hearing about the property tax relief from the small businesses. He stated how Roseau County was showing 10%-13% reduction in property taxes for small businesses which is exciting for them and he is hoping that it will also help the small businesses in East Grand Forks. He commented on the Federal tax bill that was passed around Christmas time and how they will be working on this session is to try and get some parody between the State tax bill and the Federal tax bill. He said they were trying to get more tax relief in areas. He informed the Council that the 17<sup>th</sup> was a big day for District 1 because the bonding committee was going to be in Thief River Falls and Crookston and some of the things they will be looking at is Northland Community and Technical College for some projects they would like to accomplish as well as make stops at Digi-Key, the food bank in Crookston, and at the University of Minnesota Crookston. He continued saying that he had been asked if they will be raising LGA this year which he explained it is a non-budget year so that will not be done this year.

Senator Johnson continued saying they were trying to get feedback on what some of the concerns are from this area, how it has been relatively quiet, but the three main things that are brought up have been taxes, health insurance premiums, and the confusion with buffer zones. He said it could all be moot with the Senate President moving to Lieutenant Governor and the legal challenges that come with it. He commented how it may throw a wrench in the session depending how it is resolved, she might be able to do both positions, and it also depends on a special election in. He explained how it will be an interesting session. He asked if there were any questions.

Council member Tweten told Senator Johnson about the drug task force for the region and how the Police Department has started the process of trying to obtain a dog to help detect drugs when called upon. He said at this time the drug problem is permeating the entire State and it will take money and effort to enlarge all of the task forces to get rid of the drugs. He said they should try to get North Dakota to also expand their drug task forces, how the judges in this area are giving longer jail terms when drugs are involved, and he asked Senator Johnson to talk with the legislators about this as well as having him speak with Chief Mike Hedlund. Senator Johnson asked to be clear that there was a concern about the funding for the task forces and that they will be able to work with other states.

Council President Olstad informed Senator Johnson that there is already in place an inter-governmental agreement between North Dakota and Minnesota so they are able to cross state lines to help each other. He added how they are also working with Border Patrol so the drug task force covers this area all the way up to the Canadian border which was the same on the North Dakota side. He stated there were already some things in place and the major factor that Council member Tweten was getting at was the funding source and how more funding may be needed. Senator Johnson said that was one issue that was brought up the previous year, how he sits on the judiciary committee, and they do administer some of the funding for those agencies and task forces. He stated that was something they really looked into and he has had a conversation with the Sheriff of Polk County regarding this as well. He added he feels very strongly about his as well and how this is a public safety issue.

Mayor Gander said that in the coming years there may be some requests coming through the DNR which the City partners up with them on for items for the greenway and campground area such as possibly getting cabins along with an emergency shelter. He explained how currently when there is severe weather people from the campground go to the fire station for shelter. He said they would like a designated shelter and could also include an interpretive center. He added again that these things would be worked through the DNR and the City would work through and with the DNR to obtain these appropriations. Senator Johnson said that some of these items have been on the radar for a while. Mayor Gander said another on that should be on the radar is a south end bridge which is something the City will also be working on. Council President asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were none. He then thanked Senator Johnson for coming to the meeting. Senator Johnson thanked the Council again for their time.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Regular Meeting” for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of January 2, 2018.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of January 9, 2018.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE ITEMS ONE (1) AND TWO (2).**

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

**SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE**

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*Items under the "Consent Agenda" will be adopted with one motion; however, council members may request individual items to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion and action if they choose.*

3. Consider approving the request to purchase two Ford Police Interceptor SUVs for a total amount of \$56,084.90 from Ford of Hibbing.
4. Consider approving the request to purchase and installation of additional equipment for the Ford Police Interceptor SUVs for a total amount up to \$9,373.82 to be completed by Code 4 Services.
5. Consider approving the striping of the two new Ford Police Interceptor SUVs for a total amount up to \$1,000 to be completed by Custom Stripes.
6. Consider declaring the 2013 Ford Police SUV and the 2014 Ford Police SUV as surplus and use them for trade on the purchase of the new SUVs or to be sold at the next city police auction.
7. Consider approving the request to start an internal hiring process for the Supervisor of the Facility Maintenance and Cemetery position in the Park and Recreation Department.
8. Consider approving the request to start an internal and external hiring process for the Team Lead of Facility Operations position in the Park and Recreation Department.
9. Consider approving the request to purchase a speaker system and equipment rack for a total price of \$8,145.91 from Acme Tools for the VFW Arena.
10. Consider approving the request to purchase of fitness equipment that includes two stationary bikes, Plyo boxes, powerblocks, and kettlebells totaling \$6,994.68 from EXOS.
11. Consider approving the Special Event Application for the Vintage Snowmobile Show to be held on February 3, 2018 from 8am until 6pm and allow them to block off parking spaces along the west side of the parking lot at restaurant row.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO APPROVE ITEMS THREE (3) THROUGH ELEVEN (11).**

Council Vice-President Grassel stated there were two positions in the Park and Recreation Department, how they need to do their due diligence to find someone who can really lead in the Team Lead position, and he would be voting no if it is a person put in this position that cannot work with others within the City.

He said this the time to make an opportunistic, good change and wanted to put that out there publically. Mr. Huttunen commented how Council Vice-President Grassel was correct with the intent of the position change.

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*

**ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS:**

12. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for December 21, 2017.

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

13. Reconsider approving the non-exclusive agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and Northland Community and Technical College for the use of the northeast corner of the city parking lot west of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW for the truck driving program from January 9, 2018 until January 8, 2019.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE NON-EXCLUSIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND NORTHLAND COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR THE USE OF THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE CITY PARKING LOT WEST OF 4<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE NW FOR THE TRUCK DRIVING PROGRAM FROM JANUARY 9, 2018 UNTIL JANUARY 8, 2019.**

Council member Riopelle he apologized for not being able to attend the work session the previous week but he had watched the meeting. He stated that reviewed the contract when it came to maintenance of the parking lot he fails to see how they can dictate certain these things without having to pay for the use of the parking lot. He explained how he votes tonight does not reflect how he really feels but next year he will be voting no on this if the City does not receive some sort of payment or if some of the items are not removed from this contract.

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, and Pokrzywinski.*  
*Voting Nay: DeMers and Vetter.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

14. Consider adopting the East Grand Forks Police Department In-car Camera and Body-Worn Camera Policy.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADOPT THE EAST GRAND FORKS POLICE DEPARTMENT IN-CAR CAMERA AND BODY-WORN CAMERA POLICY.**

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*

15. Consider approving Ordinance 23, 4<sup>th</sup> Series amending City Code Chapter 31 by adding sections 31.65 through 31.68 entitled “Park and Recreation Commission” and by adopting by reference city code chapter 10 “General Provisions” and section 10.99 which, among other things contain penalty provisions (1<sup>st</sup> Reading).

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 23, 4<sup>TH</sup> SERIES AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 31 BY ADDING SECTIONS 31.65 THROUGH 31.68 ENTITLED “PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION” AND BY ADOPTING BY REFERENCE CITY CODE CHAPTER 10 “GENERAL PROVISIONS” AND SECTION 10.99 WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS CONTAIN PENALTY PROVISIONS (1<sup>ST</sup> READING).**

Council member DeMers thanked Mr. Galstad for making changes. He suggested changing some of the language when it came to appointing the council representatives for this commission and if there weren't any objections he would propose an amendment to this for those changes. Mr. Galstad said it was a policy decision of the Council and it doesn't change the substance of the ordinance so it could be modified before the next reading. Council member DeMers asked again to make an amendment to modify the language on how the Council members were appointed to this commission. Mr. Galstad told the Council this could be tabled until it was modified or they could pass it as is and since the request did not substantially change the ordinance it could be modified before the next reading. Mayor Gander said he would like to keep this on track. Council President Olstad asked if they could approve this as it is and have it modified before the next meeting. Mr. Galstad said he could do that. Council member DeMers stated he removed his motion for an amendment. Mayor Gander reminded the Council how this was a big step in getting more community involvement and input to help guide the process moving forward.

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: Vetter.*

16. Consider authorizing Widseth Smith Nolting to proceed with the change in scope of work on Rhinehart Drive from a street reconstruction to a mill and overlay project and amend the project memorandum.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO AUTHORIZE WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING TO PROCEED WITH THE CHANGE IN SCOPE OF WORK ON RHINEHART DRIVE FROM A STREET RECONSTRUCTION TO A MILL AND OVERLAY PROJECT AND AMEND THE PROJECT MEMORANDUM.**

Council member Riopelle asked if this was being done just in case if they move forward with a round-a-bout. Mr. Emery said that was correct and how they didn't want to have to rip up a newly reconstructed street. Council member Riopelle said they would be voting on a round-a-bout somewhere down the line. Mr. Emery said that was correct. Council member Tweten said he thinks there is a problem and he has yet talked to anyone who thinks that a round-a-bout should be put into this situation. Council President Olstad stated they were not discussing the round-a-bout and how they are discussing the mill and overlay project. Council member Tweten stated the Senior Center parking lot readings should have been taken and be done and how important it is.

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

17. Consider authorizing Widseth Smith Nolting to include ADA improvements to the sidewalk system on 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW and amend the project memorandum to include this project.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO AUTHORIZE WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING TO INCLUDE ADA IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SIDEWALK SYSTEM ON 17<sup>TH</sup> STREET NW AND AMEND THE PROJECT MEMORANDUM TO INCLUDE THIS PROJECT.**

Council member DeMers asked if the document needed to be updated with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Mr. Emery said he had started the process with getting the paperwork filled out and it was going to be brought forward at the MPO meeting in February.

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

#### **CLAIMS:**

18. Consider authorizing the City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer to issue payment of recommended bills and payroll.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK-TREASURER TO ISSUE PAYMENT OF RECOMMENDED BILLS AND PAYROLL.**

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

#### **COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:**

Mayor Gander commented how there are many people in the community that consistently work hard to help make life better for others, they do it because they care about others, they want to make the community a better place, and are not easily discouraged. They give their best efforts, they are grinders, they know what the right thing to do is, they do it, and he appreciates them. He said there was a nomination this week for Brian Nelson who is involved with Pheasants Forever. He explained how this group is very active in raising funds for youth, habitat, and youth safety when it comes to fire arms along with teaching youth about conservation and being outdoors. He then asked if Council member Vetter would like to add anything since he is involved with the competitive shooting.

Council member Vetter said he was a coach of the trap team, Mr. Nelson help start the team, got people involved, and has been funding the team since the beginning. He explained that Mr. Nelson and Pheasants Forever donated funds to the Midway USA Foundation, how these funds have been matched either one for one or two for one on all donations that are made, and on an annual basis they can take out up to 5% of the interest earned. He stated that this year alone they are able to pull out \$10,000 for the East Grand Forks Trap team. He added how Mr. Nelson also helps support Crookston, Thief River Falls, Roseau, Greenbush, and a number of smaller communities in northwest Minnesota so Mr. Nelson does a lot for them.

Council Vice-President Grassel said he would also like to add how Mr. Nelson is everyone, at every booster tournament, every gathering, and always promoting the programs that he helps. He added how he

would always bring his kids along so Mr. Nelson's children have grown up doing all these things along with him. He added how you can tell Mr. Nelson's passion for the outdoors. Mayor Gander said there was an article in the Grand Forks Herald back in 2015 about the efforts of the Pheasants Forever group and that year they had raised \$118,000 for all of these different groups. He commented that in the photo that was included in the article was Mr. Nelson's wife and daughter who also served on the board of directors so he was going to be giving three grinder awards to Mr. Brian Nelson, his wife Michelle Nelson, and their daughter, Jaelyn Nelson.

Council Member Tweten said they have had the opportunity over the last couple weeks to see how the City is operating. He stated the Fire Department did an excellent job putting out the fire at the barley plant and the Public Works Department has done a wonderful job getting snow moved in adverse conditions and keeping the streets clean. He continued saying how the Fire Department and Police Department were out on a medical call and how important it is for them to have the equipment and personnel to perform these things. He added how he had attended the regional figure skating competition at the Civic Center which was very well attended. He told the Council this shows they are interested in the families that live in the community and this was an excellent city for families.

Council President Olstad reminded the Council that March 14<sup>th</sup> was Legislative Day in St. Paul and to let Ms. Nelson know if they were able to attend. He said they would travel down on the 13<sup>th</sup> which would then move the meeting to Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. He added that both he and Mr. Murphy will be going and asked again for those that can attend to let Ms. Nelson know. He also reminded the Council about the Chamber's annual dinner that was coming up on Thursday of this week.

Mr. Murphy told the Council that the tri-city meeting that was cancelled because of the weather will be rescheduled for a date when Senator Johnson, Representative Kiel, and Representative Fabian are able to meet before the legislative session beginnings and try to get as many council members from each city there are possible.

Mr. Huttunen thanked the Northern Star Figuring Skating group, which is largely volunteer based, for putting on the competition over the weekend. He said there were more than 230 individual skaters and over 20 teams that participated which is up from previous years. He added by all accounts this was a successful event for them.

Mr. Huttunen then told the Council there was a break in a line at the Blue Line Club Arena on Friday night. He said it was fixed by Saturday morning but at this time the system does not have enough glycol in it. He stated they had added entire supply that the City had along with what Lunseth Plumbing had in their inventory, they were hoping to have it up running, but this rink is below freezing and the ice is still melting. He said it was an update for the Council in case they are asked about it since the rink is currently closed. He added they were unsure at this time how the break happened. Council member Riopelle asked if they has talked with any of the neighboring communities to see if they might have a supply. Mr. Huttunen said they had talked with Crookston, Grand Forks Park District, and the Ralph Engelstad Arena and none had a supply, didn't have any enough on hand, or it wasn't compatible with the system the City has. He added they are looking into the possibility of ordering a supply from the Twin Cities. Council member DeMers asked over what time period the break took place. Mr. Huttunen explained the break happened around 10pm and Midwest Refrigeration was able to get someone there at midnight to start shutting down all of the pumps. He said he wasn't sure how much it holds but they have added approximately 500 gallons of glycol back into the system and it is still not running properly.

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 16, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:39 P.M.**

*Voting Aye: Riopelle, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Pokrzywinski.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer