

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2018 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for January 23, 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; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Tyler Hajicek, Police Officer; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; and Megan Nelson, City Clerk..

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

Council President Olstad stated before starting with the agenda Mr. Murphy was going to introduce a visitor. Mr. Murphy said that there was a representative from the public relations office from the Air Force Base. He explained those who attended the Chamber annual dinner were honored to sit with the members of the Grand Forks Air Force base which started a conversation about how many on the Council have not been on the Air Force Base and how the representatives from the air base have offered to have the Council out for a tour.

Mr. Shaun Shenk said it was an honor to be seated with the Mayor and city council members during the annual dinner. He stated that Colonel Ben Spencer is the current commander at the base. He continued saying Chief Brian Thomas and himself along with the Colonel were at the table and based on the conversation realized East Grand Forks leaders hadn't been to the air base which they think is a disservice on their part because so many airmen live in East Grand Forks. He commented how they thought it was important the City understands what they do every day which is why they are inviting the Council out to the air base. He explained some of the things that the Council would be seeing on the tour as well as how they would like to strengthen the relationship between East Grand Forks and the air base. Discussion followed about possible dates for a tour and what is needed for the tour. Council member Tweten commented how this relationship is good for the air base, the City, and Northland College. Mayor Gander stated how the community embraces the airmen can positively impact the airmen and how that can carry over into their morale, readiness, and retention. He added he likes the connection and relationship and hopes to keep it going.

1. Request to Start Promotional Process – Gary Larson

Chief Larson stated that this was a request to fill the engineer position that has been left vacated by the retirement of Mr. Merle Hoverson and asked to start the process of filling this position. There were no questions.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

2. Request for Donated Rental Space – Reid Huttunen

Mr. Huttunen informed the Council the VFW Arena has been reserved by the Anne Carlsen Center from July 16th to July 20th for a bike training camp to teach people with disabilities to ride a bike. He explained they had been looking for a location for this area and how they think the VFW would work great for setting up the obstacle course inside and eventually will end up outside in the parking lot. He stated how they requested to see if the rental could be donated instead of paying \$200 per day to rent the facility. Mr. Huttunen told the Council he didn't think there would be any additional cost to the City for this because they would be using the facility from 8am to 5pm, a worker would already be there to open the arena for people to come and walk, they were not requesting any additional equipment other than the use of a table and some chairs, and he would be able to lock up at the end of the day. He added the Anne Carlsen Center will be paying the iCan Bike organization to put on this event, it will cost \$8,500 to \$9,000 before any rental costs were included. He recommended the City donate the use of the facility for this event because this group was not making any revenue from the event. He added during his experience working for Special Olympics they didn't pay for events like this other than maybe staff time.

Council member Pokrzywinski said he would support this and asked if they would consider including the City as a sponsor for the donation. Mr. Huttunen said that was something that had been discussed and it was something they would do. There were no more questions.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

3. Request to Approve Purchase of In-Car Video & Body Cam Systems – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund informed the Council he had received the additional information that was needed for this item. He reminded them \$35,000 had been budgeted, how they had decided to also include body cameras in this purchase, and with the quote of \$40,000 the additional funds were going to come out of the Police Department's budget. He stated how there was additional items needed for a cost of \$3,995 along with additional hardware for \$4,313. He asked to be fronted these additional funds which would be paid back with funds from the police auction that will be held this year and how they already have 10 cars for the auction. Council Vice-President Grassel asked how much an average auction brings in. Chief Hedlund said they vary from \$15,000 to \$30,000. Council member DeMers asked if there was a revenue line that accounted for those funds. Chief Hedlund said there was and how currently this revenue line had \$12,000 budgeted.

Council member DeMers stated the city charter doesn't allow for appropriating funds unless they were budgeted. He added he was on board to look into the funding further as well as supporting this program. He asked to put a measure in place to see how well this is working so when it comes time to spend funds to further the program the Council can decide if this program should continue. Chief Hedlund stated the bike patrol had been using body cameras until it was no longer allowed and how they enjoyed using them.

Mr. Galstad said these cameras would be another tool for the police department showing an accurate account. He added courts are relying on these videos more and more, the current car cameras do not provide very good videos, and how these new cameras for both the cars and body-worn will help protect all parties involved. Discussion followed on how measures will be put in place to see if this is a useful program, again how this will protect all parties involved, and how this is the new standard in law enforcement.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

4. Request to Approve the K-9 Program for the Police Department – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund informed the Council the Police Department had already raised \$15,000 for the K-9 program, how they found a used fully equipped K9 vehicle which cost is significantly less than purchasing and outfitting a new vehicle, and how there is a program in Anoka where they would be able to get the dog and training for the handler. He stated they just found out the Eagles Club had pledged \$5,000 which would be given on March 1st and another \$5,000 had been pledged for 2019 as well. He also informed the Council that during a recent Minnesota Wild hockey game \$2,500 had been raised to help a city start a K9 program and East Grand Forks was picked so they are asking for a commitment otherwise those funds will be going to another police department. Chief Hedlund thanked all of those who had donated to get this program started and how they could still receive more donations for this program.

Council member Pokrzywinski said he will support this process and asked if there were reporting requirements for receiving donations. Chief Hedlund explained all of the donations were being made to the police association which is a non-profit and would allow those who had donated to write off those donations as tax deductible. Mr. Galstad said State Statute allows cities to collect donations. Discussion followed about how the dog could be used for a variety of purposes, how the effectiveness of the program should also be measured, and how there were many possible ways to set those parameters. Council member DeMers asked if an MOU would be needed to address overtime, call backs, and any else that might come with this position in regards to the labor union. Mr. Murphy explained he would check with the League but usually the overtime the handler receives is the additional compensation for being the handler. Mayor Gander asked how many times a dog would be deployed to protect a human officer. Officer Hajicek said it wouldn't happen all that often because in the last two years there is only one case that he could think of when that would have happened.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

5. Legislative Day and Thank Yous to the Capital Investment Committee – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy explained the City visits legislators from the area during legislative day and asked if there were any other legislators that should be visited. He commented the suggestion was made to send a thank you to those on the bonding committee that helped the City receive funding for the interconnect project which included 55 people. He added there is a budget for media and public relations so they could look into having something professionally prepared. Council President Olstad suggested they should maybe show the progression from beginning to end and have it signed by the Council. Mayor Gander said showing appreciation is a good thing and he liked the idea. Council member DeMers said this City has done well in getting appropriations and they should send a thank you. He also asked to set up a meeting with Paul Torkelson who did some heavy lifting for the City and he deserves more than just a thank you. Council President Olstad said if there were any other ideas to email Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy informed the Council that he had an update on the pool. He explained they have the report from the consultant, how it is also in the lawyer's hands, and they will need to hire an engineer to prepare plans and specifications for the repairs. He added the plan is to have the work done in April so the pool will be open for the entire season.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 23, 2018 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:53 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer