

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2018 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Monday, March 12, 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.

Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Megan Nelson, City Clerk; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

1. Potential Location for New Local Traffic Bridge – Earl Haugen

Mr. Haugen reminded the Council about the joint meetings that had been held to discuss a location of a new bridge and how the Metropolitan Planning Organization had been asked to complete a traffic analysis at each of the locations. He stated how this is part of the street and highway update that will be adopted later on in the year. He explained all four crossings were reviewed, all conditions were set the same for each crossing when analyzed except for their location, and they found the further north the bridge is located the better it serves local traffic. He added the further south it is located the more it serves other traffic. He commented how the three current bridges are reaching capacity. He explained how they looked at the amount of miles driven and time spent traveling and how it was decided at a joint meeting the proposed bridge should focus on serving local traffic and try to eliminate crossings. He added how there weren't many at the last meeting to help narrow down the choices which is why they are coming to the Council for direction.

Council member Vetter proposed eliminating the crossings at 47th Ave S and Merrifield and keep the proposed crossings at 24th Ave S and 32nd Ave S. Mayor Gander asked if there was interest in a bridge at the southern locations. Mr. Haugen said the counties were interested and there have been studies done on these locations. Mayor Gander stated how a bridge would make things better for everyone and how it was practical to move forward with what serves the local traffic best. Council President Olstad asked if additional work is needed. Mr. Haugen said it depended on where the bridge was located and in past plans the City of East Grand Forks needed to develop roads to connect the traffic. He added the bridge

potentially could meet up with Polk County Road 72 and how that would still attract other traffic. Council President Olstad said it would be proper to take out the 47th Ave S and Merrifield bridge locations.

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

2. Request for Approval of Sandy's First Resubdivision – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis reminded the Council this plat was for the property behind Hardware Hank. She explained there would be an easement on the entire property, nothing could be built, but they would still be able to use it for other things. She said the public hearing was going to be held at the next meeting and the Council would be voting on the final plat. Council President Olstad asked if there were any questions about this item. There were none.

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

3. Consider Zoning Districts Ordinance Amendment – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis explained the zoning code was adopted in 2001 and since there are some new uses that will need to be included in them such as addressing micro cells among other things. She said the city attorney is working on a right of way ordinance which will list the requirements that would need to be met for the placement of items in the right of way. She continued saying there is changing locations of some things to commercial zones because they already have large buildings, roads to accommodate the traffic, and parking available. She said major uses will be added into the commercial zones which will list more specific businesses and how some of these changes will mirror uses that are allowed in Grand Forks. Council President Olstad asked about wineries or distilleries and where they can be located. Ms. Ellis said she could add them in with this update. Discussion followed about how they wouldn't need be required to get a special use permit since they are regulated by the State. Council member DeMers asked about a medical dispensary but how the State may also dictate where that may go. Ms. Ellis said at this time this was to add more general uses and that is something that can be addressed in the future.

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

4. Request to Promote and Fill Vacant Engineer Position at Fire Dept – Gary Larson

Chief Larson reminded the Council about the request to fill the engineer position because of the retirement at the end of 2017 that created the vacancy. He stated there was one applicant who was tested, approved by the Civil Service, and completed the interview process. He said he was looking for approval to promote Mr. Ryan Swang to this position and place him on Grade 14 Step 6. Council President asked if there were any questions about this item. There were none.

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

5. Rental Request Update for the Proposed AC Expos Gun Show – Reid Huttunen

Mr. Huttunen told the Council he had followed up with the organizer of the gun show and communities where this gun show had been previously held. He stated there were positive remarks from the communities on how it was run and how it brought people into town. He said the organizer commented how about 75% of the vendors have their federal licenses at these events and how not all vendors are there

with fire arms but instead are selling items such as ammunition or outdoor gear so there can be a variety of vendors. He informed the Council the organizer has rules and regulations in place that all of the vendors have to sign off on before they are able to set up their booth, the organizer would be comfortable adding in the requirement of background checks, but wasn't sure how it would be enforced because it was not required by law in this situation.

Mr. Huttunen said they would be stopping at the local gun dealers in town to see if they wanted to participate, they didn't think Cabela's would participate, but people coming to town for the gun show would more than likely stop at Cabela's. He also informed the Council that they would not be able to pay more than \$1,000 for rent for the weekend, it is the organizer and his wife that check everything in to the event, they do a thorough job, and have a security team place who also checks everything before people walk out the door. Mr. Galstad told the Council he had talked with the Grand Forks City Attorney, Mr. Swanson, about the gun show that was held recently at the Alerus Center. He told the Council the City of Grand Forks did not require anything other all of the liability was put on the promoter, there were no issues, and all of the fire arms had zip ties in the chambers. He added how requiring vendors to be licensed and the requirement of running background checks was not law so it would be difficult to enforce if required.

Council member DeMers said since they were using a city facility the Council could require all vendors to be federally licensed and require a \$5000 deposit from each vendor which could be addressed in the contract. Mr. Galstad stated again there was an enforcement issue and that it would be difficult to track and enforce without having laws on the books. Council member DeMers said again there should be guidelines in place for this event. Council President Olstad said he appreciated the work that had been done on this issue and fine with having this event. Council member Riopelle suggested rent of \$500 per day since they are a for-profit business and he had no problems with this event. Mr. Huttunen said the dates are undetermined at this time but they would come in on a Friday to set up and hold the event on Saturday and Sunday.

Council President Olstad asked what the charge would be for Friday. Mr. Huttunen said they couldn't pay more than \$1,000 for the weekend and not much was required for their set up on Friday. Council member Pokrzywinski said he supported the event, they received information from references which he had asked for, and he had no problems with this as long as the city attorney and police chief sign off on it. He added how this would be a good event for the City. Mayor Gander asked to just have the police department aware of when this will be. Chief Hedlund said he had no issues with this event and that patrol could walk through the event over the weekend.

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

6. Request to Purchase Forklift for Public Works Dept – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl informed the Council a new forklift was needed at Public Works. He explained \$25,000 had been budgeted to replace the 1984 Allis Chalmers forklift which he would be asking to declare as surplus and use towards the purchase of the new forklift. He recommended making the purchase from F-M Forklift because after the trade in and trade allowance the total cost would be \$21,489.00. Council member Tweten commented that it was important to keep up equipment. Council member Riopelle asked if there was a warranty on the new forklift. Mr. Stordahl stated there was. There were no more questions.

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

7. Discussion on Campground Joint Powers Agreement – David Murphy

Mr. Murphy stated that he and Mr. Huttunen had met with a representative from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) about the contract for the upcoming year. He explained they reviewed previous practices and what is coming up. He said the calculations are set for determining revenues and expenses, how documentation is submitted with the expenses, and the revenue sharing is split 50/50. He told the Council in 2016 the City and DNR each received \$34,326.82 for revenue sharing and 2017 seems to have similar numbers but the audit still needs to be completed. He stated they will need to decide how they would like to handle the renting of the Quonset building. He referred to the pictures that had been included in the packet that shows what is stored in the building over the winter months. He added the DNR says if they are charged rent it will be added into their expenses which will lower the amount for revenue sharing.

Mr. Murphy said the City is being treated fairly on this contract and how there are some items such as the merchandise and firewood that they sell is not included in the revenue amount. Council President Olstad asked if a study had been done about the economic impact the campground had on the City. Mr. Murphy said he was unaware if any report had ever been done. Council member Tweten asked which office they were dealing with. Mr. Murphy said it was the Bemidji office. Mr. Tweten reminded the Council how years ago an interpretive center was going to be built but it was vetoed by Governor Ventura. He asked if there was any indication when a storm shelter was going to be built. Mr. Murphy told the Council that the DNR is focusing their funds on destination locations such as Itasca and the North Shore area and there was nothing in their short term plans for building a storm shelter in East Grand Forks. Council member Tweten asked about how bookings were going. Mr. Huttunen said as of right now 80% of the spots were already reserved for Memorial Day weekend so more than likely that weekend will be sold out. Discussion followed about what the DNR considers a destination location and how foot traffic, amount of campers, and the size of the park all are a factor.

Council member DeMers said the rental of the facility should be included and the City should get paid something for it. He commented how things should be accounted for. Mr. Murphy said he would speak with DNR and do whatever is more advantageous for the City and bring it back for approval.

This item will be brought back to a future meeting.

8. Request to Name the Grand Cities Bike System – Mayor Gander

Mayor Gander first asked anyone had been a part of the naming system. No one had. He explained that Mr. Jairo Viafara, who works for the Metropolitan Planning Organization, is very involved with transit, and how there is discussion about naming the bike trail system. He stated he was asked to pick a name but he wanted to have a conversation with the Council to come up with a name as a whole. He added they could ask to have Mr. Viafara come to a meeting to discuss this process further. Discussion followed on if there would be a name for the entire bikeway system not just the Greenway area and at this time the Greenway Technical Committee had not been formally asked about naming the bikeway system.

Ms. Ellis stated there has been some confusion on the Grand Forks side in regards to the naming because some say it was named with the passage of the resolution but others say it wasn't done. Mayor Gander said Andy Hampsten was the name that apparently been used or was going to be used and suggested naming the East Grand Forks side separately. Council member DeMers thanked Mayor Gander for bringing this to the Council as a whole. He stated he sees a reason for naming things, he didn't think it merited naming, and each side should designate their own name. He added he didn't want to take anything

away from the section that had been named after Officer Olson. Council member Pokrzywinski said he didn't want to be negative but he didn't have the appetite for this. He explained he could see singling out the greenway but that area is already called the Greenway. Mayor Gander suggested in time bringing in groups to discuss this further but for now wait to see what Grand Forks decides.

This item will be brought back to a future work session.

OTHER:

Council member Tweten reminded everyone there was a group going down for Legislative Day, how there is a drug issue in the area, and he would be talking about what is needed statewide to help the drug task forces and other law enforcement. He asked if there was anything else the Council would like discussed while visiting legislators. He added that he will also be mentioning about things that need to be done to modernize the higher education structure. Mayor Gander commented on the quality of life that is allowed with the work done by the police department. He said the City enjoys a high level of safety and he appreciate the work being done to keep the community safe.

Mr. Murphy said the Park and Recreation department had been requested to apply for a grant which was the same grant in which the City received funding for the pool project. He asked for a consensus from the Council in regards to Mr. Huttunen spending the time to complete the application for additional park shelters. Mr. Huttunen reviewed the requirements for the grant and how it is a 50/50 match for either making additions or improvements. He asked what would be a priority, reviewed how this year repairs were being done to shelters and sidewalks were being added for accessibility, and how they will be working on putting an ADA transition plan together to improve accessibility to the parks. Council Vice-President Grassel asked what had been included in the budget. Mr. Huttunen said \$40,000 was budgeted for shelters and \$30,000 had been budgeted for sidewalks for 2018. Council member Tweten commented how shelters would attract families. Discussion followed about where equipment may need to be updated, how they will need to work on a transition plan which could result in a bigger project, and the Altru dollars had been allocated for fencing at the baseball fields this year.

Mr. Huttunen told the Council the City would receive the funds for the project after it has been completed. Council member DeMers suggested using past successes, doing something like Sherlock Park but keeping each park unique and different, possibly adding in outdoor exercise equipment at the trailheads, adding fishing piers, or adding a natural playground. Mayor Gander also suggested fixing up the boat ramp and cleaning up the brush along River Road. Mr. Huttunen said these were good suggestions but the funds could not be used on DNR property which much of the greenway area is. He continued saying much of what he is hearing is for bigger projects, if an application was going to be submitting in the three weeks before the deadline his first thought was to focus on O'Leary Park. He explained the plans and funds were available for the installation of a concrete border, update some of the equipment to improve accessibility, and they could include the addition of some picnic shelters in the front. He added this would be a smaller scale project that they could put together in this time frame and a resolution would need to be approved showing Council support.

Mayor Gander asked if picnic shelters were also going to be added at Stauss Park. Mr. Huttunen said a separate application was required for each park and the budgeted funds for this year were to rehab the existing shelters before adding more shelters. Council Vice-President Grassel asked how much had been set aside for these grants. Mr. Huttunen said there was \$825,000 available this year, and the City received \$50,000 in 2015 from this program.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 12, 2018 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:27 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer