

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for February 5, 2019 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, Tim Riopelle, Tim Johnson, and Marc DeMers.*

*Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; 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; 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:**

President Olstad stated the open form is an opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not on the current agenda and items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate. He asked if anyone would like to address the City Council, please come up to the podium to do so. No one came forward.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Council Meeting” for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of January 15, 2019.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of January 22, 2019.

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

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

**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 Exempt Gambling Permit Application for the East Grand Forks Fire Department Relief Association to hold a raffle on June 8, 2019 at the Eagles Club #350 located at 227 10<sup>th</sup> St NW East Grand Forks, MN 56721 and waive the 30-day waiting period.
4. Consider approving the facility use agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and A.C. Expos for the use of the Blue Line Arena for holding a gun show on June 1-2, 2019.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE ITEMS THREE (3) AND FOUR (4).**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

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

5. Organizational and regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for January 3, 2019.

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

6. Consider approving the request to start the hiring process to fill the Park and Recreation Specialist for the Parks and Recreation Department.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO START THE HIRING PROCESS TO FILL THE PARK AND RECREATION SPECIALIST FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.**

*Voting Aye: Johnson, Olstad, Grassel, and Riopelle.*

*Voting Nay: DeMers and Vetter.*

*Absent: Helms.*

7. Consider adopting Resolution No. 19-02-14 approving the hiring of Jack Croaker as a truck driver and place him at a salary of 18.39 per hour.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 19-02-14 APPROVING THE HIRING OF JACK CROAKER AS A TRUCK DRIVER AND PLACE HIM AT A SALARY OF 18.39 PER HOUR.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 19-02-15 approving the layoff of the Firefighter II position due to the ending of the SAFER Grant Funding.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 19-02-15 APPROVING THE LAYOFF OF THE FIREFIGHTER II POSITION DUE TO THE ENDING OF THE SAFER GRANT FUNDING.**

Council member DeMers asked if the City was going to apply again in the near future. Chief Larson explained this application process was only available once a year, they would not be able to apply for it this year, and they would consider applying for it the following year. He stated there was talk about someone retiring when they applied for the grant. He reminded the Council the grant was paid for by FEMA for two years, the city used to be required to pay for the position for the third year, but that created hardships for cities so that is no longer a requirement. Chief Larson told the Council they do not apply for this grant unless they are planning to keep the person through attrition or a retirement. He said many things are considered before they apply for the grant, and he does not like being in the position they are currently in with having to let an employee go because this position was not budgeted and the grant was ending.

Council member DeMers asked if they would be applying during the next grant cycle. Chief Larson explained they would apply if it works for the department, if they think they would be able to retain the employee, and that the grant pays wages and benefits for that employee for two years. Council member DeMers asked how much it costs to train someone for this position. Chief Larson said it varied but it was around \$16,000 for training, gear, and uniforms. Council member DeMers commented with all of the time, funds, and training it would be nice if they would be able to keep this person on as an employee. Mayor Gander commented that they would never put pressure on someone to retire and asked if this person might be kept in mind when a retirement happens. Chief Larson said there had been some conversations but it is a fine line.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

#### **CLAIMS:**

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

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

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

**COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:**

Mayor Gander stated the group was unable to make it to trip to St. Paul the previous week because of the weather but the group was planning a trip down to visit legislators. He continued talking about how there has been a civil war going on in Somalia since 1991, how many people have died because of this civil war, many are coming to the United States, and how some of these refugees have settled in East Grand Forks. He said he along with the City Council had been invited to visit their place of worship on Sunday and he had been able to attend. He added they are able to make connections at this event because there were people there from the City, the police department, the school, and members of the clergy from some churches in town. He commented on the great hospitality, how they would like to form friendships, he had been introduced as a friend, he was grateful to be able to attend this event, he hopes that friendships are developed, sharing cultural differences can create a richness in life, and hopefully this community will come together within one generation. He ended by saying that he was able to attend the vintage snowmobile event that took place over the weekend, how he saw a sled that looked the same as the very first sled he ever road, and he awarded that sled the Mayor's Choice award. He thanked everyone that puts on that event, it showcases some of the earliest snowmobiles that were ever made but they also have some of the new and high performance sleds. He suggested that anyone who is able to attend this event in the future because it is a worthwhile event.

Council Member Riopelle informed everyone that there was going to be a Valentine's Day dinner at the Senior Center on the 14<sup>th</sup> and tickets for the dinner are only going to be sold in advance for this event so they should contact the Senior Center for tickets.

Council Member Johnson thanked Public Works Department for the good job they had been doing with snow removal.

Mr. Murphy asked the Council to let Mr. Thompson know what type of device they would like to use so that equipment can be ordered.

Chief Larson told the Council he had recently attended an Emergency Managers meeting and based on the work staff had done after the windstorm the City will be receiving a check for \$39,000.

Mr. Mykleseth told the Council there was going to be a Green Step City presentation during the Water and Light meeting that was scheduled for Thursday morning at 8am and the entire Council was invited to attend.

Ms. Ellis stated the new bus routes had been in place for six months, they were being reviewed, more than likely there will not be any changes to the routes in East Grand Forks but there may be changes made in Grand Forks. She said Cities Area Transit was seeking input and those that would like to comment could visit the CAT website. She added the City had been receiving complaints about snow on sidewalks. She reminded everyone that the sidewalk ordinance does require snow and ice to be removed from the

sidewalks within 12 hours of the snow ceasing to fall. She explained that it is getting difficult to remove the snow because there is getting to be so much snow we are running out of spaces to put snow and hopefully Public Works will be able to start pulling snow from the berms soon, which should help. She ended saying that she is asking everyone to be understanding during this time.

**MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION IN TRAINING ROOM:**

10. This portion of the meeting is closed pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05 Subd. 3(b) for attorney-client privilege to discuss litigation strategy and settlement negotiations regarding the city swimming pool.

Mr. Galstad stated this was going to move into a closed session. He explained this closed session was for attorney-client privilege pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05 Subd. 3(b) to discussion litigation strategies and/or settlement options. He said prior to moving into closed session he is required to look at the balancing test, it has been considered and determined the balancing policies behind the attorney-client privilege and the open meeting law dictates this session be closed for confidentiality purposes to discussion settlement and litigation strategies specifically regarding damages the City incurred from the swimming pool project. He asked for a motion to move into closed session.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

Discussion followed in closed session.

**MOVE BACK INTO OPEN SESSION:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO MOVE INTO OPEN SESSION.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

Mr. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the release of all claims agreement and authorize the City Administrator to sign the release agreement.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN THE RELEASE AGREEMENT.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 5, 2019 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:45 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer