

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS**

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2019 – FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for July 9, 2019 was called to order by Council Vice-President Grassel at 5:01 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 Vice-President Chad Grassel, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Dale Helms, Tim Riopelle, Tim Johnson, and Marc DeMers.

Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; 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 Vice-President Determined a Quorum was present.

1. Proposed Project with Good Samaritan – JoAnn Whicker & Rep from Good Samaritan

Mayor Gander told the Council he had a meeting with Ms. Whicker and her daughter about this project, stated he and his family has had ties to Good Samaritan, and that it was important for the City to have a good relationship or connection with Good Samaritan. He commented the City would not have funds for this but the media was present to give this item good coverage and asked Ms. Whicker to share her plan.

Ms. Whicker introduced herself, Michaun Shetler from Good Samaritan, and her daughter Terri Horpedahl. She informed the Council she is now a resident at Good Samaritan, it has everything she would need except the residents would like more seating available outside. She explained how they have received help with the plans that have been drawn up; they would need to have poured concrete slab, have a pergola installed, and add landscaping. She added because of the needs of some of the residents electric outlets would also need to be installed. She stated this project may need to be completed in phases, they are just starting to take the steps to move this forward, and they will work to get the prices down as much as possible.

Ms. Shetler reminded the City that Good Samaritan has been a part of the community since September of 1965, there have been significant changes over the years with most happening after the flood, and currently they have 94 units for senior housing. She complimented the first responders who help almost on a daily basis and how well city staff and other vendors worked together when there was a watermain break about six weeks ago. She added how the City and Good Sam should integrate more, how they currently have an unofficial dog park on the south end of their campus, and many residents have requested an outdoor

area to sit but currently it is not something that Good Sam can afford to do so this is why they were asking for support.

Ms. Horpedahl reminded the Council again this project could be completed in phases and some of the amounts were higher so it would cover everything that they wanted to do. Ms. Whicker told the Council there were only five spots to sit in outside the Maples building so the design for this would allow many more residents to be outside. She stated the first phase would be expensive because it would be the pouring of the slab, footings for the pergola, and getting the electric installed. She asked for help or any ideas the Council may have to make this project happen. Ms. Shetler added the residents like to sit in the front of the building, not in the back. Discussion followed about how the other two buildings already have an outdoor sitting area, how they were completed when the buildings were built, they currently did not know what the cost of those outdoor areas were, and what the cost of the building permit might be. Ms. Ellis suggested waiting until they know the cost of the project before coming in to get the permit so the cost of the project is more accurate. Ms. Horpedahl told the Council how her mother has wanted to stay in East Grand Forks like many other seniors and this is something that should be done for them.

2. Request for Boiler Replacement for Public Works – Jason Stordahl

Mr. Stordahl told the Council the boilers at Public Works are at the end of their life expectancy and due to corrosion, they are in need of being replaced. He explained Mr. King had been working with Sourcewell and Johnson Controls on this project and the cost for the replacement of the boilers along with bringing everything up to code would be \$178,690. He added the boilers that would be installed would be 95% efficient and this would be paid for out of the building maintenance fund, which had sufficient funds. Council member Vetter asked if there was access in the roof for this project. Mr. Stordahl said there was. Discussion followed about the current condition of the boilers and both would need to be replaced at the same time since they are on the same system.

Council member DeMers asked if other quotes were requested. Mr. Stordahl said no because this was the State bid they went through. Council member DeMers asked if this was just for the supplies and what labor would cost. Mr. Paul told the Council this was a turnkey proposal and covered everything including labor, which was the same for the contract for the City Hall project. Council member Johnson asked when the Public Works building was built. Mr. King informed the Council the Public Works building was built in 1987, they originally had electric boilers that were too small, and in 1994 they were changed out for natural gas boilers. Discussion followed about how the tables were used as a guide, some boilers last longer, and the current boilers were having issues last winter.

Council member DeMers asked if there was enough in the fund to cover everything and if there were any other expenditures coming out of this fund. Ms. Anderson said due to the scope of some work changing and other projects not needing to be done right away there were sufficient funds for these expenditures as well as the expenditures that were budgeted for the year. Discussion followed about what other possible projects that might use these funds and some items were being planned for the 2020 budget.

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

3. Request to Replace Air Conditioner & Coil for the Library – Charlotte Helgeson

Ms. Helgeson told the Council the air conditioner unit has been repaired, Johnson Controls has been keeping things consistent, but this unit is at its end of life. She explained the plan is to replace this unit

instead of spending \$11,000 on more repairs. She added the library was done in 2001, the building has been kept up well, the community should be proud of this building, and they need to keep up with all of the mechanical maintenance as well. Council member Riopelle asked if this was a roof unit. Ms. Helgeson said it was a ground unit.

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

4. Request for Boiler Replacement at the VFW Arena – Reid Huttunen

Mr. Huttunen told the Council the boilers needed to be replaced at the VFW Arena, he does not think they would be able to get them up and running, and the water pan as completely rusted through. He explained the two boilers are undersized for the building and the two boilers will be replaced with one larger boiler that is more efficient. Council member Helms asked if there was enough in the fund to cover all of these. Ms. Anderson said yes and how some of these will be eligible for rebates.

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

5. Update on DNR Legacy Application for LaFave Park – Reid Huttunen

Mr. Huttunen explained options were reviewed for a gravel and paved lot, even if there is a gravel lot there should still be curb and gutter, and with a gravel lot the price did not change much. He stated the drawing had not been updated and reminded the Council the previous year they had applied for the kayak and canoe launch, which had a 25% local match. He informed the Council the application process would be the same for this project, the funds would not become available until July of 2021, and the percentage of the local match will determine the amount of points given. He stated a 25% local match of the \$1.6 million would be approximately \$421,000; the City would receive 10 points if they have a local match between 10% to 24%, and no local match is required to apply for these funds. He added there was no funding currently allocated for this project and he did not have an answer for where the funding would come from.

Council member Helms said this was a beautiful project but he was concerned about the dollar amount and how they will not know what it will look like after a flood. Mr. Huttunen said he agreed with those concerns, the Council could pick priorities and only complete park of the proposed project. Discussion followed about this would not be completed by the fishing opener, it can be completed in phases, and each ramp was estimated to cost \$125,000 because of the required work needed for the ramp and river banks. Council member DeMers said he agreed with the plan and they should be taking out the cost of the boat ramps from this project because the DNR had previously promised to redo the boat ramp so that should be their responsibility. He stated the City needed to be more vocal to get the boat ramp done. More discussion followed to reduce the project down to around \$400,000, remove the boat ramps and parking lot from the project, and how the criteria has to be reviewed to make sure the project still meets what is needed.

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

6. Request for Direction on Unlawful Signs – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund commented how everyone has witnessed signs placed in the right-of-way, which is a violation of an ordinance. He explained they had not issued citations for these signs, enforcement is

difficult, and signs are pulled based on complaints. He asked if the Council would like to revamp the ordinance, pull the signs, or consider other ideas or options. Mayor Gander asked if the signs could be pulled and have the officer contact the individual to notify them of the city ordinance. Chief Hedlund stated that would triple the amount of time spent dealing with this situation. Mr. Murphy said the signs usually just have an address and no phone numbers on them. Discussion followed about how there are several complaints during the year about signs and if a citation was issued the fine would be \$25 plus \$85 for court costs. Chief Hedlund added that when they have pulled signs more signs are put up in that same area.

Council member DeMers stated they should either revise or remove the ordinance and the ordinance should be enforced until something is changed. He asked people to make comments on if they would like the ordinance enforced or edited. More discussion followed about how some areas can be filled with signs, how there is some precedent to wait before a sign is pulled, and how the Police Department would like some direction. Council Vice-President Grassel said this item could be brought back in a couple weeks so the community can comment on this. Mr. Murphy informed the Council there is no perfect ordinance when it comes to signs.

This item will be brought back to a future Work Session.

7. Discussion on the 2020 & 2021 MNDOT Transit Application – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis told the Council this was for the annual transit application except this would be for the next two years. She explained the cost allocation plan for transit and dial-a-ride services and the costs for the City are determined. She stated if UND is added in for services the City costs will go down. She added 20% of her salary is included and that percentage may be increasing. She reviewed how MNDOT pays for 85%, there is around \$160,000 in federal funding, there may be a change to the amount of federal funding that can be used for operating which is still be worked on, but the local share would stay the same. She also reviewed the costs of dial-a-ride services and how the contract is being reviewed. Council member Helms asked if it mattered how far someone went with the dial-a-ride service since they were being charged a flat rate per passenger. Ms. Ellis said it did not matter because the trip was a flat rate regardless how far they go. Council member Helms asked how many buses the City owns and if those costs were accounted for. Ms. Ellis said the City owned three buses and applying for funding for buses was done on a separate application. She added the local funds for those purchases were included in the City's capital plan.

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

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 9, 2019 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 6:30 P.M.

Voting Aye: Riopelle, Johnson, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, and Helms.

Voting Nay: None.

Absent: Olstad.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer