

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for April 7, 2020 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, Dale Helms, Tim Riopelle, Tim Johnson, and Marc DeMers.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Regular Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council from March 17, 2020.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the “Emergency Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council from March 24, 2020.
3. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council from March 24, 2020.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE ITEMS ONE (1) THROUGH THREE (3).

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

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.

4. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-04-22 declaring the City of East Grand Forks act as the legal

sponsor for an application for the FY 2020/2021 funding to the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the trail maintenance of snowmobile trails managed by the Red River Snowmobile Club.

5. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-04-23 approving the following appointments to the Civil Service Commission and the Library Board.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE ITEMS FOUR (4) AND FIVE (5).

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

Voting Nay: None.

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

6. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for March 4 and 18, 2020.

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

7. Consider approving the agreement for professional services between the City of East Grand Forks and Widseth Smith Nolting and Associates for engineering and general consulting services for a two year term.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING AND ASSOCIATES FOR ENGINEERING AND GENERAL CONSULTING SERVICES FOR A TWO YEAR TERM.

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

Voting Nay: None.

8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-04-24 extending the local public health emergency for an additional 30 days or while the State of Minnesota peacetime emergency declaration remains in effect, whichever comes first.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-04-24 EXTENDING THE LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY FOR AN ADDITIONAL 30 DAYS OR WHILE THE STATE OF MINNESOTA PEACETIME EMERGENCY DECLARATION REMAINS IN EFFECT, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

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

Voting Nay: Vetter.

9. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-04-25 respectfully requesting Governor Walz to extend the deadline for businesses to pay property taxes without penalty or interest.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-04-25 RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING GOVERNOR WALZ TO EXTEND THE DEADLINE FOR BUSINESSES TO PAY PROPERTY TAXES WITHOUT PENALTY OR INTEREST.

Council member DeMers asked where this was coming from. Mr. Murphy explained the information had come from the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, it was supported by the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce, and the City was asked to endorse this. Council member DeMers stated this was requesting a 60 day delay and asked what that would do to the City. Mr. Murphy said the property taxes collected could be 60 days late but the City could use reserves during this time. Council member DeMers commented how this is business driven coming from the Chamber and asked why they wouldn't include residential properties as well. Discussion followed about how the revenue is down significantly for many businesses because of being closed or having to operate much differently, how some businesses are not paying employees so this could extend to residential properties, and this was just a recommendation for action by the Governor.

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

Voting Nay: None.

CLAIMS:

10. 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: Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Helms, Riopelle, Johnson, and Olstad.

Voting Nay: None.

COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:

Mayor Gander thanked Mr. Jeff Boushee, the emergency manager, on the excellent job he has done coordinating two emergencies with the help of city staff including Jason Stordahl and Public Works staff for getting the flood walls up, moving snow, making sure staff are at a distance to help stay healthy, and he thanked Keith Mykleseth along with the Water and Light staff for helping with the flood fight. He stated that he and President Olstad were going to record a public service announcement, how the Council has been receiving updates from the policy group meetings which are being held twice a week, and that city playgrounds were closed today based on a discussion from the policy group meeting.

Mayor Gander stated policies for staff have been updated to account for the changes and recommendations that have been made recently so all departments have the same information. He added Governor Walz was considering extending the Stay At Home order and the City will need to determine if any changes need to be made regarding operations. He continued saying work is being done on behalf of restaurants to see if something can be done to allow them to serve curbside so they will try to work with the Governor's office regarding this.

Council Member Helms stated he watch them put up the flood wall on Demers Avenue, they all had their job, and they did it well. He commented he appreciated that and to keep up the good work.

Council Member Riopelle thanked Chief Hedlund for the good job he did on the radio and thanked the workers who are busting their tails.

Council Member Johnson commented on his admiration for all of the good people of East Grand Forks.

Mr. Murphy stated he has stayed in contact with the department heads, particularly with the Emergency Manager, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works. He said morale is still good among employees and the work is getting done. He added how City Hall is still closed to the public, staff is still available by phone and email, the call volume has dropped significantly, and it is business as close to usual as possible with staff working remotely.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 7, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:15 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer