

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2020 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, May 19, 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, 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 Council Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council from May 5, 2020.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council from May 12, 2020.

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

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

**SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE.**

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.**

**CONSENT AGENDA: NONE**

*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.*

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

3. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for April 15, 2020.

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

4. Consider approving the Inter-municipal Agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the City of Grand Forks for bridge inspections for the Point Bridge and to equally share the costs for the inspections.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO APPROVE THE INTER-MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS FOR BRIDGE INSPECTIONS FOR THE POINT BRIDGE AND TO EQUALLY SHARE THE COSTS FOR THE INSPECTIONS.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

5. Consider approving the Retainer Agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and Ronald Galstad of Galstad, Jensen, and McCann for legal services from 2020 through 2022.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO APPROVE THE RETAINER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND RONALD GALSTAD OF GALSTAD, JENSEN, AND MCCANN FOR LEGAL SERVICES FROM 2020 THROUGH 2022.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

6. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-05-31 authorizing the temporary conditional use of two non-exclusive pickup and delivery parking spaces for Mamma Maria's.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-31 AUTHORIZING THE TEMPORARY CONDITIONAL USE OF TWO NON-EXCLUSIVE PICKUP AND DELIVERY PARKING SPACES FOR MAMMA MARIA'S.**

Council member DeMers said this says it was temporary and asked when it ends. Mr. Galstad advised to reevaluate this in March of 2021. Council member DeMers stated this was non-exclusive so anyone could park there and parking won't be enforced. Mr. Galstad said it was his understanding these two spots were going to be reserved for all of the restaurants in this area. Discussion followed about what would happen if there was a call to the police department regarding a parked car, the two spots were located in the parking lot area, signs were going to be installed designated these spots, and the Police Department would move

forward based on what the Council recommended. Council President Olstad asked if there were any restrictions for parking in a public parking lot. Chief Hedlund said there was no 24 hour parking allowed in the public lots. Council Vice-President Grassel said he hopes whoever parks there understands these are to benefit the businesses in the down town area and allow people to park for pickups. Mr. Galstad stated if the sign says the violator will be towed the vehicle could be towed. Council President Olstad they should get the signs installed and address any issues as they come up. Chief Hedlund added they would try to educate people before only strictly enforcing. Council Vice-President Grassel added if they are having issues that means the parking lots are full again and it would be a good problem to have. Ms. Ellis said she would work with Mr. Galstad and get the signs ordered.

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, Vetter, Helms, and Riopelle.*

*Voting Nay: DeMers.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

7. Consider authorizing a hiring process to fill the position of Public Services Librarian position that will be vacant as of May 29, 2020.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO AUTHORIZE A HIRING PROCESS TO FILL THE POSITION OF PUBLIC SERVICES LIBRARIAN POSITION THAT WILL BE VACANT AS OF MAY 29, 2020.**

Council member DeMers said he had received the data that was requested and asked if the average visits were the daily walk in visits to the library. Ms. Helgeson stated this was the information that was reported to the State, when the counts are done have varied, and this is how they come up with the average visits to the library. Council member DeMers asked when this position was first approved. Ms. Helgeson said it was approved in 2017. Council member DeMers said he had reservations in approving this position the first time, this was originally approved with the overall budget, and he doesn't see that this position has increased online or foot traffic to the library except for in the last couple months. He said he will not approve this position but would consider a downgraded position, he respects Ms. Helgeson's opinion, but he cannot justify this position. He added if they need marketing that is something the Council could look into to assist the library.

Ms. Helgeson said reviewing this position on paper can be stark, the count of people using the library is going to be changed because they will be counting everyone from the front door instead of the tunnel area, and the main goal of this position was to increase the outreach. She stated a big part of this position is knowing why and how they do things in the library to keep things moving, they do things differently than they did years ago, things are constantly changing, and they are trying to best estimate on how to serve the public. She added the person in this position is to help serve the community and to understand how things keep changing. Council member DeMers said he appreciated the comments but this was why there is a library director in his opinion. Discussion followed about the school not having a librarian but that was an issue for the school to address, how credentials matter somewhat less than performance, and it is not easy to ask to pause and review what is being asked for.

Council President Olstad asked if the current programs have subsidized the school's needs instead of the City's needs. Ms. Helgeson said no, each organization needs to set their own priorities, it had been suggested before, they are not able to replace a school librarian, and the library is there to help and support

children along with the community. She added they have worked with the school before when a teacher has reached out, and had classes come to the library but they are not trying to be the school's library. Council member Riopelle asked if this position could be cost shared with the school so it could serve a dual purpose. Ms. Helgeson said she had talked with the school before, it would be too difficult with staff working in separate buildings, and currently there is no specific plan to share this position.

Council member DeMers stated he wanted to correct what he said at the work session. He explained he had insinuated this was being looked at in light of the budget situation the City may be looking at and he shouldn't have made it seem that this was an emergency thing. He asked to look at this with the regular budget and not because of this new environment. He added the library does a lot of continuing education for all ages which are beneficial and the shared position would not fall into the mission of the City. He asked if there is a partnership the school could have with community education to help with funding for their own needs that the City may be able to assist with. Ms. Helgeson said they could ask, the City has participated in grants before, but due to specific requirements of the school district it may limit what can be done. She added they could still have the conversation about it.

*Voting Aye: Grassel and Helms.*

*Voting Nay: Olstad, DeMers, Vetter, and Riopelle.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

Council President Olstad said the motion failed and asked to have this position re-examined and brought back to a work session.

8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 20-05-32 approving the 2020 seasonal pay scale and allow the seasonal pay scale to be adjusted to reflect any changes to the State and Federal minimum wages.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-32 APPROVING THE 2020 SEASONAL PAY SCALE AND ALLOW THE SEASONAL PAY SCALE TO BE ADJUSTED TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES TO THE STATE AND FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGES.**

Council member DeMers asked to add in mandated changes instead of just having any changes because it was too broad. Mr. Murphy said he was okay with that because that was the intent. Council Vice-President Grassel and Council member Riopelle were okay with the change.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-32 APPROVING THE 2020 SEASONAL PAY SCALE AND ALLOW THE SEASONAL PAY SCALE TO BE ADJUSTED TO REFLECT ANY MANDATED CHANGES TO THE STATE AND FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGES.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

9. Consider approving the following On-sale Weekday & On-sale Sunday Liquor License Applicant Renewals: All businesses are in good standing with the City.
- a. Blue Moose Bar & Grill located at 507 2<sup>nd</sup> St NW East Grand Forks, MN 56721.
  - b. Casa Mexico Restaurant located at 112 14<sup>th</sup> St NE East Grand Forks, MN 56721.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE LISTED ON-SALE WEEKDAY & ON-SALE SUNDAY LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICANT RENEWALS.**

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Helms, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Johnson.*

10. Consider approving the Off-sale Non-intoxicating Malt Liquor License Renewal for East Side Travel Plaza located at 607 Gateway Dr NE East Grand Forks, MN 56721. – This business is in good standing with the City.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE OFF-SALE NON-INTOXICATING MALT LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL FOR EAST SIDE TRAVEL PLAZA LOCATED AT 607 GATEWAY DR NE EAST GRAND FORKS, MN 56721.**

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Helms, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Johnson.*

**CLAIMS:**

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

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

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Helms, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Johnson.*

**REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION OF RULES FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTING RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-33 ASKING GOVERNOR WALZ AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO ALLOW EAST GRAND FORKS TO REOPEN.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO SUSPEND RULES TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER ADOPTING RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-33.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

Mayor Gander said he had been contacted by many businesses regarding reopening and being so close to Grand Forks because the businesses in Grand Forks are able to be open. He stated being in rural Minnesota COVID does not behave the same as it does in down town Minneapolis so he would like to ask to move past the one size fits all and allow for a custom fit approach. He added this resolution would be asking the Governor and Legislature to reconsider allowing rural Minnesota to safely reopen. He asked the Council to consider approving this resolution and respectfully request a change for the City. Council member Helms said it was time to move on.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 20-05-33 ASKING GOVERNOR WALZ AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO ALLOW EAST GRAND FORKS TO REOPEN.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

**COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:**

Mayor Gander reminded the virtual State of the City was going to be taking place at noon the next day, he thanked everyone that provided information and was interviewed. He also thanked HB Sound for producing this and how the information to watch was provided on the city website.

Council Member Vetter stated he was hoping the next meeting would be held at City Hall and not over the computer so they are able to get back into a normal cycle.

Council Member Helms said he was also hoping to have the library meeting at the library so they are able to discuss things and come back to the Council with a better plan.

Council Member Riopelle thanked Council President Olstad for holding the policy meeting on Monday and showing how it could be done in a short period of time.

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 19, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:38 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Johnson.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer