

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2020 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, July 28, 2020 was called to order by Council President Olstad at 5:02 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.

1. Grand Forks-East Grand Forks South End Bridge Study – KLJ & AE2S Representatives

Mr. Brian Gaddie from AE2S introduced himself and Mr. Wade Frank from KLJ. He explained five firms submitted proposals last year to complete this study and their team of firms was selected. He stated the study was a hydraulic analysis, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) did not have enough funding for this analysis, and this was a supplement for a larger study that was being completed by the MPO. He added they would not be making any clear recommendations; he may give some opinions, but no recommendations because this will be included with the larger study that will also look at traffic studies and other information. Mr. Gaddie explained they developed conceptual bridge alignments, profiles, and the superstructure of the bridge. He said they identified impacts from a future bridge both hydraulically and on adjacent infrastructure like properties, levees, floodwalls, they identified mitigation, and completed cost comparisons on the alternative bridge choices.

Mr. Frank said the MPO study included multiple locations but this study focused on the three locations of Elks Drive, 32nd Avenue, and 47th Avenue. He explained they based the costs and impacts on the same roadway section that was included in the MPO study which was a two-lane road with a bike path on one side. He reviewed the bridge terminology, how beam and deck make up the superstructure depth, span refers to the distance between support piers, and the traffic barrier is part of the super structure and in some cases they can result in an obstruction to water when flooding. He stated it was very early in the process to design the bridge so they used typical beam sizes that are routinely used in the bridge industry in this area. He reviewed the different sizes of beams and the span of each. He continued saying they used that information to come up with options for each location for a low, medium, and high to find the right tradeoff between how deep the structure is versus how wide the piers are because they both block water.

Mr. Gaddie reviewed more key terms that included rise, which is the difference in the existing river elevation versus the new river elevation with the new structure and how river gauge would be referenced

to the elevations of the Sorlie or Demers Avenue Bridge. He added the 100-year event, which was the main event they looked at, and was 1% probability in any given year because it was important when it comes to FEMA and insurable structures that may be within the flood plain. He continued with the design event, how the flood structure for both cities was designed for a 210-year event, which was selected by the Army Corps of Engineers. He added freeboard was the distance from the design flood elevation to the top of the flood protection, which was approximately three to four feet for the City.

Mr. Gaddie continued with hydraulic mitigation or mitigation, which is commonly referred to as flood plain excavation that could consist of digging a hole in the flood plain or riverbank to let the water pass faster and reduce any rise. He said lastly an insurable structure is a structure within the 100-year flood plain that is usually insured by the national flood insurance and FEMA states there can be no impact on those structures so in this process they need to target a 0.00 rise which is why there is mitigation to bring rise back down to existing conditions.

Mr. Gaddie reviewed the list of elevations, how they relate to current infrastructure, and the different closures of each bridge at the different locations. He explained the low bridges would be closed fairly frequently, the medium bridges height was closer to the Kennedy Bridge so they would be open most of the time, and the high bridges they consider high and dry because the low beam is at 63 feet so they wouldn't be closed.

Mr. Frank started reviewing how the bridges would tie into the current road systems. He explained it changes a little bit for each height of the bridges and how there is already existing floodwall closure infrastructure at the Elks Drive location. He said on the East Grand Forks side they tied the bridge into Rhinehart Drive and it would go over the levee system so a floodwall closure would not be needed. He continued with the 32nd Avenue location, the closures for each during a flood event, and how there is not a floodwall closure in place on the Grand Forks side so that would need to be constructed. He then reviewed the East Grand Forks side and they modified the alignment part way through this process because if the crossing were moved down it would prevent the roadway from impacting flood protected property that is available for development. He reviewed how they would then tie into Rhinehart Drive. He explained the 47th Avenue location, the different heights of the bridge, how the bigger the bridge the bigger the footprint, so potential impacts also increase. He said they did not go into great detail but did try to include those costs in each cost estimate. He added the 47th Avenue bridge would tie into Rhinehart Drive but it is a mile south of the levee and infrastructure and the estimate does not include the cost of raising up the road to get it into flood protection.

Mr. Gaddie stated they compared the hydraulics for the low, medium, and high bridges at each location. He explained what the rise for each bridge was before any mitigation was completed, how a small rise on the river can effect things all the way back to the Thompson Bridge, and how this changed with the materials used to construct the bridge. He stated the smallest amount for rise for the low and medium bridges are at the Elks Drive location and the smallest amount in rise for a high bridge was at the 32nd Avenue location. He said the higher the bridge the less rise there is and the lower the bridge the more rise there is, also the bigger the superstructure the bigger the rise so the smaller the super structure the lower the rise.

Mr. Gaddie continued with what migration could be done for the different locations and the difference between the original and preferred alignment of the 32nd Avenue location. He showed the areas that would need to be mitigated or excavated, the volume of dirt that would need to be excavated for each bridge option, and how it can have a significant impact on costs. He stated another impact for mitigation is for

structures, this was not included in the cost estimates, but it will be included in the final report. He explained the preferred route for the 32nd Avenue and 47th Avenue bridge alignments are both outside of the flood protection, there were quite a few structures in the flood plain in these areas, mitigation would need to be done, which could include building levees around the properties, raise the structures, or complete property buyouts which would add to the cost of the project. He added there were a few less structures that would be affected by the 47th Avenue bridge but it would still increase costs.

Mr. Gaddie reviewed the key conclusions regarding when the different bridges would be closed during a flood event, the hydraulic impacts for height and elevation, hydraulic impacts for bridge configuration, what is needed for mitigation for the different locations, and the property impacts for each location. Mr. Frank stated the cost comparisons in this report will be different than final numbers because this study is at an early stage and it doesn't make sense to put the effort in to determine the costs with this many locations. He said they were trying to look at the differences between the locations and the bridge, it depended on the bridge length, cost of the road, and mitigation. He reviewed the costs for the different types of bridges at the different locations and how this could help identify a location for a bridge. He stated the next steps would be to start discussions with FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers for verification of hydraulic results and mitigation options, start discussions with landowners, and to keep in mind there are stability issues with the banks along the Red River so there may be need for soil stabilization.

Mr. Gaddie said it would be important for Grand Forks and East Grand Forks to come up with criteria to help rank the different locations. He stated there is a lot of information available, each location has pros and cons, and determining criteria could help narrow down a location. He told the Council based on this study there would be some bridges he could eliminate a few options such as the 47th Avenue high bridge because of all of the additional work needed to build up the road and the low option for the Elks Drive location because the cost with a real benefit. He added how the low bridges will have additional maintenance costs because they flood more frequently.

Mayor Gander thanked them for bringing the medium option, how this was not an option before, and this is giving them a better picture of how these affect the neighborhoods, especially on the Grand Forks side. He said this was a process; they need to achieve traffic objectives, and thanked them again for going through this process. Council member DeMers asked if other bridge types were considered. Mr. Frank said there are other bridge types. Discussion followed about how it did not matter the bridge type because there will be piers with all of them, there could be a trade off with less mitigation but the bridge will cost more, and they used what could be considered a standard Department of Transportation bridge so they can compare each location. Mr. Gaddie said there was infinite possibilities of what they could use for a bridge. Mr. Frank said they are comparing impacts to natural conditions and this area is so flat a small change makes a difference. More discussion followed about what would happen if an existing structure was removed, the removal of the railroad pier would lower the water .04 but it can't be removed because it is historic, and if the bridge ends up at Elks Drive they might be able to remove the pedestrian bridge to help with mitigation. Mr. Frank said if something were removed, it would need to be downstream and would need to be within a certain area to make a difference.

Council member DeMers asked if the road construction figure based on to Rhinehart. Mr. Frank said it was nothing beyond that. Mr. Gaddie said there would be additional infrastructure costs because they only went so far with the roads. He added those costs would be best captured by the MPO because they are looking at the traffic. Mr. Frank said they just tried to get to the flood protection on each side. Council member DeMers asked what road costs were included for the 32nd Avenue location. Mr. Gaddie said it

was for the preferred alignment. Council member DeMers asked if there was a cost for the northern alignment. Mr. Gaddie said mitigation was similar for the original alignment at 32nd Avenue and there could be more costs for roadway costs. Council member DeMers suggested bringing the alignment right to the levee. Mr. Gaddie said they need to be far enough away from a certain area because of the river hydraulics. He stated on a typical river a tenth of a rise would wash out in a mile on its own and because it is so flat it takes 10 miles on the Red River. Council member DeMers asked if this is adjusted for the river mile increases. Mr. Frank stated the hydraulic model considered those. Mr. Gaddie added they used the same model the Army Corp of Engineers used for the flood project.

Council member Vetter asked about the high bridges and if mitigation was included for the buyout of homes of the Grand Forks side. Mr. Gaddie said that was included in the costs but it was not being shown at this time because they are not in a design phase, only a concept level, and adjustments can be made to the alignments. Council member Helms asked if this had been present to the Grand Forks Council. Mr. Gaddie stated it had been presented to them the night before. Council member Helms said the hardest part would be negotiating between the two sides. Mr. Gaddie said that is the case and how there can be a differences within the councils. Mayor Gander asked what the best interval was to place bridges between the population centers that stretch out for five miles on each side of a river. Mr. Gaddie said it would be reliant on the traffic patterns and what corridors they are trying to tie into. Mr. Frank said the North Dakota Department of Transportation likes to have interchanges every two miles which could be comparable. Mayor Gander said he does not mind that because once they get beyond that they are forcing heavy traffic onto the Point Bridge and creating more north/south traffic, which is what they are trying to mitigate.

Council member DeMers asked about the medium and high level bridges about the pier locations and if the bank would be used. Mr. Frank said when they start building embankment they will need to start looking at bank stabilization and they did not get that detailed. Mr. Gaddie stated they could also do more mitigation than build a higher bridge, which could be a cheaper option. Council member DeMers asked if there was any benefit for the placement of the bridge and if a perpendicular crossing is better. Mr. Frank said it was a factor and if the crossing is not square to the river the bridge is longer. Mr. Gaddie said debris can build up on curves and can affect the long-term maintenance. Council member DeMers asked if this could affect the hydraulics. Mr. Frank said the hydraulic model is a technical tool and it just shows an obstruction perpendicular to the flow in the model. Discussion followed about how the model cannot account for curves, it is a one-dimensional model, there are other costs associated with a curved bridge, and there could be curves leading up to the bridge.

Council President Olstad stated they would be getting together with Grand Forks to keep this process moving forward. Council member DeMers commented the rails on the pedestrian bridges had removable rails and if this could be included on the bridge. Mr. Frank said traffic barriers are not removable because it is cast with the decking. Mr. Gaddie added the railings on the pedestrian bridges are more decorative. Mr. Frank stated they would be damaged if hit by debris, but a concrete barrier for traffic on a bridge will be fine. There were no other questions. Council President Olstad thanked them for their time. Mr. Gaddie told the Council to reach out if they had any questions and the final report will be submitted within a couple weeks.

2. Legislative Update from Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities – Marty Seifert
- Handouts will be made available at the meeting.

Mr. Marty Seifert introduced himself to the Council and he is a lobbyist for Flaherty and Hood on behalf

of the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC). He commented how CGMC now has over 100 members; East Grand Forks was either an original charter member of the Coalition or joined shortly thereafter, and how the Coalition's main focuses have been on local government aid (LGA), property tax, economic development, annexation, land use, transportation, environment, energy, labor, and employment.

He explained the legislative session had been a rollercoaster, they had expected a short session, a \$1.5 billion dollar surplus, and passing the bonding bill. He stated after they held their conference in March everything changed, there were no in-person meetings, there have been two special sessions with more to come, the surplus changed to a \$2.4 billion dollar deficit, and there has been a battle over the CARES Act funds. He added how there has been civil unrest, police reform; there are battle lines over executive powers, and a bonding bill that still has not been approved. He stated when the Capitol campus was shut down they were not able to have in-person meetings but he was still able to speak with legislators by phone and using Zoom.

Mr. Seifert stated there has been a change in goals since COVID, before COVID they wanted a large bonding bill, they were advancing legislation for LGA, they tried to build on childcare progress, and reform environmental laws. He continued saying after COVID they are still working for a large bonding bill, the CARES Act funding became a huge battle in May and June, there was no funding remaining to build on what was needed for childcare, and they started working on protecting LGA instead of trying to get it increased.

He informed the Council the Coalition created a COVID-19 resource page, they have hosted labor and employment seminars, they have been sending out informational emails on a variety of topics, they have hosted a webinar regarding the State budget, and they have surveyed city leaders regarding their top concerns. He stated they increased production of the Coalition's newsletters and hosted a Zoom meeting with the Governor. He explained the CARES Act was provided by the Federal Government, there was a big battle regarding this funding in May and June, the State received \$1.8 billion in CARES Act funding, and in April, there was vague guidance on how this act was supposed to work. He said the Coalition worked with other groups and the Department of Revenue to get the distribution formula figured out, how there were disagreements between the House and Senate on how this should be distributed, and the Coalition agreed with the Senate Republicans because it benefitted the rural areas better. He added Hennepin and Ramsey Counties received their own appropriations because of their size and the original House proposal allocated them additional funds. He stated they fought that because it would take away funds from the rural areas so after more discussion the Governor approved \$841 million distribution and the funds should be on their way to each city. He reviewed the information showing how each proposal would have affected the City and how the final amount the City was going to receive was \$668,000.

Mr. Seifert told the Council there were resources put together by the Department of Revenue and the League of Minnesota Cities on some guidance for frequently asked questions. He said there was not much guidance from the US Treasury so he would use other sources, which sets the guidelines for what these dollars are going to be spent on and what the time frame can be used for expenses.

Mr. Seifert continued with the bonding bill, how the Coalition was asking for a \$1.5 bonding bill that included funds for wastewater and water infrastructure, business development public infrastructure grants, child care, housing, and public infrastructure. He said COVID made a large bonding bill more important to help stimulate the economy. He reviewed the work the Coalition did month by month on the bonding bill, in July the Coalition worked with both parties and the Governor's office, and they came up with a

\$1.3 billion dollar bill that included most everything except for child care. He said both sides have done things to hold up the bonding bill, police reform was passed, but the Governor's executive powers are being challenged, so it was voted down again. He explained bonds will be sold in August, the Office of Management and Budget does not want a bonding bill in August because of the selling of bonds, and so the bonding bill will be brought back in September. He added there was not a bonding bill approved the previous year so it is imperative to get this approved this year.

Mr. Seifert stated there is still work being done on cleaning up bodies of water, getting the chemicals out of them, and cleaning up water sources. He said it is very expensive to get this done, they were trying to complete a study to find better ways to complete this process, but once COVID started it was cut from the budget. He continued saying how the childcare initiatives also went away once a deficit was projected. He said there was a timeframe on childcare issue, each year there is more of a need to childcare, and the more regulations there are the more people that are quitting the profession. He stated they would need to work to find a balance between cutting back some regulations and funding.

Mr. Seifert informed the Council there was a projected forecast of a \$1.5 billion dollar surplus in February, by May the new projection changed to a \$2.4 billion dollar deficit, and the reserves for the State are \$2.4 billion. He commented how the Coalition has advocated for the State to have a healthy budget reserve, the budget can change, and had the reserves been spent down there would a larger deficit. He stated with the State being shut down and many businesses being closed, they are expecting a deficit during the next session. Council member DeMers asked if the CARES Act dollars were figured into this. Mr. Seifert said they were not, most of those dollars are for local governments, and all LGA payments need to be paid on time and in full since so many cities rely on those dollars. He added how two thirds of the budget for Crookston was LGA dollars. Council member DeMers asked if the CARES Act dollars would be sent back if they were not used. Mr. Seifert said they expect all cities to use all of their CARES Act dollars and there were creative ways to make sure the funds were utilized.

Mr. Seifert reviewed options for how the State could deal with the budget deficit, the Governor has started some things such as a soft hiring freeze, no unnecessary travel is allowed, and every day they don't deal with the deficit it will only get worse. He added how the Governor could use allotment but the reserves would have to be spent first before they can start cutting LGA so right now they are in a holding pattern. He continued with LGA, how the City was frozen last year, but that was not the case this year so the City will be losing additional LGA. He stated they were working on trying to get this built into the statute for East Grand Forks to be frozen, he said how there were good discussions with legislators but they did not want to deal with LGA formulas this year, they thought they had an easy solution but it was not completed. He added the tax bill was not approved and that is where it needs to be included. He commented how COVID messed up a lot of things.

Mr. Seifert continued with November elections and how Minnesota is the only State in the country that has a divided legislature with a Republican controlled Senate and a Democrat controlled House. He said they are not able to get to much accomplished, this November the entire legislature will be up for election, and LGA protection will be the Coalition's top priority. He reviewed the upcoming events and into next year, the contact information, and a couple extra handouts with additional information. He added they were going to continue working on environmental issues and he asked if there were any questions.

Mayor Gander said without the Coalition down in the Twin Cities lobbying on behalf of cities like East Grand Forks would be in a world of hurt. He said the Coalition has made themselves available to meet, helped with the LGA formula, and he is glad the Coalition is there. Mr. Seifert said he appreciates hearing

that, sometimes they have to rock the boat like they did for the CARES Act funding, and a reason why there is the Coalition is because sometimes the metro area and the League of Minnesota Cities don't necessarily agree with what the rural population would like which is the nature of the beast. He added sometimes they need to get tough and their members appreciate consistency.

Council member DeMers said the City's biggest concern is LGA and finding a way to get that to stop being reduced every year. He asked if the formula was being reconsidered or if a taskforce was still going to be formed to handle LGA. Mr. Seifert said the House was talking about forming a taskforce for both LGA and local option sales tax, the Coalition will try to be a part of that process, and for local government aid changes they say their members need to be treated fairly and any changes need to be consistent and have common sense. He said he would like to see if cities grandfathered in unless there was a noticeable change and upgrades in their tax base and there were a few other cities along with East Grand Forks that need an update done to the formula so they don't continue going backwards. Council member DeMers asked if the local option sales tax process was moving forward. Mr. Seifert said it was never brought to the floor, it was a part of the original bill from the property tax division, and the Coalition is arguing this would be another tool in the tool box for cities to use. He added cities like East Grand Forks have a lot of needs so if the residents vote to approve a local sales tax that is local control. He said if the people vote to tax themselves, they understand what they are getting, but in 2020 there were 26 or 28 local sales tax requests which surprised everyone. Council member DeMers said that also makes a statement to the Legislature. Mr. Seifert told the Council to reach out if a need comes up. There were no other questions.

3. Discussion on Recreation Improvement Planning & Facilities Plan – Reid Huttunen

Council President Olstad stated this item would be moved to another work session.

4. Discussion on 2022 Federal Project – Steve Emery

Mr. Emery stated the City would be receiving federal sub-target funding in 2022, the funding can total up to \$860,000, it was an 80/20 local split, and to utilize the entire amount there would need to be approximately \$1.1 million construction project. He reminded the Council the current project scheduled to utilize these funds is a round-a-bout at the intersection of Bygland Road and Rhinehart Drive. He stated how priorities and needs could change, the State Aid system was reviewed, and there were a couple other potential projects for the Council to consider. He said the first project was the round-a-bout at Bygland and Rhinehart, this project could require property acquisition and utilities will need to be moved so the Water and Light Department will need to plan ahead. He said there were a couple options for the location of the round-a-bout and the first option would require property acquisition on the east side of Bygland Road. He explained they could move the location of the round-a-bout more to the south and then it would only affect one property. He stated the second option shifts the round-a-bout to the northwest and would not require any property acquisition at this time but possibly in the future if a second land would be required. He said the project costs for this project are being estimated at \$1.5 million in construction dollars.

Mr. Emery stated another project that could be considered would be located in the Industrial Park. He explained this project would include the reconstruction of 10th Street NE from 11th Avenue to 15th Avenue and adding an extension of another 1500 feet to the end of the current street. He explained this would include putting in a new gravel base, adding a drain tile system, replacement of storm sewer including the manholes and catch basins, and replace the clay tile sanitary sewer line. He added they should not have to replace the watermain line and at this time, he did not have the cost estimates for the 10th Street project.

He stated if the Council decided to move forward with this project they will have to amend the TIP so this project is listed. He asked Mr. Stordahl for his comments.

Mr. Stordahl said he looks at projects based on what would serve the City best and where the biggest needs are. He said some would say there is a need for a round-a-bout on Bygland, Bygland Road and the side streets are still in good shape, and 10th Street NE is not in good shape. He stated there were some pictures included in the packet, the infrastructure is failing, and they found an issue that has caused some of the flooding issues in the Industrial Park. He added the catch basins would be repaired in the next couple of days. He explained the infrastructure in this area is old, at times the road the is almost not drivable, and in his opinion this street project is a higher priority than a round-a-bout on Bygland Road.

Mr. Emery continued with another possible project of adding a round-a-bout at the intersection of Bygland Road and 13th Street. He explained medians and a crosswalk system were installed a couple years ago but there continues to be concerns for pedestrian safety along with access to Bygland in the morning. He said in the Bygland Road study this project was estimated at \$2.4 million and this project would not require any property acquisition. He reminded the Council this project would be funded through federal sub-target dollars; they can use State Aid allocation funds, and special assessments. He stated property owners could be assessed 30% of the project costs, which would be another way to help fund these projects. He asked for questions and direction from the Council.

Council member Helms said he agrees they need to do something with 10th Street in the Industrial Park before they complete round-a-bouts on Bygland. Council member DeMers asked if the federal dollars would need to be spent on a State Aid classified road. Mr. Emery said that was correct and it had to be at least a minor collector. Council member DeMers requested a map showing the State Aid routes and if this could be added to the City's GIS system. He commented how it is difficult to know what decision to make without knowing where the streets are located. He asked about the quiet zone implementation and if additional costs could be covered. He asked if there was any additional mileage available to extend the urban section on Rhinehart and if the frontage roads or trunk highway roads were included in the State Aid mileage or if they have to be designated. Mr. Emery stated they would have to be designated, not all frontage roads have been designated to be on this system, and there is very little mileage available to add anywhere. He added how part of Rhinehart Drive is not within city limits and they are working on getting some estimates to repair Rhinehart Drive so it was not included as an option.

Mayor Gander said based on previous conversations the round-a-bout at 13th Street and Bygland is a non-starter. He stated they need to consider if they want keep the round-a-bout at Bygland and Rhinehart, if they want to pick another project as a top priority, and he liked the idea of improving the road in the Industrial Park. Council President Olstad said he agreed, fixing 10th Street NE has been brought up before and that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. He added he thought a round-a-bout will help but it did not make sense to work on a road that did not need structural repairs. He said he understood it would help traffic but 10th Street NE is in need of repair. Ms. Ellis informed the Council there are federally aided streets and it is only those streets that the funds could be used on so not all of the State Aid streets qualified. She added 10th Street was a federal aid street so that project would qualify but there was a separate map that shows the federal aid streets, which did not include the frontage roads.

Council member Vetter stated a traffic study was completed on Bygland, there has been traffic issues for years, and the round-a-bout was supposed to be done three years ago. He commented how they ended up completing maintenance projects instead. He explained a round-a-bout project would alleviate a lot of traffic congestion and problems for the entire city because of all of the people that drive down to the

schools. He said 10th Street is in bad shape but the round-a-bout should be done first because it is traveled on much more than 10th Street NE and will benefit more citizens in the City. He added he would support a round-a-bout and have it placed so no property acquisition is required. He said they would not need a second lane once there is a south end bridge, they will still need a round-a-bout to help with the traffic flow, and it was recommended by a study so they should install the round-a-bout.

Council President Olstad stated it looks like it would be between Option 2 for the round-a-bout and 10th Street NE. Mr. Emery said a decision would need to be made on which project they would like to move forward with. Council President Olstad asked to have the costs for 10th Street NE brought back to a meeting, which would help the Council make the decision. Mayor Gander asked to have the other costs associated with the round-a-bout also be brought forward, what the local share would be, and the sources of funds that could be used. Mr. Emery said he would bring the information back to a work session.

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

5. Consider Special Event Request for Spud Jr. – Megan Nelson

Ms. Nelson told the Council the Rockin Up North Fest was postponed until next year and the Spud Jr would like to have a grand opening using some of the talent they had already booked on August 22nd. She explained they would like to block off a section of 3rd Street NW, place tables six feet apart, only 250 people would be allowed, people would be required to stay at their table, they would be questioned when they entered, there would be no dance floor, and they would be securing the area with fencing. She asked for questions, comments, concerns, and if the street could be closed.

Council President Olstad stated he had talked with Mr. LaRocque who reached out to his neighbors to make sure they were aware and okay with what was going on. He said since they are only closing a portion of the street and not the whole street so Cabela's and Options were both find with this event happening. He added this was something was something positive, people would look forward to attending, and he would support it. Council member DeMers asked what the City was doing beyond barricades and closing the road. Ms. Nelson said they would be renting the bandmobile, they would be getting snow fence from another source because the City's was in bad shape, and they would be using the City's posts. Council member DeMers said he was fine for renting things out.

Mayor Gander commented how Rockin Up North Fest has gained momentum every year, they had considered holding this in Grand Forks this year, they will be moving to another space in East Grand Forks next year, and this is a good draw for the downtown. He said he is thankful there are people in this area to bring events and that there are people supporting it. Council member Riopelle said he had talked with Mr. LaRocque, there is a lot of money invested in this, he has done a lot of work on his building, and they should work with him on this.

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

6. Consider Final Approval of Replat of Emerson Estates Third Addition – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis explained this is the group of townhomes that are being built on 17th Avenue SE next to the coulee. She said two sets of townhomes have been built, the next will be a tri-plex, these properties are still owned by Mr. Robertson, and he is requesting to move a property line four feet to allow for a side garage door. She said nothing else was changing, because it was simple so it did not need planning

commission approval, and it can go straight to the Council. She asked for questions and how this change would be noted on the PUD plan. There were no questions.

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

7. Consider Approving Revised Loan Rate Policy – Paul Gorte

Mr. Gorte stated in 2015 the policy was set for loans and interest rates for city loans. He explained based on the last few months more flexibility is needed so it is being recommended to change the policy to include business anchors and to include emergency loans. He said the language was added to policy to allow for flexibility. There were no questions.

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

OTHER:

Mayor Gander said the Governor's executive order 20-81 now requires masks or face coverings at gatherings or in public places. He commented how this is like asking someone to wear a coat in the wintertime, people should have freedom to decide what they are going to do, but this is a little different because the decision to wear a mask affects many other people. He referenced a study from Health Day News on July 23rd which stated 47.2% of the population has an underlining health issue that could put them at higher risk for complications if they get COVID. He said he hates being told what to do but this makes a strong case for people to wear a mask. He stated he appreciates the work the school is doing to try to find a way to reopen, he respects the moving parts involved, and to find a safe way to get kids back in school. He added he had been asking kids if they want to get back to school and they really want to get back to school. He said it is a tough decision to make but he thanked all of the schools for working hard to get the students back into the classroom.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 28, 2020 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 7:05 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer