

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, May 9, 2023 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: Council President Mark Olstad, Council Vice-President Tim Riopelle, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Ben Pokrzywinski, Dale Helms, Brian Larson, and Karen Peterson.

Staff Present: Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Jeff Boushee, Fire Chief; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; Megan Nelson, City Clerk; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

1. Discussion on Pedal Pub Proposal – Justin LaRocque & Tyler Piper

Mr. Tyler Piper told the Council they had worked with the North Dakota Department of Transportation and the Downtown Development Association to have changes made so the Pedal Pub bike was able to be used in North Dakota. He explained it was a multi-passenger bike that was driven by a pilot who would be an employee, there were 16 seats on bike, it was similar to a party bus, and the goal was to be able to take it around downtown East Grand Forks and Grand Forks to help increase tourism and partner with local businesses. Ms. Nelson stated that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) said a permit was not needed for this and they would need to follow the rules of the road. Discussion followed about how an ordinance would need to be passed to regulate the use, it would be similar to the Minneapolis ordinance, it should include where this bike would be allowed or not allowed, and it was asked where the bike would be stored.

Council member Helms said he was concerned about open containers and if this would be in violation of the law. Mr. Galstad stated that would not be violated because of how it was categorized and because they would have a sober operator. He added if the operator was drinking, then they would be in violation. Council member Helms said he would like to see this but wanted to make sure the ordinance included a way to end this if there were issues. Discussion followed about how the ordinance would have violations listed, if there were many violations the license could be revoked, how Pedal Pub would complete an annual inspection, currently the proposed hours of operation were 10am to 10pm, and these bikes go slower than expected. More discussion followed about how there would not be much variation to the route that was proposed, this use could be limited to the commercial area in case of construction blocking part of the route, there was no intention of taking these bikes onto the greenway system, and it would take time to draft an ordinance so the first reading may not be until June 6th.

This item will be brought back to a future meeting.

2. Review of Bid Results for the Federal Subtarget Project – Steve Emery

Mr. Emery informed the Council bids were opened on May 4th, only one was received, and it was 24% higher than the engineering estimate. He stated how some contractors were busy which was why they did not submit a bid, there were three proposals for the three different areas, if all were awarded it would be approximately \$1,999,832. He reminded the Council of the funding sources, how \$860,000 were federal funds, \$241,142 would be assessed, and the rest was coming from the State Aid Construction fund. He reviewed the upcoming projects that would be paid for by the construction fund and how there were funds available for the additional costs. He reviewed the different options of rejecting and rebidding the project, awarding a combination of the proposals, or approving the project as bid. He added that they would not be able to award the bid until the Office of Civil Rights gave approval. Discussion followed about the timeline if the project was rejected, clarification was needed about how long the federal funding was available, and how the intersection south of Highway 2 would need to be completed by September 15th.

Council member Larson asked Mr. Emery if he thought they could get better numbers if they rebid the project. Mr. Emery said his best guess was they could save around 10%. Discussion followed about how to proceed, more information would be brought to the next meeting, and how the City was not able to negotiate when there was only one bidder for a project. Mr. Emery said he would reach out and have definitive answers at the next meeting.

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

3. Discussion on Left Turn Signal at 3rd Ave SE & 1st St SE – Steve Emery

Mr. Emery said he was asked by Mayor Gander what it would take to add a left turn signal at the stoplights by the Point Bridge. He explained he had reached out to MNDOT and the Water and Light Department to see if it was possible and what would be needed. He said it could be added with the current system, two quotes were received with the lowest being \$14,000, the lights were already 25 years old, and they usually were replaced around 30 years, but it could be longer. He asked if there were questions and if there was interest in moving forward with this. Council President Olstad said the turn signal would be welcomed. Mr. Emery stated the funding would come from the State Aid Maintenance fund. Council member Pokrzywinski said it would be supported and could create a gap in traffic allowing people to turn left onto Bygland Road. Council member Larson asked if it would create any traffic issues for south bound traffic between the lights and the railroad tracks. Mr. Emery said no and again they would be able to utilize the current infrastructure.

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

4. Consider Request for Station 2 Facility Assessment – Jeff Boushee

Chief Boushee told the Council this would be the first step towards a renovation of Station 2 which was built in 1977, some work was done after the 1997 flood, but systems needed to be updated and some of the work included addressing gender equality. He stated he would like a plan for capital improvements and would like outside help. Council member Vetter said he toured the station, was concerned about the \$10,000, and was not sure that an assessment was needed. He suggested asking contractors questions to help with the process. He added things could change with a south end bridge and they could use the funds

on a new building. He stated Chief Boushee did say Station 2 could work for another 20 to 30 years but if the City continued to grow south, another station would be needed in the future, and he would rather spend the funds on a project. Chief Boushee said he agreed to a point, he was surprised at the cost estimates for the assessment but did not want to miss anything when preparing for the renovation which was why he was requesting outside assistance. Council member Larson said the scope of the work may require an architect and to make sure they were meeting all codes an assessment would need to be done at some point.

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

5. Consider Senior Citizen Center Rooftop Unit Replacement – Reid Huttunen

Mr. Huttunen said this project had been pushed back a couple times, it had been reviewed, and the costs had continued to rise because \$97,500 had been budgeted but the cost estimate was \$120,000. He explained they worked through some of the contractor suggestions and this proposal was the best to move forward with because of the commercial kitchen in the Senior Center. He said there was enough in the building maintenance fund to cover the additional expense but there were also ARPA dollars still available that could be used for this project and the building maintenance funds could be used for something else. Discussion followed about how Lutheran Social Services (LSS) made meals in the kitchen, the City was responsible for the facility, and LSS was responsible for the kitchen equipment. Mr. Huttunen told the Council others receive 10 cents per meal back to help with utilities but at this time the City had not requested to reopen the agreement. He added they had served 17,000 meals in the previous year.

Council member Vetter asked if the costs would be recouped if the building was sold. Discussion followed about whether any repairs would be required and how they would like to wait for a recommendation from the finance committee before moving forward with this project. Council member Peterson asked who was pushing this project. Mr. Huttunen said it was the City, how there were two residential units for air conditioning, and one needed to be repaired which was why this came forward, the kitchen was about 85 degrees in the summer months, and he wanted to make sure the project was done right.

This item will be brought back to a future meeting.

6. Request for Direction on Special Assessments – Megan Nelson

Ms. Nelson informed the Council she had been notified by the County the US Postal Service had not paid special assessments since 2019, they had paid the first few years, but then quit paying. She said the County was contacted by the attorney for the US Postal Service stating they were not required to pay specials unless it was approved by Congress so the next step would be to draft a resolution stating the debt was uncollectable which would be at the next meeting. Council member Pokrzywinski asked if the City would have to pay back the amount that had been paid. Ms. Nelson said they had not requested at this time. Council member Pokrzywinski suggested writing this off.

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

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 9, 2023 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST

GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:55 P.M.

Voting Aye: Helms, Olstad, Larson, Peterson, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, and Riopelle.

Voting Nay: None.

Megan Nelson, City Clerk