

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, August 8, 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: Mayor Steve Gander, 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; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Michael Hedlund, Police Chief, Reid Huttunen, City Administrator; Jeremy King, Public Works Supervisor; Megan Nelson, City Clerk; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.*

**1. Review Proposed Engineering Service Contract from Widseth – Mark Olstad**

Council President Olstad stated the contract would be the same as before and there was an updated fee schedule that capped the fee increases to 3% for 2024 and 2025. He asked for questions. Mayor Gander thanked Mr. Emery and his team for negotiating in good faith and always getting them the requested information. There were no other comments or questions.

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

**2. Review Proposed Legal Service Contract from Mr. Galstad – Mark Olstad**

Council President Olstad explained how they had reviewed the agreement and that Mr. Galstad would be working with Crookston to help reduce the fees for time spent in court. He thanked Mr. Galstad for working on that. Mayor Gander also thanked Mr. Galstad for the good hourly rate and working hard to find savings. He added that because of Zoom court there was added costs because of the extended time spent in court and how they would like to see court be conducted the way it was before COVID happened.

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

**3. Consider the Request for Salary Adjustment – Michael Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund explained that Officer Kallinen was hired at a Step 3 which had been the standard, others have been hired at a higher step, and it was an oversight that Officer Kallinen had not been hired at a

higher step because of his significant experience. He stated the request was being made for a step increase and backpay to January of 2023 which totaled \$3,652. Council President Olstad said when this had first come up it was determined they needed to go through the correct process and the business representative had requested to discuss this instead of having to file a grievance. He added that it was asked but it did not seem that any others had a similar issue. There were no questions.

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

#### **4. Consider Amending City Code Section 98.35 Regarding Weeds & Grass – Ron Galstad**

Mr. Galstad informed the Council that he had updated the ordinance regarding weeds and grass because the State now mandated that wild flowers or gardens could be allowed to replace lawns. He added that the State also allowed grass up to eight inches instead of six inches, so the ordinance was updated to reflect that change. He stated even though gardens were allowed they could not be inundated with weeds and the Department of Agriculture had the list of noxious weeds and that if no one was listed, the mayor would be considered the weed inspector. Council member Helms asked about the Simplot property. Mr. Galstad said he would look into it. There were no other questions.

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

#### **5. Consider Request to set Electric Scooter Licensing Fees – Reid Huttunen**

Mr. Huttunen reminded the Council the ordinances had their first reading at the last council meeting, Grand Forks had sent the fees for their licensing process at \$2,000 for the initial application and \$500 for renewal applications, and staff was looking for a recommendation to set the fees as required by the ordinance. He stated how Grand Forks had a fleet of 400 and the City would be limited to 100 scooters, he was not sure what the legal fees had been, and if they wanted to try and cover some of those costs with the licensing fee. Council member Larson stated the fixed costs would be similar to Grand Forks regardless the size of the fleet so they should be consistent with Grand Forks. Council President Olstad said he thought the same. The consensus from the Council was they could be the same.

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

#### **6. Request to Appoint Interim Parks & Recreation Superintendent – Reid Huttunen**

Mr. Huttunen told the Council he had sent out an email asking if there was interest in the interim position, only one city employee stepped forward, and Mr. Jeremy King would be a great candidate based on his skill set. He recommended appointing Mr. King who could transition into the position on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Discussion followed about how people would be moved around at Public Works with Mr. King's absence, the timeline to fill the full-time superintendent position would be no sooner than the middle of October, and there was an understanding that things could shift back if Mr. King was not hired for the full time position.

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

#### **7. Other – Steve Emery**

Mr. Emery informed the Council the turn signal was going to be installed on Thursday at the intersection

of 1<sup>st</sup> Street SE and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SE by the Point Bridge with the work finishing up by Friday. He added the Ti-Zack Concrete was supposed to have completed the HAWK system project by August 11<sup>th</sup> but they had a foreman quit so they requested a week extension which had been granted and would still have the project completed before school started.

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 8, 2023 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:21 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

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Megan Nelson, City Clerk