

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, September 26, 2023 was called to order by Council President Olstad at 5:01 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: Jeff Boushee, Fire Chief; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Michael Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Reid Huttunen, City Administrator; Jeremy King, 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. Consider Approving Update to the East Grand Forks Fire Relief Association Bylaws – Andrew Robertson

Mr. Robertson told the Council the Relief Association decided to update their bylaws, they took a class and had assistance from Mr. Mike Stroeing during the process. He stated the Relief Association voted to approve the bylaws in September and State Statute required approval from the City Council. He asked for questions and there were no questions.

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

2. Request for Approval to Paint Mural on Riverwalk Center Wall – Nancy Ellis & Jill Proctor

Ms. Ellis said the ordinances and sign guidelines were reviewed and the mural would be considered public art and the Council would need to consider it. Ms. Proctor introduced herself, how she worked at the Downtown Development Association, and they offer services on both sides of the river. She explained a conference was held, they reviewed the four pillars of place making and to understand accessibility, the five groups came up with different ideas, and they were trying to implement the ideas including a mural on the side of the Riverwalk Center. She stated they had talked with Ms. Stai who was excited about the idea and had okayed the idea with Ultima Bank. Ms. Proctor said she then reached out to Ms. Ellis to determine what the process would be to move this forward and how it fit with the downtown design standards. She continued saying how it was great with a business, city, and non-profit could work together, how this would help enhance the area, and they would start an RFP process to get proposals from

artists. She added they had already secured 50% of the funding for the project so they were not asking for funding but were looking for approval to move forward from the City. She commented how pedestrian traffic increased 57% in the Town Square area with the new mural.

Discussion followed about how the mural would not take up the entire space, the City would need to approve of the wording on the land acknowledgement statement, and this would be a good addition to the downtown area. Mr. Huttunen asked about accessibility and if something else was needed in the area. Ms. Proctor said there were no barriers currently, but they would be asking for recommendations for accessibility. Council member Vetter asked how far the canoe would be. Ms. Ellis said Ms. Stai owned the property, it could not extend out to the sidewalk, and the corner was privately owned because of the zero-lot line set back. There were no other questions.

3. Discussion on Snow Removal along Bygland Road and 13th Street SE – Jeremy King

Mr. King stated this item was discussed at the last work session, staff was asked to bring back a recommendation, and after review there was no reasonable way to move snow on the east side of Bygland Road out to the schools. He said the first proposal would be move forward with what the property owners were originally told on the west side of Bygland Road and have them move the snow off the sidewalks and the City would continue to move snow on the east side of Bygland Road and on 13th Street down to 20th Avenue. He stated the second proposal would be to continue snow removal on both sides of Bygland Road and on 13th Street. He added he was leaning towards the first proposal.

Ms. Kristi Swanson, 1034 Bygland Road SE, asked when the information about the sidewalks had been mailed out. Mr. King said the original letters were mailed out in 2011. Ms. Swanson stated she had a lot of property with sidewalk, there was not much space between the curb and sidewalk, and they had been told they were not going to be responsible for the snow removal on the sidewalk. Mr. King said he had not found any information about the west side of Bygland Road not having to take care of the sidewalk, it was only the east side of the street, because of how it was in their back yards. Ms. Swanson said there would be 300 feet of sidewalk and asked how soon the snow would have to be removed. Ms. Ellis said the ordinance listed 24 hours from when the snow quit falling but it was dependent on other things as well. Ms. Swanson commented on how difficult it was to remove the snow that had been plowed up from the street. Mr. King said again it was intended for the west side property owners to clear the sidewalks but at some point there was a change made at staff level where the snow removal was done by the City. Ms. Swanson said it would not be an easy task and asked if it was too late to make a change. Mr. King said the Council still had to vote on it and how the City had received calls from other property owners that did not want the City to move the snow because of the damage done to grass.

Mr. Richard Klein, 1222 17th Ave SE, introduced himself and his wife Linda. He asked if the recommendation was to move the snow on 13th up to 20th Avenue. Mr. King said yes. Mr. Klein explained the City used a bobcat to move the snow, sometimes it took longer than an hour for them to get by his house, and he would not be able to do it with his snowblower. He added he had been calling snow removal companies, but no one was available but since the City would continue, he no longer had an issue. Council President Olstad asked for anyone with questions to reach out to Mr. King before next week's meeting.

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

4. Economic Development/Tax Base Growth Strategy – Paul Gorte

Mr. Gorte said based on recent discussions the 2018 strategic plan needed to be updated, the plan was to start the work in October, and the City Council and Economic Development Board needed to be on the same page. He added the Chamber agreed to help pay for part of the assessment. Mr. Wilfahrt stated the City needed to set priorities, the Chamber was willing to help, and find ways to grow the tax base. He added that Praxis would do a great job and help the City focus on specific areas. Council President Olstad asked when this would happen. Discussion followed about at the end of October or beginning of November, the information provided would show where the City had strengths, and where there were opportunities. Council President Olstad said to get this on the calendar as soon as possible. More discussion followed about the need for good participation during the process, how time was of the essence, the City needed to capitalize on opportunities, and the process could help set talking points that could be sent to the State Government.

5. Consider Ordinance Allowing Pedal Pubs – Ron Galstad

Mr. Galstad said it was requested to bring forward an ordinance that would allow pedal pubs, the ordinance was very similar to the Grand Forks ordinance, but there were some differences because they were in different states. He stated the ordinance allowed pedal pubs, there had to be a minimum of five passengers, and no alcohol could be sold on the pedal pub. He said the time of operation was from 10am to 10pm which was regulated by the corporation, it would not be allowed in the greenway or on sidewalks, and a map was provided showing the route. He added there was still some questions about the storage of the vehicle, there was a question about allowing them to use public parking, but the ordinance addressed the requirements of the business license, no glass containers were allowed, and how this was exempt from open container laws. He informed the Council pedal pubs had been allowed in Minnesota for some time, but they were only recently approved to be in North Dakota.

Mayor Gander asked about the open container and public consumption. Mr. Galstad said there were State Statutes that allowed it if it was on a pedal pub, but the ordinance did not allow for the driver to consume alcohol. Discussion followed about how the drivers would have to have a background check, how the background process could start as soon as possible so they were ready to go for the following year, and how the driver would need to obtain a certification. Council member Helms asked if the training would be done by the business owner. Mr. Galstad said yes, the vehicle would need to be inspected, and they could have that done by a designee. He added he had the Grand Forks fee scheduled handed out and suggested having the same requirements. There were no other questions.

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

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:49 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Megan Nelson, City Clerk