

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, October 17, 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, Brian Larson, and Karen Peterson.*

*Staff Present: Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Steve Emery, City Engineer; 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 QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.*

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**SWEARING IN OF OFFICER HESSE:**

Chief Hedlund introduced Officer Alec Hesse, stated how he had completed his field training, and was now patrolling on his own. He explained there would be two oaths, the first being the oath of office, and the second being the oath of honor. He then swore in Officer Hesse which was followed by applause.

**OPEN FORUM:**

President Olstad stated the open form was an opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not on the current agenda and items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate. He asked if anyone would like to address the City Council, please come up to the podium to do so. No one came forward.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Council Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council of October 3, 2023.
2. Consider approving the minute summary of the “Closed Meeting” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council of October 3, 2023.

3. Consider approving the minutes of the “Work Session” for the East Grand Forks, Minnesota City Council of October 10, 2023.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO APPROVE ITEMS ONE (1) THROUGH THREE (3).**

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Larson, Peterson, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Helms.*

**SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE**

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*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.*

4. Consider approving the Exempt Gambling Permit Application for the Northern Lights Figure Skating Club to hold a raffle on January 1, 2024 at the VFW Memorial Arena located at 711 3<sup>rd</sup> St SE East Grand Forks, MN 56721 and waive the 30-day waiting period.
5. Consider adopting Resolution 23-10-64 authorizing the transfer of the funds in the 681 Demers Professional Fund to the General Fund to be utilized in the 2024 budget.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO APPROVE ITEMS FOUR (4) AND FIVE (5).**

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Larson, Peterson, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Helms.*

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

6. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for September 20, 2023.

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

7. Consider adopting Ordinance No. 40, 4<sup>th</sup> Series to enact Chapter 119 in City Code Title XI Business Regulations concerning licensing and regulation of commercial pedal car and to amend City Code sections relating to alcohol consumption on multi-passenger bicycles and by adopting by reference City Code Chapter 1 and Section 10.99 which among other things contain penalty provisions. (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 40, 4<sup>TH</sup> SERIES TO ENACT CHAPTER 119 IN CITY CODE TITLE XI BUSINESS REGULATIONS CONCERNING LICENSING AND REGULATION OF COMMERCIAL PEDAL CAR AND TO AMEND CITY CODE SECTIONS RELATING TO ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION ON MULTI-PASSENGER BICYCLES AND BY ADOPTING BY REFERENCE CITY CODE CHAPTER 1 AND SECTION 10.99 WHICH AMONG OTHER THINGS CONTAIN PENALTY PROVISIONS. (2<sup>ND</sup> READING)**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-10-65 setting the fees for the licensing for pedal pub businesses, drivers, and vehicles.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-10-65 SETTING THE FEES FOR THE LICENSING FOR PEDAL PUB BUSINESSES, DRIVERS, AND VEHICLES.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

9. Consider approving the ordinance summary for Ordinance No. 40, 4<sup>th</sup> Series to be used for publication in place of the full ordinance.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE SUMMARY FOR ORDINANCE NO. 40, 4<sup>TH</sup> SERIES TO BE USED FOR PUBLICATION IN PLACE OF THE FULL ORDINANCE.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

10. Consider approving the proposal and contract agreement from Roof Spec Inc doing business as RSI Building Envelope to prepare plans and specifications, assist through the bidding process, and perform construction administration and quality assurance of the City Hall roof project.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AND CONTRACT AGREEMENT FROM ROOF SPEC INC DOING BUSINESS AS RSI BUILDING ENVELOPE TO PREPARE PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS, ASSIST THROUGH THE BIDDING PROCESS, AND PERFORM CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE CITY HALL ROOF PROJECT.**

Mr. Huttunen informed the Council the agreement had been reviewed by Mr. Galstad who suggested changes to the limited liability portion of the agreement, that would be negotiated, and then the agreements would be signed.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

11. Consider authorizing the Mayor to propose a limited reconstruction of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and 20<sup>th</sup> St NW to the property owners affected by the project and begin the special assessment process at which time a petition is received by at least 35% of those property owners affected by the project.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO PROPOSE A LIMITED RECONSTRUCTION OF 5<sup>TH</sup> AVE NW AND 20<sup>TH</sup> ST NW TO THE PROPERTY OWNERS AFFECTED BY THE PROJECT AND BEGIN THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS AT WHICH TIME A PETITION IS RECEIVED BY AT LEAST 35% OF THOSE PROPERTY OWNERS AFFECTED BY THE PROJECT.**

Mayor Gander asked for guidance from the Council and said no projects requiring special assessments had been completed on these roads since 1987. He reviewed major patching had been done over the years, no one was proud of the condition of the street, and there was a strong recommendation for a full reconstruction of the street with ADA improvements. He stated the Water and Light Department had agreed to help pay for sidewalk when completing a watermain replacement but most people still had \$30,000 in special assessments with many saying they would object to the project. He explained they took a step back to look for possible additional funding to help bring down costs, no additional funding was available even with all the current programs that were available, and there was no interest in changing the street assessment policy.

Mayor Gander stated that would leave one option which was to do nothing but that was not a good option. He said the only option was to move forward with a partial reconstruction and he had Mr. Emery put information together on what the project would be or include. He listed what would be replaced which included failed curb and gutter, failed storm sewer catch basins, replace sanitary manhole covers, replace driveway aprons tied to failed curb and gutter, replace or remove sections of sidewalk tied to failed curb and gutter, and repair sections of the street with an overlay, mill and overlay, or complete replacement based on the condition. He reviewed the estimated costs, what costs would be covered by enterprise funds, and what would be assessed to the property owners. He said he would like to make the neighborhood aware of the option, the Council could consider covering a portion of the failed curb and gutter, and if the Council would consider a partial reconstruction if a petition was received by at least 35% of the property owners. He commented this would be a 10-to-15-year solution and then something else would need to be done. He asked for feedback.

Council member Larson said he was confused about the discussion because there were no property owners to speak on the issue, so he was not comfortable moving forward with the process. Mayor Gander said limited reconstruction was ambiguous and getting out the information would give the property owners an idea of what the project would be. Council member Larson said he would be happy to discuss the project

but there was no one there to provide input, he was worried about spending more on engineering, and did not support tabling this item. Council Vice-President Riopelle stated he had talked with some of the property owners, and they were not interested in a limited reconstruction project, there was no additional funding, and the project costs would only be increasing overtime. He added that no one was asking to have the limited reconstruction project done. Discussion followed about the information being put out at a public meeting, the request would need to come from the neighborhood to move forward, how the special assessment process could be initiated by the Council or by property owners, and what the special assessment process was. Mayor Gander commented how limited reconstruction could be used in other areas in the city as well. Council member Pokrzywinski said there were engineering costs every time for a proposed project and it was not fair to have everyone else pay those costs so he would like to see the residents move the process forward. Mr. Emery reviewed the special assessment process, how they follow the State Statutes, and he did not want to duplicate the effort. Mayor Gander said they would also need to consider what to do with the sidewalks and if they should be removed or replaced.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER OLSTAD, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, MOVED TO TABLE THIS ITEM.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

12. Consider adopting Resolution 23-10-66 formally requesting a total of \$7.016 Million be included in the 2024 Bonding Bill with \$4.637 Million of that being appropriated to the Civic Center Sports Complex site, and \$2.379 Million of that being appropriated to the VFW Memorial Arena project site.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-10-66 FORMALLY REQUESTING A TOTAL OF \$7.016 MILLION BE INCLUDED IN THE 2024 BONDING BILL WITH \$4.637 MILLION OF THAT BEING APPROPRIATED TO THE CIVIC CENTER SPORTS COMPLEX SITE, AND \$2.379 MILLION OF THAT BEING APPROPRIATED TO THE VFW MEMORIAL ARENA PROJECT SITE.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Helms.*

**CLAIMS:**

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

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

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

*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Helms.*

**COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:**

Mayor Gander thanked everyone for the work done on the street project and reminded everyone that the honor flight was returning to the Grand Forks Airport. He invited all to attend the welcome home for the veterans that did not get a homecoming years ago. He added they should arrive around 7pm.

Council President Olstad reminded everyone about the upcoming State of the College event taking place and the open house at the Food Bank starting at 4pm both taking place on Thursday, October 19th.

Mr. Huttunen reminded everyone about the upcoming strategic meeting that would be taking place on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 12pm to 5pm and to join for the portion of time they were able if they were not able to attend the full session.

Mr. Emery said 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE had opened back up and Demers Avenue would be opening up on Wednesday or Thursday because they had to finish landscaping and striping. He thanked everyone for their patience while the project was being completed.

Mr. Stordahl informed everyone the road to Public Works would be shut down for a road and sanitary sewer project and there would be a detour set up with people being able to enter through the east entrance.

**ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 17, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:44 P.M.**

*Voting Aye: Olstad, Larson, Peterson, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, and Riopelle.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Absent: Helms.*

---

Megan Nelson, City Clerk