

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2023 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, November 21, 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; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Michael Hedlund, Police Chief, Reid Huttunen, City Administrator; Jeremy King, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; and Megan Nelson, City Clerk.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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 November 7, 2023.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE “COUNCIL MEETING” FOR THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL OF NOVEMBER 7, 2023.

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

Voting Nay: None.

SCHEDULED BID LETTINGS: NONE

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. Public hearing to consider granting a property tax abatement to the listed properties that qualified under the New Construction Housing program.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Mr. Gorte stated those who bought new homes received a property tax rebate once the home reached full value, the rebate included city, county, and school taxes, and was done for two years. He said there were fifteen properties that qualified for the program this year. There were no questions.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.

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

Voting Nay: 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.

3. Consider approving the lease agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization for renting office space in the East Grand Forks City Hall for a two-year term.
4. Consider approving the lease agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the Tri-County Community Corrections for renting office space in the East Grand Forks City Hall for a two-year term.
5. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-72 authorizing special assessments totaling \$25,404.75 assessed on Parcel 83.00114.18 for 20 years at 4.5%.
6. Consider approving the Special Event Application for the KC Pro West organization to hold the KC Pro West Youth Snowmobile Races on January 6th and 7th contingent upon the City receiving insurance for the event.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO APPROVE ITEMS THREE (3) THROUGH SIX (6).

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

Voting Nay: None.

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

7. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for November 1, 2023.

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

8. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-73 authorizing a tax abatement on the listed properties that qualified under the New Home Construction Program for 2023 that is payable in 2024.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-11-73 AUTHORIZING A TAX ABATEMENT ON THE LISTED PROPERTIES THAT QUALIFIED UNDER THE NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR 2023 THAT IS PAYABLE IN 2024.

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

Voting Nay: None.

9. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-74 approving the encroachment agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the Blue Moose based on the conditions listed in the agreement.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-11-74 APPROVING THE ENCROACHMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND THE BLUE MOOSE BASED ON THE CONDITIONS LISTED IN THE AGREEMENT.

Council member Helms said he was okay moving forward and asked if they knew they were encroaching on the city property before they started the project. Mr. Galstad said they were looking at replacing the HVAC system, they already had encroachments on the city property, and this was the only location to place the HVAC system. He added the system took up more space than anticipated and the city property was discussed prior to the project starting.

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

Voting Nay: None.

10. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-75 approving the promotion of Nick Korynta to Corporal.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-11-75 APPROVING THE PROMOTION OF NICK KORYNTA TO CORPORAL.

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

Voting Nay: None.
Abstain: Vetter.

11. Consider approving the request to declare ammunition as surplus and authorize the sale of the ammunition to the East Grand Forks Police Officers.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO DECLARE AMMUNITION AS SURPLUS AND AUTHORIZE THE SALE OF THE AMMUNITION TO THE EAST GRAND FORKS POLICE OFFICERS.

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

12. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-76 authorizing the City Attorney and City Staff to execute the required series of notices to opt-out of the Class Action Settlement for 3M and Dupont.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-11-76 AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY AND CITY STAFF TO EXECUTE THE REQUIRED SERIES OF NOTICES TO OPT-OUT OF THE CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT FOR 3M AND DUPONT.

Mr. Galstad said the papers were ready to be signed and needed to be received by Dupont no later than December 4th.

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

CLAIMS:

13. Consider adopting Resolution No. 23-11-77 authorizing the City of East Grand Forks to approve purchases from Border States Trophy the goods referenced in check number 41598 for a total of \$16.00 whereas Council Member Riopelle is personally interested financially in the contract.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-11-77 AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS TO APPROVE PURCHASES FROM BORDER STATES TROPHY THE GOODS REFERENCED IN CHECK NUMBER 41598 FOR A TOTAL OF \$16.00 WHEREAS COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE IS PERSONALLY INTERESTED FINANCIALLY IN THE CONTRACT.

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

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

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

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

Voting Nay: None.

COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:

Mayor Gander said his thoughts and prayers were with the family of Fran Rapacz who served as a police officer in East Grand Forks from 1960-1981, he and his wife had recently celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary, and he thanked Mr. Rapacz for his service to the community along with his son Randy who was a long time Water and Light employee. He asked for an update about the campground at a future work session and wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Council Vice-President Riopelle said he hoped everyone had a happy Thanksgiving.

Council Member Helms thanked the Widseth crew for their help during Halloween at the Heritage Village.

Council President Olstad offered his condolences to the Rapacz Family.

Mr. Huttunen reminded everyone they would be meeting downstairs for the budget discussion.

Mr. Emery informed the Council the potential ship date for the HAWK system parts was December 7th, the electrician said they could arrive the week of December 11th for installation, and hopefully that week the system would be operating.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON, TO ADJOURN THE NOVEMBER 21, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:11 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Megan Nelson, City Clerk