

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2024 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, July 9, 2024 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: 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, 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. Review of the Safe Streets for All Action Plan – Stephanie Halford

Ms. Halford said this was an updated on the action plan for Safe Streets for All, reminded the Council how the grant was applied for, \$400,000 was received to help plan, and this granted access to additional funding sources. Mr. Blue Weber stated again how being awarded a grant allowed the communities to access funds and help make safer streets for all users. He explained they would be a part of the entire process, how \$1 billion dollars each year would be available for Safer Streets for All projects, and action plans were needed to show how the funds would be used. He reviewed the five elements for the safe system approach, how it was for everyone that used the road system, crash information was used in the process, and that would help to be proactive by identifying issues and setting priorities. He stated there were eight components for the project and gave a brief explanation for each. He told the Council this was early in the schedule, there would be additional updates throughout the project, they were holding pop-up events, they were willing to be at other types of events, and there was a website with an interactive map that people could add input.

Mr. Weber informed the Council they would be looking at a high injury network which would be based on the crash information from across the area along with an intersection analysis to try and determine why there were issues at certain locations and come up with implementation goals. He added they were also working with a subcontractor that had worked in other cities on environmental impacts along with other factors and helped implement plans in other cities. He stated there was a peer review and the cities were chosen based on weather and population distribution. He told the Council again how there were going to be pop-up opportunities and reach out for public input. He asked for questions.

Mayor Gander thanked them for the presentation, was glad this could open doors to funding, and asked what things could be brought to a neighborhood. Mr. Weber said it could include a road reconstruction, sidewalks, round-a-bouts, or other items. Ms. Halford commented how they were looking for intersections or corridors. Mayor Gander asked if they wanted to hear from the people. Mr. Weber said yes, they could contact him because they wanted feedback about issues in areas. Mayor Gander said this would help make sure the funding went to the greatest need. Mr. Weber added they should be proud of Ms. Halford, because of the grant request, the communities received a grant four times more than what the Fargo/Moorhead area received. There were no other questions.

This item will be brought back to a future meeting.

2. Consider Approval of the 2025 Fixed Route and Dial-A-Ride Applications – Nancy Ellis

Ms. Ellis told the Council the operating grants would be split 95/5 for 2025 because the federal funds were increased from \$135,000 up to \$208,000. She stated there were many overages in Grand Forks for Dial-A-Ride services, they could only request so much funding based on the cost models, but they could make an adjustment once the contract was received. She added there was a concern about maintenance and suggested rolling over anything remaining in the 2024 budget to help with the 2025 budget. There were no questions.

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

3. Consider Approving the Hiring of a New Police Officer – Mike Hedlund

Chief Hedlund informed the Council they were short one position but that was currently being filled by Officer Gunderson who would be returning to the schools soon as the resource officer. He added the new police officer would be moving to the area. Council Pokrzywinski asked how long the position had been open. Chief Hedlund said they were fully staffed until the school resource officer was able to go back into the schools. Council member Larson asked what brought this person to the community. Chief Larson said it was family ties of his significant other. There were no further questions.

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

4. Discussion on Sales Tax Ballot Questions – Jeremy King

Mr. King said ballot questions were due to the County no later than August 13th. He explained they had been working with Kennedy and Graven on the two separate questions and during this process learned there might need to be another ballot question in 2026 because the City Charter requires a vote if the City were to issue general obligation bonds for fundraising. He said that question had a blank in it because they were not sure at this time what amount they would be trying to fundraise for so at this time they would be moving forward with just the two questions. Council member Peterson suggested that when this was talked about in the community to include the economic impact the facilities have because that was not always brought up. Mr. King said the consultants were working on updating the information about the project and would hopefully have it by the next meeting and they would include the importance of economic impact. Council member Peterson said it was important to show what these facilities did and not just for the programs. Mr. King said the clubs were going to be working on getting out information but the City would be remaining neutral and just sharing information.

OTHER:

Council member Helms commented he was not impressed by the group cutting the grass and how there was grass out in the street. He added this had already been brought up. Ms. Ellis said she would speak with them.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER HELMS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 9, 2024 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:32 P.M.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Megan Nelson, City Clerk