

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017 – 5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Council Meeting of the East Grand Forks City Council for December 19, 2017 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 Chad Grassel, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Mike Pokrzywinski, Tim Riopelle, Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.

Jeff Anderson, Assistant Fire Chief; Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Steve Emery, City Engineer; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Merle Hoverson, Fire Engineer; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Megan Nelson, City Clerk; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

The Council President Determined a Quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF MERLE HOVERSON:

Mayor Gander asked Mr. Hoverson and Chief Larson to come forward. He then reviewed how Mr. Hoverson has been a part of the Fire Department as an on call fire fighter starting in 1979 until getting hired on full time in 1988. He commented how some of the highlights for Mr. Hoverson have been fighting the big elevator fires, the emergency response to the flood of 1997, assisting in the delivery of two babies, and participating in CPR where it has saved people's lives. Mayor Gander he didn't know how many fire calls, emergency assists, fire house bowls of chili, or Chiefs he has helped train in but what he does know over Mr. Hoverson's 38 years of service the community has benefited greatly and thanked him for his years of service. Mr. Hoverson stated that he appreciated the recognition, how he had spent a lot of years working for the City, met a lot of good people, had some good times, and tough times but that comes with the nature of their job. He thanked everyone.

OPEN FORUM:

"An opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not on the current Agenda. Items requiring Council action maybe deferred to staff or Boards and Commissions for research and future Council Agendas if appropriate." If you would like to address the City Council, please come up to the podium to do so."

Mayor Gander stated they were going to watch a short clip on the Northern Valley Career Expo. He explained this event was attended by approximately 1600 students from the region, how there were breakout sessions, and how they reviewed what training or schooling is needed for the different careers. Mr. Gorte stated he was on the steering committee for the expo, listed the different local entities that are also a part of the steering committee, and that it is very important to try and retain the young people in this area. He added the expo is to show the kids what careers are available in the area and to get them excited about it. Mayor Gander stated that employers are present at the expo. Mr. Gorte said there are many different interactive things for the students to try out. Council President Olstad informed the Council he had attend the previous year, spoke too many of the people in attendance, and how this is a great opportunity to show what is available in our community.

Mr. Gorte told the Council to visit the Northern Valley Career Expo website to view the video since the video was not working properly. Council member DeMers asked about the unemployment rate and how that is determined. Mr. Gorte explained it is based on the number of people applying for benefits but they don't know how many are actually unemployed. Council member DeMers asked what fields are in need of employees. Mr. Gorte said there were lots of opportunities in the skilled trades and the engineering areas but there were other areas that were also having a hard time finding and retaining employees.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approving the minutes of the "Regular Meeting" for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of December 5, 2017.
2. Consider approving the minutes of the "Work Session" for the East Grand Forks Minnesota City Council of December 12, 2017.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE ITEMS ONE (1) AND TWO (2).

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

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.

3. Consider adopting Resolution No. 17-12-96 ordering the improvement and preparation of plans and specifications for 2018 City Project No. 2 – Master Lift Station Rehabilitation.
4. Consider approving the request for the Metropolitan Planning Organization's assistance in developing an ADA Transportation Transitional Plan with the use of in-house staff and consultants.
5. Consider approving the request to hire a firefighter from the current hiring roster to fill the upcoming vacancy.

6. Consider approving the Decorative Lighting Plan for the Sorlie Bridge and authorize the Mayor to sign this plan as team member for the City of East Grand Forks.
7. Consider approving the labor agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local No. 3423 for 2018-2020.
8. Consider approving the labor agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the AFSCME Council 65 (Supervisory Employees) for 2018-2020.
9. Consider approving the labor agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the Law Enforcement Labor Services Local No. 152 for 2018-2020.
10. Consider adopting Resolution 17-12-97 designating the polling places for the 2018 Primary and General Elections.
11. Consider adopting Resolution 17-12-98 forgiving the debt of \$170 for snow and ice removal for Parcel 83.01882.00.
12. Consider adopting the corrected Resolution 17-11-88 which has the correct amount of \$148.50 to be assessed for snow and ice removal to parcel 83.00291.00.
13. Consider approving the Premises Permit Application for the East Grand Forks Blue Line Club to conduct gambling at Sickies Garage located at 121 Demers Ave, East Grand Forks, MN 56721.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, TO APPROVE ITEMS THREE (3) THROUGH THIRTEEN (13).

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

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

14. Regular meeting minutes of the Water, Light, Power, and Building Commission for November 16, 2017.

COMMUNICATIONS:

15. Acknowledge the Mayoral Veto of Resolution 17-12-94 which would increase the tax levy by 10%.

OLD BUSINESS:

16. Reconsider adopting Resolution No. 17-12-94 approving a 10% increase to the 2017 Tax Levy, collectable in 2018.

Mr. Murphy told the Council after a review of the charter a motion or second was not needed to reconsider this item, the Council could discuss the merits of the veto, then once discussion ended they could vote, if they voted yes they were voting to override the veto, and a no vote would be in favor of a different levy. Council member DeMers asked if the funds that had been budgeted from the general levy and now were

coming out of the state aid maintenance had been scheduled to be used on a different project. Ms. Anderson stated how State Aid funds could be used to cover the City's portion of the soft costs and some of the construction costs for the proposed projects in 2018. Council member DeMers asked if these State Aid funds were going to be used on any other maintenance. Ms. Anderson stated the only other maintenance that would be done was the maintenance covered by the \$250,000 that is set aside each year for street repairs and maintenance.

Council member Pokrzywinski told the Council that he would be voting to override the veto because there isn't enough funds to take care of everything. He added how Mr. Murphy had made a strong argument for keeping the increase at 10% which included sustaining the fund balance and to continue providing services. He stated how an 8.5% levy increase would be creating a delay, how the first thing that needed to be done after Mr. Murphy was hired was to restore the fund balance, and this is just delaying the payment of things that are needed.

RECONSIDERATION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 17-12-94 APPROVING A 10% INCREASE TO THE 2017 TAX LEVY, COLLECTABLE IN 2018.

Voting Aye: Vetter and Pokrzywinski.

Voting Nay: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Riopelle and Tweten.

NEW BUSINESS:

17. Consider adopting Resolution No. 17-12-101 approving an 8.5% increase to the 2017 Tax Levy, collectable in 2018.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 17-12-101 APPROVING AN 8.5% INCREASE TO THE 2017 TAX LEVY, COLLECTABLE IN 2018.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

18. Consider adopting Resolution No. 17-12-99 approving the 2018 Budget and to authorize specific financial related activities.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER TWETEN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 17-12-99 APPROVING THE 2018 BUDGET AND TO AUTHORIZE SPECIFIC FINANCIAL RELATED ACTIVITIES.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

19. Consider approving the agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and AE2S to perform the strategic and marking plans and authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to execute the agreement.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND AE2S TO PERFORM THE STRATEGIC AND MARKING PLANS

AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

20. Consider approving the Fire Department Clinical Agreement between the City of East Grand Forks and the Northland Community and Technical College from December 2017 to December 2022.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO APPROVE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT CLINICAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS AND THE NORTHLAND COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE FROM DECEMBER 2017 TO DECEMBER 2022.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

21. Consider adopting Resolution No. 17-12-100 appointing the Commissioner of Transportation as Agent of the City of East Grand Forks accepting federal aid funds which may be available for eligible transportation related projects and authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to execute the agreement.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 17-12-100 APPOINTING THE COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION AS AGENT OF THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS ACCEPTING FEDERAL AID FUNDS WHICH MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR ELIGIBLE TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

CLAIMS:

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

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

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS:

Mayor Gander stated how in sports some players are grinders, they help their team against any odds, they continue after others have given up, and their persistent effort often makes a difference between a win and a loss. He commented how there are individuals like that on the team in East Grand Forks and he was

going to recognize them with Gander Grinder Awards. He stated the Council members were grinders because of their continued work on the levy to reduce it further even after it had been approved at a 10% increase. He said he appreciates the work they did with staff to bring those numbers down. He stated he heard how the department heads acted in selfless ways when reviewing the budget and recognizing the needs of other departments so they were all going to receive an award.

Mayor Gander continued with Mr. Ron Bubendorf who stays as late as needed to make sure all of the equipment is ready before they go home so staff can move snow early in the morning so he is a grinder. He stated Mr. Merle Hoverson after 38 years of service to the community in the Fire Department is a grinder. Mr. Randy Rapazc recently retired from the Water and Light Department stopped and help dig out the Mayor's car when it got blocked in by a city plow so he was a grinder. He added that if anyone catches someone going above the call of service to members of the community at any time and could be a staff member, volunteer, or a board or commission member to nominate them so they can receive recognition from the Mayor for a grinder award and receive a grinder from the Red Pepper East.

Council Member Tweten commented how the 24th is Christmas, how it is important to remember to serve the country, how we live in the greatest democracy in the world, and he wished everyone a blessed Christmas. He added that he hopes there are no emergencies during the holidays. He stated how this is an excellent city, the city will continue to expand, and how the Council will need to continue going to St. Paul to make sure the City receives its fair share.

Council Member DeMers said how this budget process was as good as its been, they have a heavy burden to try and get things done, and overall it was a good process because people were trying to do what was in the best interest of the City. He added that he didn't think they had received the budget information from the Water and Light Department, how it is required by the City Charter, and it is the Council's responsibility to approve that budget. He said he would appreciate a budget presentation and a budget to approve from the Water and Light Department because he has some questions. He stated how it was the Council's responsibility to check on that even though much of the work is delegated. Mayor Gander stated that the Water and Light Department had shared the budget information and financial statements with him, he didn't realize he was supposed to bring that to the full council, and to make sure it is known they are sharing the information. Council member DeMers said he wasn't putting blame on anyone but just to ensure they are doing their job as council.

Council President Olstad thanked staff and council for the work that was done on the budget this year, how they were trying to make sure the City was taken care of, he wanted to thank everyone for their hard work, and that he appreciates it.

Mr. Murphy informed everyone that City Hall and other offices would be closing at noon on Friday and will be closed all day on Monday in observance of the Christmas Holiday. He added that he was taking some time off and might be out of the office the next week.

Mr. Emery wished everyone a Merry Christmas from himself and all the staff at WSN.

Chief Larson invited everyone for cake and coffee in honor of Mr. Hoverson from 2-4:30pm.

Mr. Gorte informed everyone that there was an after hours event taking place at Northland Community and Technical College which will be catered by the Blue Moose.

Chief Hedlund stated that the Police Department will be holding their annual award ceremony where a number of awards will be given out which will be starting at 4:30pm and it is open to the public.

Ms. Anderson told the Council staff was having a potluck during lunch on Thursday.

Ms. Nelson wished Council member Tweten a happy birthday because he was turning 94 on Thursday. Council member Tweten commented how he has been very fortunate throughout his life, how he has worked with many good people at different levels of government, and he intends to be around for a while but the City's best days are ahead.

ADJOURN:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER POKRZYWINSKI, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADJOURN THE DECEMBER 19, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:37 P.M.

Voting Aye: Olstad, Grassel, DeMers, Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Riopelle and Tweten.

Voting Nay: None.

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer