

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2018 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for Tuesday, October 9, 2018 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, Tim Riopelle, Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.*

*Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, Economic Development Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Reid Huttunen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent; 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.*

**1. Consider Renewing Contract with Countrywide Sanitation – Jason Stordahl**

Mr. Stordahl told the Council that Countrywide Sanitation brought forward a proposal to extend their contract for the next five years. He explained the current contract doesn't expire until June 2019 and the proposed contract if approved would be in place until 2024. He then asked Ms. Gornowicz talk about the proposal. Ms. Rachel Gornowicz stated they are asking for a continuation of the contract, they are proposing to keep costs the same until 2020, and after that there would be a 3% increase each year for the remainder of the contract which includes all of the services they are currently providing.

Council member Tweten said the greensite is getting under control, notification may need to be sent out telling people to cut up their boxes, but at this time he would like to move this ahead and renew the contract with Countrywide because he is very satisfied with the service. Mr. Stordahl told the Council the service has been good from Countrywide and there have only been a few complaints from residents. He continued saying the City is looking at getting a roll-off truck to replace two trucks in the fleet and this could possibly be used for pulling roll-offs or be used for spring and fall clean-up to haul things directly to the dump. He added they would still need containers from Countrywide and asked if the City doing some of these things would have an effect. Ms. Gornowicz stated they would like to try and keep the whole package, they don't want to piecemeal a contract together, and how they would take any suggests moving forward. She commented an idea she had was to allow individuals to have their own composting containers which could be picked up at their home.

Mr. Murphy informed the Council this was talked about during the department head meeting and the only comments made were for language updates that were needed. Mr. Galstad stated there are things in the current contract that would need to be modified to fit the proposed agreement and possibly include a reopener to discuss the roll-offs or if that would be detrimental to the contract it would be left out. He added he would be including the new pay schedule. Council President Olstad asked how long it would take to make the modifications. Mr. Galstad stated he was in court all week but he could have it prepared for the next work session and have it to Countrywide for review sometime the week before the work session.

Council President Olstad stated he was satisfied the service provided by Countrywide and having these numbers will help with setting budgets in the future. He added he doesn't see any issues with moving this forward. Mayor Gander asked if there was just one 3% increase or if it was every year. Ms. Gornowicz stated it would be a 3% increase for each year. Mayor Gander said that may need to be negotiated because that is higher than the rate of inflation. Council member DeMers commented he was happy this was a local business and how the Council may want to keep their options open because they may discuss doing away with one of the clean-ups. He stated this looks like a fair deal and he liked having long term costs but the Council might also want to consider asking for Request for Proposals (RFP) to keep prices in line. He added he didn't think the City was being taken to the cleaners but it would be done for the price point. Council Vice-President Grassel stated he was fine with staying with Countrywide and the only calls he has ever received was because of a missed pickup which was taken care of.

Ms. Gornowicz informed the Council they now have a person in a service truck that checks on the greensite, delivers carts, repairs carts, and helps with issues. She said the first few months were rocky when they started picking up refuse in the City but with their normal driver things seem to be going well. Mayor Gander stated how sometimes there seems to be things left in the bottom of a container and asked if they could give an extra shake to the containers. Council member Vetter said he would be open to either option of extending the contract or asking for RFPs. Council member Riopelle stated he was fine continuing with their services. Mr. Galstad commented how if the City doesn't know they are doing the job because of no issues then they must be doing it right.

Council member DeMers said the individual composting could be looked at but it may not be needed. He asked Ms. Gornowicz to see what the minimum number of carts was to make it a viable service. Ms. Gornowicz stated she will need to investigate a few things on that. She added they are a local company that uses local companies, how the whole company is insured by Evergreen Insurance, they purchase their bulk fuel from a Minnesota company, and how the Blue Line Club did a great job putting the carts together when they first started so they have given them \$1,500 each year. She stated how they try to give back to organizations in the City. Council President Olstad asked to have the modifications made and to have this be brought back to the next work session.

## **2. Request for Winter Equipment Lease – Jason Stordahl**

Mr. Stordahl stated how each year the City leases a motor grader for the winter season. He explained he had received two proposed lease agreements and based on the past years he is recommending to move forward with the lease agreement from RDO Equipment. Council member DeMers stated they should create and track the information over a five year period. Mr. Stordahl stated he does that based on the numbers from last year using these agreement the cost would either be approximately \$7,000 or \$30,000 for the season. He commented he takes an average of the years to try and account for the years where there isn't much snow and the years there is. Council member Tweten commented it is important to have

an extra blade because of the safety element for fire and police so he strongly supports this.

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

### **3. Request to Continue Parking Ticket Food Shelf Program – Mike Hedlund**

Chief Hedlund reminded the Council this program had been used the last two years and how it allows for traffic tickets to be paid for with cash or donations of food that are given to the East Grand Forks Food Shelf. He stated how the first year of the program there was approximately 200 pounds of food donated and there was quite a bit more the second year because there was more snow. He said how this program helps the food shelf provide for the less fortunate as well as serve as a friendly reminder about keeping cars off the roads during weather events. He asked for the Council's support to implement this program again this year. Council President Olstad stated this was a great program and asked if anyone had any to add. Mayor Gander commented last year there was a vehicle that was towed after having a tow tag on the vehicle for about a week to allow time for the people to move the car because of their circumstances. He thanked the police department for trying to work with and help people in the community.

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

### **4. Consider Approval of Grand Forks TAM Plan – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis explained to the Council a Transit Asset Management plan needs to be adopted in order for the City to keep receiving its Federal and State funding for transit. She stated this plan includes buses, facilities, and shelters showing what their useful life is, how many buses are being maintain, what the maintenance schedule is like and with Grand Forks as the lead agency they are adopting the North Dakota Transit Asset Management plan. She added the City has received the approval from MNDOT to also adopt this plan so the City can continue to receiving Federal and State funding. There were no questions.

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

### **5. Consider Approval of Financial Procedures for FTA Grant Management – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis informed the Council that every three years there is an extensive Federal audit that is done on transit. She stated three of the findings were related to the website which was addressed by Grand Forks and one of the findings just for East Grand Forks was that the City did not have written procedures to accept grant dollars in place so staff put together the procedures and once they are approved it will remove the finding from report. There were no questions.

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

### **6. Request for Recommendation of Appointment to Regional Transportation Coordination Council – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis explained MNDOT was putting together groups to try and help coordinate transportation the elderly, veterans, those with a disability. She stated as the City's transit manager she has been asked to be a part of this council to help coordinate transit in the region. There were no questions.

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

## **7. Consider Rental Lease Agreement with MPO – Nancy Ellis**

Ms. Ellis told the Council the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was asking to extend their lease for one more year at the same rate they were at 2018. She stated this had gone through their finance committee, there may still be some questions on the office space they rent in the future, but the lease amount seems to be at a good rate. There were no questions.

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

Ms. Ellis said a new maintenance position has been offered, the person would be placed on step 1, there were a number of successful candidates, this person has experience with both apartment and hotel maintenance along with customer service experience, and this will be going before the Council on October 16<sup>th</sup> for approval.

## **8. Consider Renewing Lease Agreement with Independent School District 595 – Reid Huttunen**

Mr. Huttunen informed the Council the lease agreement between the school and City had expired in May of 2018. He explained it needed to be renewed for the 2018/2019 school year with the same terms as before. There were no questions.

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

## **9. Discussion on Fitness Court Grant through National Fitness Campaign – Reid Huttunen**

Mr. Huttunen stated the National Fitness Campaign group reached out to the City to see if there was interest in an outdoor fitness area. He explained this organization helps out with the process from beginning to end, it costs approximately \$120,000 to set up this outdoor fitness area, and the City can apply for \$30,000 grant through their organization to help with these costs. He asked for the Council's input, if this was something they would be interested in, and how it could be an asset to the City. He added there are a few communities that were given as references from the group that were located in the Midwest, Waite Park is the closest community with one of these, all of the references have been called, but at this time he hadn't received any call backs.

Council President Olstad asked what the time line would be for the project. Mr. Huttunen said there isn't a specific deadline, it sounds like the project could be completed over a couple years, and this is non-binding so if the City is not able to raise the necessary funds they can give the grant money back. Mr. Murphy said group is suggesting to try and have it completed during the next construction season. Council member Riopelle reminded the Council about the upcoming needs at the arenas and how if they are fundraising they might be going to the same people asking for funds.

Council member DeMers said he appreciates this item being brought forward, how his idea was to spread things along the trail system so people can do more than just walk. He asked how durable the equipment is or how soon things would have to be replaced. He also asked if there was a charge for the app that was referenced in the paperwork, if the funds from Altru partnership could be used for this, how he does have some concerns about this, but he likes the direction it is going. Mr. Huttunen told the Council the app would be free for the public to use and has instructions and workouts for people to utilize. He added how the location in Wisconsin scheduled activities at their outdoor facility with all of their city departments to help engage the community. He stated he had not talked with Altru about this opportunity but they will

have that conversation with the committee because the idea has been brought up to have something outside.

Mr. Huttunen explained he didn't think there was going to be much for winterizing this because almost everything was stationary so it could be used year round if the snow was removed from it. He said the proposed set up was for 38 foot by 38 foot and how there might be a possibility to do something differently because this is something that has been talked about previously but nothing has been priced out at this point. Council member DeMers stated it does make sense to have this centrally located for both maintenance as well as to be used as a gathering place. Mayor Gander added he like the idea of talking with the other communities because they don't want to put this in and then just have it sitting unused. He stated he also like the idea of it being tied to the greenway system. He asked to gage the community's interest and how if this was located by Sherlock Park it could raise the likelihood of this being used. He added that getting some confirmation that these are being used would be a big thing.

Mr. Murphy said he had stopped by the facility located in Waite Park which opened up in August. He explained there were two police officers sitting there so he went and asked them if people were using it. He was told not many people were using it at first but they are now seeing more people using it. He stated this was located by a splash park, playground, and pickleball courts. He explained the equipment is heavy duty and seems to be high quality. Mr. Galstad asked if the flooring was permeable. Mr. Murphy said they have sand or gravel underneath. Mr. Huttunen said it was stuff that was used at playgrounds. Council member DeMers asked if it was adaptable to ADA standards. Mr. Murphy said in a video link it shows a person with a disability working out so he thinks there is ADA compliance. Council member DeMers asked to check on all of the installation costs. Mr. Murphy said he spoke with the City Administrator from Waite Park and how they were able to fundraise enough to cover all of the costs. Mayor Gander asked for staff to check on insurance for this facility. Mr. Galstad stated this should be covered under recreational immunity. Council President Olstad asked what the next step will be. Mr. Murphy said to bring this to the Park Board and complete the initial application because the grant wouldn't be received until the installation of the facility. There were no more questions.

#### **ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEMERS, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER RIOPELLE, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 9, 2018 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:53 P.M.**

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Absent: Pokrzywinski.*

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David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer