

Memorandum

DATE: August 4, 2006
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Al Roder, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of July 31 – August 4, 2006

Here is a list of city activities for the week of July 31 – August 4, 2006:

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA FOR MONDAY NIGHT – Approve application for Exempt Gambling Permit for Northfield Wrestling Club to conduct excluded bingo on Bridge Square on September 7-10, 2006.

Materials are attached to this Friday memo.

Administration

- Hoffman's Photography will be here at 6:00 pm on Monday, August 7, prior to the city council meeting. They will be taking photos of the city council, which will be posted on the city's website.

City Clerk

- Staff attended training provided by Dakota County for election administrators on absentee voting administration.
- Staff attended training at the Secretary of State's office on the new Statewide Voter Registration System. This new program provides authorized personnel from the City access to the Statewide Voter Registration System to aid in election administration. The system provides up-to-date voter information rather than using rosters that could be up to 45 days old.
- Staff met with MnDOT to start preliminary negotiations for the 2007 transit grant. Grant approval is scheduled on the Council's August 7 agenda.
- Reviewed preliminary general fund budgets.
- Dave Hermstad, Northfield Transit Driver, participated in the 2006 Minnesota Bus Rodeo held in Duluth Saturday, July 29. Dave enjoyed the event and did an excellent job representing Northfield.

Human Resources

- Labor Management Meeting
- Liquor Store Clerk Interviews – 12
- Facilities Supervisor Interviews – 13
- Police Officer Interviews – 2nd Interviews - 10
- Reference checking – Liquor Store Clerks
- Needs assessment consultation
- Employee Newsletter
- Budget meeting
- Employee FMLA
- Risk management – insurance coverage – questions and research (2 items)
- Waiver

Finance

- **Check Scam:** The City has been affected by a phony prize winning / check scam. While no City funds have been lost, we have changed the main checking account number at First National Bank. The scam involves a notification that the individual has won a 3rd grand prize. The mailing also includes a check (drawn on the City's account) made out to the individual – to cash and then wire back to the awarding company to cover various costs associated with the prize to be awarded.

At the start of this week, a bank officer contacted us that they had received a call from someone in Massachusetts regarding a check their mother had received (from the City of Northfield). They wanted to know if it was legitimate. The bank quickly identified the check as being bogus as the number was one written in January last year. Since then both the bank and City staff have fielded over a dozen calls from people all over the country inquiring about the checks.

The Police Department is doing the follow-up investigation. First National Bank is continuing to closely monitor activity in the checking account. As of yesterday, the bank informed us that some individuals have been able to get these checks cashed (check cashing stores / twin cities credit union). First National Bank is not honoring these when presented for payment. Because the checks have been cashed, the Postal Inspector may become involved.

All of the bogus checks we know about have been written for just under \$3,000. Because of the volume and because we know the City's account number is comprised, the account will be closed as soon as possible. According to the bank, the scam artists have done a very good job of producing a check that looks good – paper quality, graphics, etc. However, it does look very different from the City's check stock. How the City's bank account number was hijacked is not known at this time.

Attached to the Friday Memo is a copy of the scam letter sent. If you would like further details, please call Kathleen at 645-3011.

Community Development

- Met with other Department Managers to highlight the Community Development portion of the overall general fund budget
- Met with other Department staff on continuing issues associated with Rosewood 5th Addition and the extension and right-of-way issue associated with Jefferson Parkway.

Economic Development

- Staff worked with the EDA Land Committee to flush out the details of the "land" component in the economic development plan. Based on discussions at the joint EDA/City Council work session, the EDA will be developing a vision for a third business/industrial center.
- Staff is preparing application forms for public financing assistance. Existing applications are being reviewed for accuracy and compliance with state laws, and an evaluation matrix is being prepared.
- All participants in the economic development plan Context Mapping meeting were sent copies of the economic development brochure this week. Participants have been asked to continue to be involved in the implementation and continue to be champions of the economic development efforts.
- Staff is preparing to mail the economic development brochures to all residents in Northfield. It is anticipated that the mass mailing will happen in the next week or so.

Housing

- Staff met with ReNEW Northfield to discuss ways in which ReNEW Northfield and the HRA can partner to make affordable housing energy efficient. ReNEW Northfield has received a grant - and a portion of the funds will be used for education and potentially the remaining funds will be used for an affordable housing project.
- Staff met with interested parties to discuss other affordable housing opportunities, including the construction of a manufactured home subdivision. These discussions are in the early stages, but this type of subdivision is a very viable option for providing lower cost housing.
- Staff continued to work with the CDA to revise program language for the manufactured home replacement program, and Staff received two applications for the First Time Home buyer program.

Planning

- Worked on the staff reports for next week's Planning Commission meeting, including the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the proposed storm water retention pond associated with the Gleason 3rd Addition. A CUP is required because excavation in the Cannon River floodway is required to construct the pond.
- Staff reviewed the site plan application for the proposed new movie theater on Highway #3 South.
- Staff met with one of the consultants that is being considered to complete the revision to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

Library

- The next Books & Stars will be the last for the season: join Paul Niemisto and the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra at Central Park on August 9 at 7:00 p.m. This week's program, Jason the Juggler, drew 250-300 people to Bridgewater School – great turnout for a very entertaining program.
- First Steps has been very busy because it's a "cool" place for families to have fun.
- Although the summer reading program ended last week, a lot of families are still coming in to find books, books on tape, etc., for vacations.
- The Teen Summer Reading Program continues until August 19 and lots of
- James Lund and Lynne Young have continued to order lots of new materials, trying to get new things on the shelf during the peak of the leisure reading season.
- Leesa Wisdorf has been working hard to make some of the lower interest learning packets into higher interest book packs. (The book packs contain toys as well as books and activity sheets, and are highly prized!)
- The Teens will have a Sherlock Holmes Night – Friday, August 11, 7:00 p.m. at the library. Activities will include games and a film.
- Jamie Stanley and Lynne Young participated in a discussion about interlibrary loan at the regional library, SELCO. Several libraries will be making changes to their policies to make it easier for patrons to request items from other libraries.
- An overheated air conditioner fan created a bad smell – and some consternation among the staff. HVAC repair staff have corrected the problems and the library is much more comfortable now. Thanks to the custodial and streets/facilities crews for all their help with his.

Liquor

- We will offer an in-store wine tasting Saturday, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm, featuring selections from our current sale: Pierre Sparr Pinot Gris (Alsace, France)Renwood Viognier (California)Georges Duboeuf Beaujolais-Villages (France)Renwood Zinfandel (Sierra Foothills, California)

Police

Traffic Accidents:

- 9 property damage

Traffic Enforcement:

- 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. 0 citations, 1 warning
- 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. 4 citations, 8 warnings
- 3 p.m. to 12 a.m. 0 citations, 2 warnings
- 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. 4 citations, 2 warnings
- 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. 9 citations, 10 warnings 3 DWI's

Other Criminal Activity Summary: (not all inclusive):

Non-traffic arrests:

- 1 - A&D arrest – adult
- 1 – A&D arrest – juvenile
- 1 – Dakota County warrant
- 2 – UTT Parked Against Flow of Traffic
- 1 – UTT Parked Against Flow of Traffic & Plate Impoundment Violation
- 2 – backdoor log
- 1 – dog neglect
- 1 – cat neglect
- 2 – dog bite
- 1 – UTT OFP violation
- 2 – Rice County Warrants
- 1 – UTT Flee Police (bike) & small possession of marijuana
- 1 – UTT skateboard violation – juvenile
- 1 – UTT loud party

Domestic Assaults:

- 1 – male/female – verbal only
- 1 – disturbance/assault

Juvenile Complaints:

- 9 – skateboard complaints
- 2 – kids ringing doorbells
- 1 – driving complaint
- 1 – loiterers

Animal Complaints:

- 1 – stray dog

Parking Complaints:

- 1 – parking ticket for prohibited parking

Loud Party/Distrubances:

- 1 – loud party – warning
- 1 – unwanted subjects – Rueb N Stein

Investigations:

- **Investigative Case Load - Investigations reviewed/contributed to 40 new cases**
- Cleared Cases - 19 cases were cleared by arrest

Drug/Gang Events:

- 316,309,310 opened a large controlled substance, stolen property investigation. We are working with ATF, Faribault, Rice, Dakota, WI, BCA and others. Case is open active at this time.

Crime Trends:

- 2 more burglaries reported

- City of Northfield checks are being forged and mailed to people as part of a scam. Some checks have been cashed but there has been no loss by the city at this time. We are working with postal inspectors on this file.

Exceptional Efforts:

- Officer Thad Monroe was recognized by the *Northfield News* recently as one of the “25 on the Rise”.

Other Information:

- Chief Smith met with city officials with respect to planning for Defeat of Jesse James Days
- Chief Smith attended a ZAP meeting in Faribault. ZAP is a state funded program to pay for extra enforcement of liquor violations at loud parties targeting both the users and the individuals providing the alcohol to underage individuals.
- Chief Smith participated in a city labor-management committee.
- Met with HR Director Elizabeth Wheeler to organize interview questions for police officer candidates. Both Chief Smith and Elizabeth Wheeler assisted in the interview of candidates this week.
- Chief Smith met with police supervisors for a staff meeting.

Public Works

Engineering

- Construction of the paver crosswalk across 3rd Street that is part of the Library Corner project began on Monday. The parking lot is expected to be closed for eleven days (increased from the specified ten days due to rain), unless extended due to weather. The Division Street crosswalk will be constructed after DJJD.
- MnDOT has indicated that construction will be switched to the west side of the road, and Highway 19 detour removed, on August 23.
- The administrative paperwork and preliminary design for the Mill Towns Trailhead project is underway. Coordination is occurring with the Friends of the Mill Towns Trail, DNR, MnDOT, Police Department and other interested parties. Engineering services are being provided by Yaggy Colby consulting engineers out of Rochester.

Water

- Staff completed the monthly Bacteria sampling for the Minnesota Department of Health this week.
- Staff assisted contractor with underground installation of water lines for the new Science building at St. Olaf campus.
- Staff worked on updating the Conservation plan that needs to be turned into the State in October.
- Staff worked on the new meter replacement program, we will hopefully start meter replacement for the commercial and industrial customers this month.
- Staff completed State fluoride report.
- Staff wired up several 2nd meter installations this week.
- Staff worked on updating the water ordinance.
- Staff has completed 2,159 locates for the year as of 8/1/06.

Streets/Parks

- Staff completed annual safety audits of Playground equipment. Staff will now begin correcting problems, which were identified based on severity of safety concern and budget allowance.
- Staff installed crosswalks - block striping and signage - at 4th and College and Juniper and Lincoln Parkway. One of the signs at 4th and College was hit by a vehicle within 12 hours of install, repair will be made next week.
- Staff washed the River Commons walk and made railing repairs.
- Ongoing maintenance: Park shelters and park cleaning and trash removal by City staff and Epic Crew, Sechler Park/Babcock Park athletic field preparations, and street sweeping the downtown on Thursday.

Facilities

- Interviews for the Facilities Supervisor Position were held on Monday, Human Resources Director, PW Director and Assistant Director interview 13 candidates, three of the candidates will be asked back for a second interview on Monday.
- The outdoor pool construction continued, footings were installed for Bathhouse, reinforcement iron was put in place for deep end of pool, pool excavation resumed on Friday. Met-Com continues to be up to date on building submittals.

Wastewater

- Completed testing for priority pollutants. This is an annual requirement that tests wastewater discharge for a wide variety of carcinogens and pesticides etc. Results should be available in 30 days.
- Jetting and televising of the collection system continues.
- Real time data acquisition for all of the facilities flow and time meters quit functioning. Everything remains in operation but the report information was not available. System was trouble shoot, data recovered and returned to normal.
- 22 work orders where generated and completed during the week.

Resource and Park Planning

- **ArtsPlan06:** no scheduled Planning Committee meeting this week (vacations); staff submitted potential 'ArtsPlan06 Implementation' projects in the current CIP; staff and consultant (Clough) presented the current study findings at the August 1st, NDDC Forum at the Archer House. Potential outcomes and current response was reviewed with Tom Clough and Staff.
- **Greenway Corridor Action Plan:** (Greater Northfield Area Greenway Corridor System). Preliminary System map has been developed and is available for review. Staff has requested two preliminary maps from the Consultant (Bonestroo) – one with topographic contours and one without. Staff will work with Consultant to provide an electronic file to the City's website.
- **Way Park:** Staff (Merriam and Walinski) and Project Designer (Jones) presented Project background and the four Conceptual Alternatives at a Public Meeting, Wednesday, August 2nd at the NCRC. Public input was substantial and the process will likely slow correspondingly, so additional comments can be received. Park Board (PRAB) will review and discuss the process piece at their next meeting (August 8th).
- **Downtown Streetscape Projects:** Staff and Project Design Team continues to advance the following 2006 projects and initiatives:
 - *5th Street and Water Street Gateway Project* – DSU (Slack) has forwarded final parking lot layout for staff review. Anton Miakotin (SMSQ intern) to build 3-D, digital model of the project site.
 - *Riverwalk Gateways* – Staff is negotiating and receiving install pricing, as well as working with the related building owners and tenants.
 - *Parking Lot Edge Treatments* – no work this week.
 - *Signage and Wayfinding* – Staff had follow-up meeting with Neuger to finalize Project Description, Scope of Work, Timeline, Constituent Groups, Deliverables and Fees.

cc: Department Managers