

Memorandum

DATE: August 11, 2006
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Al Roder, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of August 7-11, 2006

Here is a list of city activities for the week of August 7-11, 2006:

City Clerk

- Staff attended election judge training provided by Dakota County and election equipment training provided by Rice County.
- Candidate Information Session is scheduled for 7:00 pm on Tuesday, August 15, 2006 in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Finance

- **Check Scam Update:** City staff received correspondence from several more individuals who have received the phony prize winning letter and check. In one instance, an elderly individual had endorsed the check, sending it back to us with all of her personal banking information written on the letter. Because of the potential impact on more vulnerable individuals, a press release has been drafted to alert the public to the scam. A copy of this is attached for your review.
- **Budget:** Staff completed the preliminary budget report for the August 14th work session. The full budget / CIP document will be provided to Council before the meeting of September 11th when the preliminary levy and budget must be approved. Future work sessions – number and format will be discussed Monday evening.
- **Financial projections / modeling:** Staff has completed preliminary projections for all of the existing debt/ debt service funds. Included in these is all but one of the tax increment district funds. A preliminary projection has also been completed for the Master Development District Fund. These projections are significant components of a financial model. As the CIP and operating budgets are reviewed over the next several months, additional pieces of the model will be constructed.

Human Resources

- Health Savings Account – research & charts & data
- Labor Management Meeting - Scheduling presenters & agenda prep
- Negotiations preparation
- Reference checking
- Utility Union negotiations

- Police Officer negotiations
- Employee Newsletter
- Hiring temp – Public Works
- Administrative staff meeting
- Employee FMLA clarification
- Risk management – insurance coverage

Community Development

Building Inspections

- All building permits for the construction of the municipal swimming pool for the City were issued this week.

Community Development

- Performance reviews for two staff members of the Department have occurred within the past two weeks
- Staff has worked with the Finance Department to evaluate the status of the fund balance in the Master Development District in relation to proposed Capital Improvements in upcoming years.
- Staff met with the City Attorney to review the proposed changes to the Rental Inspections programs and requirements that will hopefully be presented to City Council in the near future

Economic Development

- Staff is researching examples of successful and well-designed business and industrial parks across the State. This information will be used to help the EDA define the vision for the "third business/industrial center in Northfield - as identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan.
- Staff drafted policy updates for the Tax Increment Financing Program. The existing policies were out-of-date, and it is expected that the EDA and City Council will receive this new information in the new future. Staff is also drafting a Tax Abatement Policy for consideration by the EDA and City Council.
- Staff is working with a business pursuing a loan through the loan program/funds earmarked by the EDA for businesses negatively impacted by the Highway 3 construction. This program, which had \$100,000 available, is meant to offset operating losses that businesses may experience due to the construction. The maximum loan amount is \$25,000 - and business must demonstrate the loss and their ability to repay the loan.
- Upgrades to the City's website were completed this week. These upgrades were done without the community experiencing any loss of access to the site.

Housing

- The final draft of the Housing Study was received. This draft incorporates the Dakota County data into the overall analysis. The final study is scheduled to be approved by the HRA.
- The HRA modified two existing programs: Rental Rehab Program and the Manufactured Home Replacement Program. The maximum grant amount for the Rental Rehab Program has been increased to \$10,000. This was done to provide more incentive to landlords who rent to income-qualified tenants, to improve the rental properties. The Manufactured Home Replacement Program was changed from a 3-year declining loan to a grant.
- The HRA officially accepted the donation of the hospital lot located at 900 W. Second Street. It is anticipated that over the fall and winter the HRA will go through the design and neighborhood meeting process, with construction occurring in Spring 2007. The HRA may potentially partner with another organization on this project (example: Rice County Habitat for Humanity, RENew Northfield, etc.)

- It was reported that 2 more of the Maple Hills properties are close to being sold. With the closing of these two properties, only one unit will remain available. The Maple Hills project has proven to be a successful project, providing a mixed income neighborhood in the community.
- Staff is preparing program guidelines and applications for the FY06 programs funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program. Within a month or so, funds will be available for Manufactured Home Repairs.

Planning

- The Planning Commission met this week and recommended approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow excavation in the Cannon River floodway to construct a storm water retention pond. The pond will service the Gleason 3rd Addition and the surrounding area. The City Council is tentatively scheduled to review the CUP on 8/21.
- Planning staff in the Department met today (Friday) with the consultant planner for the City of Dundas to discuss issues that are common to both communities and see how the two cities can cooperate more closely with one another.

Liquor Store

- Conferred with consultant to review revisions of cash flow analysis for the existing and potential liquor store locations.
- Part-time sales clerks Moeuth Chim and Jim Highum began orientation and in-store training this week.
- Met with representative of TRS (service and support provider for POS) to review hardware and software upgrade options and costs for the store's security system; estimates were passed on to Administration and Police for review and comment.

Library

- At the last Books & Stars program on Wednesday evening, Kathy Ness was honored for her eight years of work on the program. Kathy has booked entertainers, set up schedules, created publicity and raised funds for the Books & Stars program.
- Tonight, Friday, August 11, 7:00 p.m., is Sherlock Holmes Night at the library. Activities will include games and a film. Sorry - teens only are invited!
- Kathy Ness worked on preparing activities for Brain Busters. For kids going into first through fourth grades, brain busters are entertaining games, stories and crafts designed to get kids thinking again. These activities will be held from 10 a.m. until noon on August 23, 24, and 25.
- Northfield will be involved in "Read for the Record." On Thursday, August 24 at noon, we will join the world in support of early education by reading *The Little Engine That Could*. The idea is to set a world record for the number of people reading the same book at the same time. We think we can...
- Library circulation was VERY busy throughout July – library staff checked out over 33,000 items during the month – and another 1700+ on the bookmobile. August is slowing down ever so slightly for checkout but more books are being checked in!
- The Friends of the Library will meet next Tuesday to make plans for the first (annual – we hope) Spelling Bee. Mark your calendars for 7:00 p.m. September 21 at the Grand. (It will be held in conjunction with the NDDC.) This should be wonderful fun and will help the Friends raise money for a newer "Booker."

Police

Accident Information:

- 4 Property Damage Accidents

- 1 Hit and Run Accident
- 1 Personal Injury Accident – serious injury to motorcycle passenger

Traffic Enforcement:

- 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. – 4 citations, 10 warnings,
- 3 p.m. to 12 a.m. – 1 warning
- 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. – 5 warnings
- 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. – 5 citations, 10 warnings
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Non-Traffic Arrests:

- 11 citations – Curfew Violation - juvenile
- 1 citation Curfew & Theft - juvenile
- 2 citations – Minor Consumption & Curfew, juv.
- 1 arrested and jailed – Domestic Assault

Assaults/Domestics:

- 1 male/female – subject jailed
- 3 male/female – verbal

Juvenile Complaints:

- 1 child protection report
- 5 curfew violations
- 1 lost child
- 1 welfare check
- 1 vandalism
- 1 fight
- 2 safety concerns
- 3 skateboard
- 1 attempt to locate runaway
- 1 runaway located
- 6 loitering
- 1 public urination
- 1 kids in fountain
- 1 kids harassing geese
- 2 bike violation
- 3 noise complaint
- 1 shoplifting

Animal Complaints:

- 1 dog bite
- 1 barking dog
- 1 raccoon
- 1 stray dog
- 1 injured dog

Parking Complaints:

- 1 tow traffic hazard
- 1 citation Expired Registration

- 1 citation Parked Against Flow of Traffic
- 1 citation prohibited parking
- 2 tires chalked OT parking
- 1 handicap violation
- 2 improper parking

Loud Party/Disturbances:

- 1 loud music
- 1 loud party
- 1 loud music/vehicle

Bar/Liquor License Complaints:

- 1 fight at the Rueb N Stein

Public Works

Wastewater

- During routine inspection of the arena lift station staff noticed a large mass of twine and rags wrapped up in the float system that controls the pumps. While removing the floats to clear the debris one of the float wires broke. Called an electrician and ran the system in manual until repairs could be made.
- DMR QA testings was completed and sent to the lab for analysis. This is an annual group of tests required by the USEPA. The agency sends out performance samples for various required tests. The lab must analyze and send results in. Test results must be within acceptable limits to maintain lab certification.
- The weekly sample collected from MOM had a noticeable chlorine smell. This is not normal and MOM was contacted to find out what was going on. They investigated and found a valve that feeds chlorine used to neutralize dyes stuck open. The valve was fixed. The amount of chlorine wasted would have no negative impact on treatment operations.
- The lab we use for fecal coliform analysis called Thursday reporting an extremely high value for fecal coliform in our Wednesday discharge. The disinfection system is inspected daily to assure proper operation and no problems had been noted. All aspects of the system were rechecked thoroughly and no problems were found. An additional sample was taken for analysis. The MPCA limit for this parameter is calculated on a monthly average (geometric mean) and if things return to normal for the remainder of the month we will probably not violate the standard.
- The 350,000 gallon backwash storage tank was drained and inspected.

Streets/Parks:

- Operators Mike Albrecht and Steve Malecha and mechanic Ryan Kiefer attended classes on Zamboni and ice maintenance on Tuesday and Wednesday. The seminars were sponsored by the Minnesota Ice Manager Association.
- The Public Works Facility will be closed to the public until further notice. Administrative Assistant Lynn James Naval Reserve unit was placed on active duty and will be stationed in Iraq for 8 - 12 months. Resident calls and in person requests will need to be addressed at City Hall.
- 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.

- Staff began aerating athletic field and general park turf this week, 110 total acres, in preparation for fall turf maintenance program which will include application of fertilizer and spot application of broad leaf herbicide.
- Concrete repairs were completed in the downtown area. A section of the red brick area surrounding the fountain at Bridge Square was replaced with red concrete, the remaining area will be completed next year providing funding is approved. Also, a number of brick sidewalk area were replaced with standard concrete to address safety concerns and ADA complaints.
- Staff facilitated the August Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting. Items of discussion include the removal and future plans for the Viking Terrace Bridge, Way Park Park Master Planning, and reviewing Chapter 11 of the City Comp Plan pertaining to the City's park and recreation facilities and locations.

Facilities:

- Public Works Director and Assistant Public Works Director conducted 2nd interviews with the top 3 candidates. Human Resources is completing background checks on candidates and a recommendation for hire will be forwarded to the City Administrator upon completion.
- Work continued on the outdoor pool at Old Memorial Field. The pool reinforcing iron is being placed with inspections scheduled for Friday, the first concrete pour for the pool is scheduled for early next week. Plumbing and footing work continued on the bathhouse. Members of the PRAB toured the site prior to their meeting on Tuesday.

Water

- Staff read monthly meters.
- Staff removed corp from water main at 812 Poplar St.
- Staff worked on changes to water ordinance.
- Staff removed monitor from Sheldahl meter this week. The monitor was installed to determine what kind of flow Sheldahl was using during a four-day period to help us determine what size and type of meter that we should install in that location.
- Staff ordered 18 large meters for meter replacement at our commercial and Industrial locations.
- Water pumped for the past week, total - 20,700,000 gallons.
- Completed 2,347 locates for the year.

Engineering

- Worked on negotiating and drafting a development agreement for Gleason Third Addition (which will include the theatre). As part of this project, the City is responsible for constructing the stormwater management facilities due to an agreement entered into in 2001. The city and developer are working to make all improvements now so that neither party has future obligations related to past agreements.
- Attended the first CSAH 1 corridor planning advisory committee meeting hosted by Rice County. Five corridors were identified for further evaluation.
- The Third Street parking lot by the library corner will be reopened today. The Division Street crosswalk will be constructed after DJJD. Plantings will be installed in the library corner in the next few weeks.
- We received news from MnDOT that the railroad is holding up construction on TH19. Since the railroad has not completed the work on their crossing, TH19 will remain detoured beyond August 23 for an undetermined amount of time. The TH3 construction will switch over from the east ½ of the highway to the west ½ of the highway on August 23 but 19 will remain closed.

Resource and Park Planning

- **ArtsPlan06:** no scheduled Planning Committee meeting or organized activity this week (vacations).
- **Greenway Corridor Action Plan:** (Greater Northfield Area Greenway Corridor System). Preliminary System map has been developed and is available for review. Park Board got brief overview at their meeting of August 8th. Staff will review with PRAB member Jones, as well as Consultant to provide an electronic file to the City's website.
- **Way Park:** Park Board (PRAB) reviewed project status and discussed process at their meeting of August 8th. PRAB and City Staff will receive public comment on project alternatives through the end of August. Staff has posted Spencer's 4 Conceptual Alternatives at City Hall – 2nd Floor across from the conference room. An additional set of project plans will be posted downtown on Division St. – more information to follow.
- **Downtown Streetscape Projects:** City Staff and Consultant conducted 2006 Meeting #2 of the Mayor's Downtown Streetscape Task Force on Thursday, August 10th. The primary focus of the meeting and discussion was the '5th Street and Water Street Gateway'. Staff also provided updates on a variety of other initiatives, including: bikes racks – 8 to be installed, 6 more ordered. Specific initiatives:
 - *Library Corner* – see 'Public Works'; project to be landscaped this coming week.
 - *5th Street and Water Street Gateway Project* – Conceptual Design Development was presented to the Task Force; comments and revisions will be incorporated into plans and documents; Staff to schedule next meeting and Public Open House.
 - *Riverwalk Gateways* – Final design images are available on the City's website or in Staff Merriam's office. Staff is negotiating and receiving install pricing, as well as working with the related building owners and tenants and the City to determine the extent of underground utilities; Staff and consultant may have to revise design and footing detail.
 - *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. In addition, Neuger representative attended the Task Force meeting of August 10th to establish project background.

cc: Department Managers