

Memorandum

DATE: August 18, 2006  
TO: Mayor & Council Members  
FROM: Al Roder, City Administrator  
RE: Friday Memo for the week of August 13 - 19, 2006

Here is a list of city activities for the week of August 13 - 19, 2006:

A revision has been made to Resolution 2006-086. A copy is attached to this Friday Memo to allow you time to review it before the meeting.

**City Clerk**

- Staff attended election equipment training provided by Dakota County.
- Staff participated in a candidate information session hosted by Mayor Lansing, which included a presentation by Bruce Johnson, Assistant Administrative Law Judge, Office of Administrative Hearings, Fran Windschitl, Rice County Auditor/Treasurer and Annette Peters, Rice County Property Tax & Elections Division Manager. There were approximately 15 candidates in attendance.
- Absentee voting started this week.

**Finance**

**Budget**

- Staff reviewed the preliminary budget, property tax levy and CIP with the Council at the work session on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Staff is preparing a more comprehensive draft budget document for the second budget work session on the August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- In follow-up to Monday night's discussion on state aid, two reports from the League of MN Cities are attached. The first is a memo from July entitled, "LGA Volatility and the Problems with Estimates"; the second is a report that details the LGA distributions for the years 2003 through 2007 for all Minnesota cities.
- A host of other topics / issues was also brought up Monday night. The draft budget document being prepared will not take into account all of the items brought up, but it is hoped that the final budget document compiled (once the final budget / CIP is adopted) in December will. It is anticipated that as additional discussions are held with the Mayor and Council, appropriate refinements and additions / deletions will be made.

**Interim Financial Reports**

- I have only presented one interim financial report since starting with the City. As the budget work settles, my preliminary plan is to provide rotating quarterly reports focusing a particular fund or fund group. This

would allow for more analysis. If there are other topics you would like researched and presented, please contact me.

#### **Other information**

- Staff completed a survey on Volunteer Firefighter Pension Plans for the Office of the Legislative Auditor. A brief description of their study is included as an attachment.

#### **Community Development**

##### **Building Inspections**

- The building permits for the new city swimming pool and the new Kwik Trip have been issued.
- The Building Official has officially assumed the responsibility for Blight conditions and enforcement in the city.
- The new purposed rental program will hopefully be ready for presentation to Council by the end of September or early October.

##### **Community Development**

- Worked with staff in Building Inspections, Planning and Community Development to identify areas of budget cuts and revenue enhancements.
- Worked with Public Works staff to evaluate various design options for the development of Way Park.

##### **Economic Development**

- Staff prepared the Economic Development Plan mailing, in hopes that the mailing will be delivered early next week. This mailing includes the brochure that highlights the majority components of the newly finished economic development plan. The mailing will be distributed throughout all of Northfield.
- Staff is preparing a Tax Increment Financing Policy and Application. The draft will be presented to the EDA next week, with a recommendation going to City Council in early September. The policy will clearly state what requirements must be met for projects to request TIF assistance, as well as the criteria that the City will use in determining if a project will receive assistance, and if so, how much.

##### **Housing**

- Staff devoted time to the "hospital lot" that is being transferred to the HRA ownership. The HRA has committed to building an affordable house on lot, that blends in with the surrounding neighborhood. Staff is communicating with the Rice County Habitat for Humanity and ReNEW Northfield on possibilities for this lot/house.
- Staff worked with a number of representatives from lending institutions, helping them understand the Housing Assistance Program. Staff also assisted a number of applicants with their Housing Assistance Program applications.
- The Planning Commission is meeting on Tuesday and will be reviewing a request to reduce the number of required parking spaces for the proposed new movie theater on Highway #3 South. The Commission will also be continuing to review the Comprehensive Plan. RFPs to revise the Comp Plan and Land Development Regulations are due September 1st.

#### **Library**

- Faribault and Northfield library directors (Renee Lowery and Lynne Young) presented each city's 2007 budget request for library service to the Rice County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday morning.

Northfield has requested just over \$208,000 to cover about 22% of our budget (including the bookmobile and service to rural Rice County communities).

- The SELCO ILS Ops Committee met on Thursday at the SELCO offices in Rochester. Lynne Young serves as a member of this covert-sounding group. SELCO (Southeastern Libraries Cooperating) is the regional library system of which Northfield is a member. ILS means integrated library system and Ops (of course) is Operations. This committee makes decisions regarding all aspects of the shared automation system that the libraries use.
- The Newbery Club met on Thursday night to discuss the book *Holes*.
- The library's mystery book club will meet at Laurie Kodet's home tonight for a pot luck dinner and discussion of Sara Paretsky's *Tunnel Vision* and Julie Smith's *Sour Dough Wars*.
- 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. **City staff and City Council members are encouraged to join us at the library or to do a reading at 12:00 at City Hall.** We think we can...
- Joan Ennis and Leesa Wisdorf have scheduled an open house for parents, students and others involved in home schooling for Monday, September 25 at 1:00. Homeschool families typically rely on their public libraries for many supporting resources.

### Liquor

- The road construction at the corner of Hwy 3 and Hwy 19 continues its negative impact on our business: sales for the month of July were down relative to 2005, and this decline has extended through the first two weeks in August week as well.
- Part-time sale clerk Noel Bublitz began orientation and in-store training this week.

### Police

#### Accident Information:

- 1 Property Damage Accidents
- 0 Hit and Run Accident
- 0 Personal Injury Accident

#### Traffic Enforcement:

- 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. – 4 citations, 14 warnings,
- 3 p.m. to 12 a.m. – 1 warning
- 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. – 4 citations, 11 warnings, 1 DWI

#### Non-Traffic Arrests:

- 2 juvenile trespass

#### Assaults/Domestics:

- 1 male/female – verbal
- 1 father/son – verbal
- 1 male/male – physical, review for charges
- 1 male/female – advised to obtain Order for Protection

#### Juvenile Complaints:

- 4 trespass notices served

- 1 bike violation
- 1 fireworks
- 5 skateboard
- 3 child neglect
- 1 juveniles on roof
- 1 suspicious activity – Gone on Arrival
- 1 theft

Animal Complaints:

- 1 stray dog
- 1 barking dog
- 1 barking dog, warning letter
- 1 dog left in vehicle – Gone on Arrival
- 1 dog running loose

Parking Complaints:

- 2 parking enforcement
- 1 vehicle blocking driveway
- 1 citation parking on bridge
- 1 street sweeping, 12 tickets issued

Loud Party/Disturbances:

- 2 loud music
- 4 loud party

Bar/Liquor License Complaints:

Criminal Investigations Information:

- Investigators reviewed and contributed to 36 new files.
- 9 cases were cleared by arrest
- 7 felony complaints were signed
- Investigators logged 120 hours this week of investigation time
- Officer Cordova executed 2 gang/drug warrants in Faribault
- 7 more burglaries were reported over the last two weeks in Northfield
- 4 more theft from vehicles were reported

Exceptional Efforts:

- During the last few months, Northfield PD has been working with are law enforcement on a Methamphetamine, burglary, theft and forgery ring that is centered in our area. On 8/16/06, 2 search warrants were executed in Rice Co. and Northfield. Approximately \$60,000 in stolen property was recovered. Items include 2 trailers, a 4 wheeler and riding lawn mower. One person is in custody with more arrests anticipated. Assisting agencies include Rice Co. SO, Faribault PD, Bloomington PD, Dakota Co. SO, Goodhue Co. SO, Dodge Co. SO, Le Sueur Co. SO, State Financial Crimes Task Force and South Central Drug Investigation Unit.

Other Information:

- Chief Smith and Tim Isom are completing FEMA training in Emmetsburg, MD.

## **Public Works**

### **Engineering**

- Conducted the preconstruction meeting for Rosewood 5th Addition. Utility construction is expected to begin next week.
- Development of the plans and the development agreement for Gleason 3rd Addition and the associated stormwater improvements continued.
- Budgets were reviewed and revised.

### **Streets/Parks**

- Ongoing maintenance: Park shelters and park cleaning and trash removal by City staff and Epic Crew, Sechler Park/Babcock Park athletic field preparations and seasonal turf maintenance, general park and ROW mowing (110 acres) and street sweeping the downtown on Thursday.
- Installed 2 ped/trail ramps on in Tyler Park and one in Heritage Park.
- City Administrator and staff met to discuss the development of the Way Park Master Plan. One of the topics of concern that was taken from the public forum on Way Park was the possibility of closing or diverting 1st Street which historically has bisected the two pieces of property identified with Way Park. Prior to a final plan being developed, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board will be requesting a joint work session with the Council to ask for Council direction on the 1st Street issue.

### **Water**

- Staff worked on the removal of graffiti from the St. Olaf storage tanks.
- Staff repaired fire hydrant by Charter Cable.
- Staff worked on changes to water ordinance.
- Staff planted trees at the Hall Avenue storage tank site.
- Staff did a flow test at Perkins Transport for Olympic Fire Protection.
- Water pumped for the past week, total - 19,858,000 gallons. Daily Average - 2,836,857 gallons.
- Completed 2,429 locates for the year.

### **Wastewater**

- An automated system used to remove grease from the primary scum pit was designed, built, and installed by the operators. The system will eliminate about 4 man-days of very undesirable manual labor per year. Materials cost for the project was about \$500.
- A new polymer was tested full scale for the belt press (sludge dewatering) operation. The polymer did not work as well as it had performed during bench testing and we will not switch polymers.
- 4 new belt cleaning products were tested on the belt press. Belt cleaning is done with a pressure washer, which takes 8 to 10 hours per month to complete the job. If the chemicals are effective the need for pressure washing could be reduced. Three of the products were ineffective and one warrants further investigation.
- Jetting and televising of the collection system continues.

- Approximately 180,000 gallons of sludge was dewatered, chemically stabilized, and pasteurized during the week.

### **Facilities**

- Concrete was poured on the deep end of the new outdoor pool on Monday. Work continues on schedule as suppliers and weather continue to cooperate with the project.

### **Resource and Park Planning**

- **ArtsPlan06:** no scheduled Planning Committee meeting this week; Staff attended NDDC's Third Thursday event at The Grand to support facilitator/consultant Tom Clough; discussion was a continuation of community dialogue about the ArtsPlan06 initiative and its outcomes.
- **Greenway Corridor Action Plan:** (Greater Northfield Area Greenway Corridor System). Preliminary System map has been developed and is available for review. No organized or scheduled activity this week; Steering Committee will re-convene to discuss existing City ordinances what tools could be added to implement the plan.
- **Way Park:** (also see Public Works summary) Staff has posted Spencer's 4 Conceptual Alternatives at City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor across from the conference room and in the late Bagel Brothers store front on Division Street; Staff and Park Board to receive public comment(s) through the end of the month.
- **Downtown Streetscape Projects:** City Staff and Consultant conducted 2006 Meeting #2 of the Mayor's Downtown Streetscape Task Force on Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. The primary focus of the meeting and discussion was the '5<sup>th</sup> 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* – (also see Public Works summary); project has been landscaped and final lettering for the Library sign is being approved.
  - *5<sup>th</sup> 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; revise project details accordingly.
  - *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; Consultant Agreement under review by City Attorney.

cc: Department Managers