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## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors  
FROM: M McPherson, City Administrator  
SUBJECT: **Bi-Weekly Administrator's Report**  
DATE: January 11, 2022

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I have the following observations and information to share from the last two weeks:

### **ARPA Funds**

The Final Rule has been issued with the creation of a "standard allowance" option which assumes a city experienced a revenue loss equal to the lesser of their full ARPA distribution or \$10 million. This opens the door for jurisdictions to spend their dollars on projects outside of broadband, infrastructure or protection of health care workers.

### **Development Projects**

We continue to work on various requests for information from developers, both residential and commercial. There will likely be another request at the January 27 meeting for the use of tax abatement for the extension of utilities for a residential development.

### **Grants**

We are still waiting on the results from our grant application to the Federal EDA for the Business Park infrastructure. Per Darrin Fleener, federal staff person, the application is still under review. We have been advised by Jim Gruber, WSB, who is familiar with the grant process, that we can begin the design work on the street and utilities, so expect a scope of services on an upcoming meeting for approval.

### **Infrastructure**

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue/County Road 4

Our preliminary application to the Small Cities Development Program has been deemed "marginally competitive" which allows us to submit a full application. Jen Edison, Jim Gruber (WSB), Kevin Schultz with Mille Lacs County, and Public Works Director Gerold and I met on January 10 to go over the work needed to complete the application due March 11, 2022. Upcoming tasks include:

- Letter of Support from Mille Lacs County (street)
- Letter of Support from Princeton Public Utilities (water)
- Public Hearing by the City Council

We will also be looking for other grant opportunities, if not for this project, then for others.

#### Radio Simulcast Equipment

No further work has been done for this project since my last update; with the change in the ARPA final rule, there may be a larger opportunity to fund this project with those dollars from other jurisdictions.

### **Liquor Store Operations**

The Liquor Store was closed January 10 and 11 for the redoing of the floors. Prior to that, Finance Director and I assisted with inventory on January 1; the auditor will be giving the City a minor finding which is an improvement over 2020's moderate finding. Only one item was off; ironically it was an item that was counted by a vendor. We will likely need to research a new inventory system, the current one has had is-

sues from day one and all of the data collected prior to and on the day of the audit the system erased for no apparent reason.

In addition to inventory, I assisted in cleaning out the former manager's office and packing product to remove it from the floor. I will be assisting for four hours on January 12 to return product to the floor.

We have implemented the following effective January 1:

- Checks are no longer accepted; cash, credit or debit card only
- Discount for Veterans, active military on Tuesdays

### **Personnel**

Ed Yost, Technology Services Manager started January 10 and jumped right into learning the various systems, equipment, touring the various building sites. His early conversations with staff lead us to believe that he will be working diligently to consolidate equipment and software that will ultimately lead to cost savings for the City. He will be introduced to the Council at the January 13 meeting.

I am participating on the interview panel for the selection of the new police officers. Ten candidates for interview have been selected and there are five on the panel. Interviews were/will be conducted January 11 and 13.

### **Upcoming Meeting/Event Reminders**

- January 14 – I will be out of the office attending the MN Federation of County Fairs Annual Convention, available by phone and text
- January 17 – Offices closed in observance of the Martin Luther King holiday
- January 24 – Heather Brooks, Community Development Manager starts