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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: March 23, 2021

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It has been a busy two weeks (or so). Everyone has been very helpful and I have learned quite a bit. Other than Nancy Campbell, Liquor Store Manager, and Ron Lawrence, Fire Chief, I have visited with all of the Department Heads and with all of the staff at City Hall. I have been given tours of the City by both the Public Works Director and Police Chief, toured the Police side of the Public Safety Building and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

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

### **Airport**

Behind the scenes work is occurring regarding the 19<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Avenue connection. A meeting was held with the FAA to determine their needs with the project schedule. A follow up meeting will be held to further discuss the schedules; the FAA will need time to review the requested release of Parcels 10, 11, 18 and Easement 12.

President Biden's American Rescue Plan Act will provide adequate funding for airports such that the City will no longer have to provide a local match for the taxiway project. However, KLJ will be presenting a proposal for the re-bid of the project. It is estimated that the scope of work will cost approximately \$15,000. KLJ believes that we can obtain money from MNDOT to off-set a portion of these costs.

The AWOS needs to be relocated in order for the development of the Industrial Park to proceed. KLJ will be providing a scope of work for this project for the Council's consideration. It is anticipated that this will be a two-part project: Year 1 will be the siting and environmental work; Year 2 will be the actual design and reconstruction.

I have started to research the necessary steps to eliminate the cross-wind runway from the ordinance now that it has been removed from the ALP. Information will be provided to the Airport Advisory Board at their May 5 meeting with the same information provided to the City Council in my next bi-weekly report, which will fall on the weeks of the regular Council agenda.

### **City Council**

#### Goals

During the clean-out and re-organization of the Administrators' files, I found the 2020 Goals established by the City Council. Given the significant projects on the schedule for 2021, I would like to propose a goal-setting session as we develop the 2022 budget. This ensures that funding aligns with the Council's goals.

### Agenda Format

In order to improve citizen understanding and transparency of the Council's meetings, I rearranged the agenda slightly. I hope that with clear titles on items, citizens will be able to participate more easily in the meetings should they desire.

Given the upcoming joint meetings scheduled for our regular study sessions, I plan to use time on the regular meetings in order to discuss and gather Council input on policies staff is developing. Once the study sessions are again available, policy discussions will occur there.

### **Development Projects**

#### AT & T Tower

Staff is working to identify the remaining items left to be completed prior to the City taking ownership of the tower. The City should receive a certificate of completion (or some other documentation) that the tower is complete. Landscaping is yet to be completed, there is ongoing staff discussion regarding slats in the fence and whether a light at the top of the tower is required.

#### Shipwreck Building

Staff met with Jeff and Jon Smith regarding the re-use of the Shipwreck site. They have a number of ideas and their primary re-use will require annexation into the City in order to access city sewer and water.

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

The County is reconstructing County Road 4 in 2022. There is both a water and sewer main in the corridor in need of improvement/repair. In addition, there are lands previously identified for possible annexation that should be considered in any improvement or repair. I have reached out to the County Engineer, Neal Knopik, to express our interest in piggy-backing on their project to accomplish our water and sewer maintenance goals. A meeting will be scheduled in the future once their construction season is up and running.

### **Finance/Personnel**

Through the American Rescue Plan Act, the City will receive approximately \$540,000. We are still waiting for the spending guidelines before proposing where to spend the money. Expenditures can be made through 2024.

The City is in dire need of new financial/payroll software. There is significant hand work in order to pay bills, generate receipts, reconcile statements and do payroll. There should not be a two-month delay in getting financial reports to Department Heads in order to track their expenditures. In addition, there is limited access to the single computer that is connected to the financial software which limits our expansion of checks and balances and the ability to telework. Once the audit is complete, focus will turn to identifying and implementing a new software.

Department Heads will begin working on the Personnel Manual in April. The plan is to work through the document one or two chapters at a time. In addition to the Manual itself, the following additional items need to be developed:

1. Standard operating procedures for hiring.
2. Policy for background checks (type and depth) and establishing an account with and outside agency for conducting the checks. The City's Police Chief should not be conducting background checks for City hires. Chief Frederick is looking into a relationship with the BCA to complete background checks for finalists.
3. Standard operating procedures for on-boarding employees.

A Technology Services person is needed. Currently, the Police Department has a part-time Tech Services person, but the Community Development Manager is filling this role for City Hall. A Tech Services person would be responsible for (this list is not exhaustive, just the most pressing):

1. Maintaining the Electronic Devices Inventory across departments for insurance purposes.
2. Analyzing existing hardware and software needs, develop a capital improvement/replacement plan for timely upgrades of hardware and software.
3. Developing a server system for housing software programs (it currently looks like we have a number of standard CPUs serving this capacity).
4. Ensuring that backups are completed and malware/virus software is up to date.
5. Providing customer service to staff and the School District on shared technology hardware and software.

The City should consider an optical imaging/document storage system. Currently, there is no back up to the historical minutes, resolutions or other documents that are required to be kept permanently. An optical imaging/document storage system that is searchable will help staff more efficiently respond to Councilor and resident requests. This may be an eligible expense under the American Relief Act monies.

### **Upcoming Meeting Reminders**

April 1 – Joint Meeting with the School Board

May 6 – Joint Meeting with the Princeton PUC