
MEMORANDUM



TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors
FROM: M McPherson, City Administrator
SUBJECT: **Bi-Weekly Administrator's Report**
DATE: June 21, 2023

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

Airport

The July 6 Study Session will be a joint meeting with the Airport Advisory Board.

There is a vacancy on the Airport Advisory Board, so any assistance in recruitment would be fantastic.

Development

Staff continues to have conversations with Pat Briggs regarding Phases 3 and 4 of the apartment project on 1st Street. We anticipate applications for preliminary and final plat to be forthcoming.

The Charlie-Bravo project is moving forward; it appears that there may be one lot sold in addition to the initial office building to be constructed for the Hages. Staff continues to ensure that communication between these two projects is open and coordination of infrastructure is seamless.

A closing has been set on the sale of the residential lot to Dale Shelley for June 30 at 1pm at Home Security Abstract and Title, Princeton.

The owner of Anoco stopped by June 20 to discuss the industrial lots for sale. He felt the current asking price was too high and I suggested he submit an offer for consideration.

Finance

I am waiting for the conclusion of the audit. We have provided all of the necessary information to the consultants, I believe. We are over budget on the Abdo expenses, but I believe the Smith Schafer costs will be lower than budgeted. Accountant Hoheisel and I will work with Abdo to determine what audit tasks can be completed by Accountant Hoheisel with oversight by Abdo next year in order to reduce future costs.

Fire

I attended the Fire Relief and Membership Semi-Annual Business meeting on June 13 at the Public Safety Meeting. There is still an undercurrent of dissatisfaction on the part of at least one firefighter that Adam Cook received an additional year of service even though he was not living within the seven (7) mile radius required by the PFRD Handbook.

There was additional strain at the meeting; one firefighter who is also a Blue Hill Township Supervisor voted June 12 to cancel the contract with PFRD effective December 31, 2023, and receive services from Baldwin Fire.

Infrastructure

Public Works Director Gerold, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Klinghagen and I met with MPCA representatives on June 8 to discuss the plant's permit. Of specific interest was the streambank project

and the phosphorus limits. It appears that the plant is well under the limits now and likely in the future should the plant reach its full design capacity. There may be opportunity to sell phosphorus credits in the future. Staff indicated to the MPCA that the City will continue to manage its streambank projects in to the foreseeable future but that the permit should include options for the City going forward. An additional discussion point was the limit on Total Suspended Solids and the chemicals (salt formulation) that needs to be added in the winter to meet the limit. Overall, it was a good meeting.

Personnel

Councilor Gerold, Accountant Hodges and I are close to completing the review and compilation of the new personnel manual. We are hoping to complete our work by mid-July in order to give it to the Department Heads thereafter. It is a large document, so I have generated a list of specific sections that require input from the Department Heads in order to assist them with the review. If all goes well, we hope to have it to the City Council in September.

We are fully staffed. I would like to acknowledge the Splash Park attendants – they have been very busy so far this year. Through June 16, sales total \$8,884.84 for the year. They have also provided input as to what the comments they hear from attendees to make improvements. Interns Benjamin (marketing) and Benson (Splash Park) have done a great job marketing for free days (up to 13 so far) and managing the attendants and stock.

Accountant Hodge and I met with representatives from NFP, our benefits broker on June 13. They will issue RFPs for all of our coverages. This year we can break away from PEIP, so they will be looking to get health insurance pricing from a multitude of service providers. When looking at options, we will need to balance price with choices for employees. I did indicate that the City and its employees cannot afford another double-digit increase as in the past two years, especially given the salary increases that are being implemented in 2023 and future years.

Legislative Monitoring

LMC and CGMC have been conducting several webinars on the legislative session. Of particular interest has been the ones regarding changes in the labor laws. The laws were changed significantly in favor of unions/labor groups and disfavor employers. It should lead to an interesting negotiation session for the upcoming contract renewals.

Miscellaneous

We received the attached thank you for attending the Glenn Metalcraft/Elemet Group groundbreaking.

The East Central Regional Development Commission is holding a public hearing regarding their FY 2024 budget. Attached is the notice and their budget.

Mille Lacs County is adopting a subdivision plat review ordinance that requires the County Surveyor to review all plats within in the County. WSB always sends the City plats to the County for review as part of the normal operating procedures for plats.

Upcoming Meeting/Event Reminders

- June 30 – Closing at 1pm, sale of residential lot to Dale Shelley
- July 4 – Offices closed for the holiday, community celebration (4 to 9pm) and American Legion Fireworks Display, Mille Lacs County Fairgrounds
- July 6 – Study Session with the Airport Advisory Board to discuss the CIP projects and budget
- July 12 – Fire Advisory Board