

Memorandum

DATE: May 2, 2008
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Al Roder, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of April 28 – May 2, 2008

Here is a list of city activities for the week of April 28 – May 2, 2008:

City Clerk

An updated staff report, resolution and bid results for item no. 11 - Award contract for 2007 Improvement No. 009 - Water Street/5th Street enhancements and reconstruction, are attached.

Requested additions to the agenda for the May 5, 2008 council meeting:

- The Water Division is asking the council to consider adding the attached proclamation (Resolution 2008-044) to the May 5 council meeting declaring May 4 – 10 as drinking water week in Northfield.
- Staff received a request to add a resolution to Monday's agenda to support the continuation of the JOBZ program as a tool to help business retention and expansion in Minnesota. A proposed resolution (Resolution 2008-043) and staff report are attached.

Finance

Council Subcommittee on the CIP: The group will meet on Monday, May 5th at 8 a.m. to continue the review of the full draft of the CIP document.

Convention & Visitors Bureau: The City's lodging tax and use of the proceeds by the CVB has been a topic this week. Kathy Feldbrugge will be making a presentation to the Council on the 19th to provide the background and history of the City's contract with the Chamber (to serve as the CVB and administer funds).

In the meantime, it is important that you know that the lodging tax collected by the City – is not City funds. By state law, these monies must be transmitted to the CVB for tourism purposes. The only exception would be if the City retained up to 5% (?) as an administrative fee.

Complicating the blog and other discussions is the fact that a former City Administrator changed the way the City accounted for the lodging tax. Up through the 2006 annual report – the entire financial activity of the CVB was presented in the City's financial statements as a special revenue fund. This gives the appearance that the monies are the City's and that is not true. The proper way to show the financial activity in the City's statements is to show –0-. The monthly receipts should be recorded to a revenue line in the City's General Fund with checks cut to the CVB coded right to the same revenue account.

Information Technology

This week IT worked to connect the Memorial Pool to our local area network using radios and a wireless connection. Plans have to be modified because of the number of taller trees blocking a good signal from the safety center to the pool. We are looking at other options using a signal from a city building closer to the Memorial Pool location. Much thanks to Bernie Shakal and his crew for trenching the conduit needed for this project.

LOGIS project: The cut-over date to move to LOGIS software at the police and fire department is scheduled for May 13th. IT has installed the needed software on all PCs within the police department and has begun work on the squad cars. This work will continue into next week.

Library

Some fantastic new resources are now available for Northfield area book lovers. From the library web page (www.ci.northfield.mn.us/library or www.northfieldmn.info), choose the Readers' Resources. The Book News link allows you to sign up to receive special newsletters prepared by the library staff. You can view any newsletter you want – there are newsletters for teen books, mysteries, bestsellers, classics, etc. From the newsletter, you can link to the library's catalog and place a request! If you like what you see, you can sign up to receive to receive each new monthly newsletter in your email.

The other new resource is Pearl's Picks. Nancy Pearl is a Seattle librarian and author of *Book Lust* and *More Book Lust* (and other books about books). She is also the model for the "Librarian Action Figure." Pearl's Picks is just that – Nancy's suggestions and reviews/summaries of books of high interest. Nancy Pearl is just the person to link people to new and fascinating books.

The public is invited to a special event on Thursday, May 8, from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Bridge Square. The Minnesota Sesquicentennial Banner will end its journey across the state in Northfield and will be presented to Northfield and elected officials by the James Gang. A journal for citizens to sign and add their thoughts on Minnesota and its history will accompany the banner. The banner and journal will be at the Northfield Public Library on Friday, May 9, from 9:30-5:30. Booker, the Northfield Library Bookmobile will transport the banner to St. Paul on Sunday, May 11. In case of rain, the event will be held in the Library Meeting Room. Library staff have been busy making the final arrangements for this event.

"Picture the Possibilities," is the name the library board and staff have given to the site feasibility study just being undertaken. The City is contracting with MS&R Architects to do a site feasibility for an expansion of the current library building going south, possibly across Third St. This study is designed to provide the information that the Library Board needs in order to determine whether or not a functional library addition can be built there. Public input is a VERY important part of this process. The meetings are coming up quickly: May 13, May 27 and June 10. All meetings will be held from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at St. John's Church. Although we know that people are very busy this time of year, we hope they'll make time to share their ideas and concerns.

Public Services

The accident that occurred at the intersection of TH 246 and Jefferson Parkway brings concerns to the surface regarding safety of the intersection. The City's police and engineering departments are cooperators with the Northfield School District in completing a study under the Safe Routes to School Grant program. The study will look at all of the elementary schools and the middle school to address the reduced number of students walking or biking to school which leads to increased traffic and raising safety concerns. Also of concern is the lack of physical activity of kids and the health concerns this creates. The City will be the fiscal agent thus receiving \$30,000 in 2009 for the program that was identified in the application, which includes the study of safe routes to school along with addressing enforcement and education components. The School District will be taking the lead on the project with help from the Non-motorized Transportation Task Force.

Additionally, the following information is provided regarding the crosswalk maintenance program currently in effect:

- Crosswalks in the downtown area, those in school areas, or in high traffic areas are painted annually.
- Crosswalks in residential areas are painted every other year.
- In recent years, the Street Division has reduced the number of crosswalks painted to include only those at controlled intersections or identified with the proper signage. Incorrect signage does affect City liability and studies have shown crosswalks at uncontrolled areas do provide an unrealistic safety mindset for pedestrians.
- Crosswalk painting is scheduled to begin the first full week in May, next week, weather permitting; this is consistent with past year's schedules.

Ice Arena Improvements:

One item that has been identified as a project addition at the ice arena is the replacement of the existing hockey boards. Staff has requested various quotes from vendors to develop a change order to the project for council consideration. Replacement of the boards at this time is ideal for several reasons:

- The current boards were installed in 1977 at the arena, believed to be 15 years old at that time. The current boards are a constant complaint item for hockey users at the arena.
- The layout of the infloor piping can be installed to best fit with the board location. The current boards have a tighter corner configuration than the current standard hockey. Installing new boards at this time would allow for the coolant lines to fit the new configuration.
- Some cost savings are realized with the installation costs already included in the Johnson Control project. Additionally the new boards would be available for use at a new arena should one be built in the future.

Staff has asked the City's Risk Manager, Elizabeth Wheeler to contact the city insurers for a review and assessment of the current hockey boards and liability issues. Staff is also contacting the significant users to discuss cost sharing for the project. The change order is anticipated to be presented to Council on May 19, 2008.

Building Inspection

The Carleton footing and foundation plans are in for review. This project will go to council on May 15th.

The new restaurant plans for Jimmy John's will come in next week for review. This project is scheduled to break ground the week of May 12th.

Community Development

Staff has been working with a company who is being asked to assist the EDA in securing purchase options on the property that is part of the annexation petition before the City. The EDA is hoping to act on a professional Service Agreement and Scope of Service at the EDA meeting of May 8, 2008.

Staff has been conducting a comprehensive review of the proposed development regulations as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. This effort will provide staff feedback to ACP Consultants on the status of the regulations. This will enable the regulations to be completed and thus reactivate the review and finalization of the regulations by the Advisory Task Force, the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Economic Development

Staff had a busy week with a series of partnership meetings including the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Northfield Enterprise Center.

CVN was provided a proposal with some thoughts on how to address some issues with the web site. Discussion also included some possible partnerships as well as the need for all the economic development agencies to work on a themed approach. The new web features for CVN could include the printing of coupons for special events. Another exciting adventure includes Northfield hosting an ice-fishing event that could bring thousands of people to the community.

The NEC is working with staff on various prospects seeking funding options from the EDA as well as some prospects seeking a location and venture capital funds. Staff met with the NEC Director to go over a few of these items and schedule a work plan ahead.

Staff has met with five clients this week who are seeking assistance with financing or incentives.

As a request from Rice County, EDA staff is working with City Council members and EDA board members to develop a resolution supporting the continuation of the Job Z Program. This resolution will be presented for Council consideration Monday evening

Staff is working with Human Resources on hiring an intern for the Economic Development Office.

Engineering

Woodley Street

Property Acquisition continued this week. Due to a County error in numbering the plat, the documents for signature had to be revised. This work was accomplished this week including correcting the documents of those whom signatures had already been obtained. A hearing on the public purpose for the project is scheduled for May 13. This hearing is the next step in the eminent domain proceedings. Staff and the consultant are working towards settling most of the offers prior to this date. It should be noted that there are 6 property owners represented by an attorney. The status of the properties as of Friday morning was:

Number of Properties	Northfield	Rice County	Total Project
Total Properties to Acquire	22	5	27
Verbally Committed	6	0	6
Signed Forms	8	2	10
Represented by Attorney	4	2	6

Water Street and 5th Street Reconstruction

Bids were received and publicly opened on May 1st at 9:00 a.m. Two Bids were received with the low bidder being Heselton Construction of Faribault, MN. Heselton Construction is a reputable construction company and has completed many similar projects in Northfield and surrounding areas. Council will be asked to award the project and make a determination on the alternate bid item at the May 5, 2008 council meeting. The alternate item is the upgrade of the base for the Harvest Sculpture to granite pavers. The engineer's construction estimate for this project was \$1,639,716.00 for the base bid, and \$30,000.00 for the alternate bid. Heselton's base bid was \$1,697,285.74, and alternate bid of \$40,500.00. The highest bid was \$1,730,234.68 for the base bid, and 60,000.00 for the alternate bid.

Fifth Street Reconstruction

Staff has been in contact with Heselton Construction regarding the punchlist for this project. Heselton will have crews in beginning Monday, May 5th, to begin on the concrete and settlement repairs that have been found. A newsletter was sent out at the beginning of the week informing the residents of the work scheduled for next week. This has generated a few calls from residents confirming other defects in the work that may have been overlooked during the walk-through, which has been very helpful.

2007 MSA Project / Lincoln Street

Staff has finalized and sent a punchlist to Heselton Construction for the warranty work that will occur this Spring. Heselton has not yet confirmed a schedule with the City of Northfield of when repairs will take place. As soon as a date is in place to complete the warranty work, Staff will send out a newsletter to the residents informing them of the upcoming schedule.

TH #3 Construction

Staff has been working with MnDOT officials to close out the TH#3 construction that occurred during the summers of 2005 and 2006. Staff confirmed with MnDOT that there is one (1) sanitary manhole at the intersection of TH#3 and Third Street that still needs a concrete invert poured. Heselton Construction has scheduled with the City of Northfield and MnDOT to complete this work on Monday, May 5, 2008. To accomplish this work, the sanitary sewer will have to be bypass-pumped from Third Street to Second Street. This will require TH#3 to be shut down to one lane northbound in the area of TH#3 and Third Street. To accomplish the bypass pumping, traffic on Third Street will have to be diverted so both east and westbound traffic will be on the south half of Third Street between TH#3 and the railroad tracks. Also, eastbound traffic on Second Street will be detoured north on Spring Street to St. Olaf Avenue and then back to TH #3. Westbound traffic on Second Street will remain unchanged. These closures and lane diversions will be set up from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Monday May 5th. Staff informed businesses in the area of the upcoming work.

Cannon River Sanitary Sewer Crossing

Water levels at the site remained high making construction challenging. The contractor continued to maintain the erosion and sediment controls. Work on the sewer and finish grading will occur when site conditions allow.

Transportation Studies

An open house was held Thursday evening for the transportation studies underway. All three studies were represented that include the Northfield Transportation Plan (Northfield), NW Northfield Highway Corridor Study (Dakota and Rice Counties, Northfield) and the Access Management Study of Highway 19 (MnDOT). There was an excellent turnout and all agencies received valuable input. The comments received will be considered as the various studies begin to make final recommendations.

West Sanitary Interceptor Feasibility Study

A walk-thru of the study areas was completed this week. Representatives from Bonestroo, the City of Dundas and Northfield City staff were there. The study area encompasses both sides of the Cannon River between the Arena lift station and the Highway #3 bridge. City staff collected and sent information to the consultant to review and determine location for soil borings.

Housing

Staff met with partners on the Southbridge Project this week to discuss the third Community Input Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 6 at 6pm in Council Chambers. The main focus of this meeting will be the different green and sustainable elements to be incorporated into the development. Additionally, we will announce a contest to name the development. Names will be accepted and then narrowed down to the top three by the HRA, and then the community will have a chance to vote on them. The HRA and the planning partners will provide more details on this as the logistics are flushed out.

Facilities

Facilities staff was busy this week installing underground conduit at the new pool site for the IT Department to improve communication between City of Northfield facilities. To accomplish this it was necessary to bore under the walkway. Franek Electric was on site wiring the lights for the flagpole, which also required boring under the walkway; efforts were coordinated to do this with the same contractor.

Johnson Controls is continuing work at the NCRC, three of four boilers have been removed, one was left to provide heat during the cool nights. They also started installing the components for the automated HVAC system.

Kersten Taylor was hired by Facilities as a seasonal worker. Kersten will be busy with many outdoor tasks such as landscaping and exterior painting on various facilities.

Recreation

There will be pre-season pool pass sales on the following dates: May 8, 15, and 19 from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm and May 31 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. All sales will take place at the pool, 801 7th Street E. Patrons purchasing their season pass at these pre-season pass sales will also receive two free general admission passes to the pool to be used this summer. For more information on the pre-season pass sales please contact Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager 507-645-3017 jason.eisold@ci.northfield.mn.us

Demolition at the arena continued this week as contractors were in saw cutting and removing the existing floor in order to prepare for the installation of new refrigerant piping. This piping will be under the concrete, which will allow for easier installation of ice when everything is operational this fall.

Planning

The Planning Commission met this week for a public hearing on the proposed annexation request for the business park west of the Northfield Hospital. The Commission is expected to make a recommendation to the City Council on this request at their meeting on May 13th. The Development Review Committee (DRC) met this week and reviewed an Amendment for a Conditional Use Permit for the Greenvale Park Elementary School, who is proposing some miscellaneous improvements to the site, including parking lot revisions. The DRC also reviewed a minor subdivision request to subdivide a property for a twin-home. The Council is expected to review this request on May 19th. Staff attended the Transportation Planning Open House on Thursday, in which updates were given on planning initiatives for the northwest corridor study (Dakota County), Northfield's transportation plan (City Staff and Bolton & Menk), and the Highway 19 study (MnDOT).

Streets/Parks

Pothole repairs have continued through out the week with the efforts on the most traveled streets. The spring round of street sweeping was completed this week. Also after the winter the crew has completed the sod repairs due to snowplow damage. The annual Department of Transportation inspections are ongoing and are approximately 80% completed.

All the City parks have the water turned on for the season. This includes shelters, fountains and irrigation systems. The American in Bloom planters are being prepared for installation at the pedestrian bridge. Downtown banners were changed out this week.

Finally, this Saturday is the annual City wide clean up day. Items can be brought to the Rodeo Grounds for disposal by Waste Management. One new twist this year is that there will be a 'reuse' container for those items that are 'gently used'. Those items will become part of a rummage sale where the proceeds will be used to purchase a composter for the High School.

Water

National Water Week will be observed this upcoming week – from May 4th – 10th. The staff from the Water Division put together an ad to be placed in the Shopper, which will be delivered to the public this weekend. The American Water Works Association (AWWA) has resources available to help communities celebrate this week. Using these resources, the ad was put together and will highlight the value of tap water service and the importance of conserving and protecting water resources.

Doug Lien and Dean Huschle have been working on a presentation for the Council's work session on Monday, May 12th. The presentation will highlight the Water Division's Year-End Report, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) to go along with the updated Water Code/Ordinance, and the Water Division's Emergency Response Plan.

Water Operator, Dean Huschle, will be attending the annual meeting of the Minnesota AWWA's Board of Directors on Thursday and Friday. The meeting will be held in Deerwood, MN. Dean is the SE District Trustee for the MN AWWA and represents 13 counties in southern Minnesota. Discussions will include water operator's training schools and other issues related to safe drinking water in Minnesota.

Wastewater

The first two days of the week were spent switching primary clarifiers. Gates are moved to switch the flow and then chemical feed systems are reconfigured, adjusted, and monitored to assure treatment in the system continues as designed.

A representative from the firm hired to do training on the proper procedures for isolating energy sources on equipment prior to performing maintenance spent an entire day with staff at the wastewater facility looking at equipment and reviewing current procedures. The purpose of the visit was for him to get familiar with what the wastewater staff needs to maintain so a program can be developed that meets the specific needs of the Wastewater Division.

cc: Department Managers