

Memorandum

DATE: May 15, 2009
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of May 11-15, 2009

The end of the state legislature session if on schedule will be completed May 18, 2009. The three current funding proposals regarding Local Government Aid (LGA) funding reductions are:

Governor's proposed reduction to LGA:	2009	\$465,134	2010	\$971,281
House of Representatives proposed reduction	2009	\$208,575	2010	\$325,306
Senate proposed reduction	2009	NA	2010	\$63,832

As of this time local levy limits are anticipated to remain in place with a cap just below 2%. There are however exceptions in several spending areas and the cap does not include debt financing. Staff will begin developing the 2010 budget with a review of revenue forecasts and a review of salaries, benefits, and personal staffing by the end of May. As more confirmed information is available from St. Paul, information will be presented to the council to keep them abreast of the budget development. We will be reviewing various options of containing personnel costs and a review of the resulting service level reductions. In developing the 2009 Operating Budget, the City reduced staffing levels by 10%. The corresponding reductions in service levels were primarily focused on internal service delivery. The 2010 reductions will have implications on external service levels.

In the event that the legislature and Governor cannot reach agreement on the State's budget expenditures, the Governor does have the authority to use unallotment. This would be similar to the actions taken at the end of 2008 when the Governor reduced LGA payments to the City by ~\$355,000. Using this method of balancing the State's budget, the City will again be put in the wait and see reactive mode.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of May 11-15, 2009:

CITY CLERK

Submitted by Deb Little, City Clerk

A retail fireworks license was issued to TNT Fireworks for a tent in the Cub Foods parking lot.

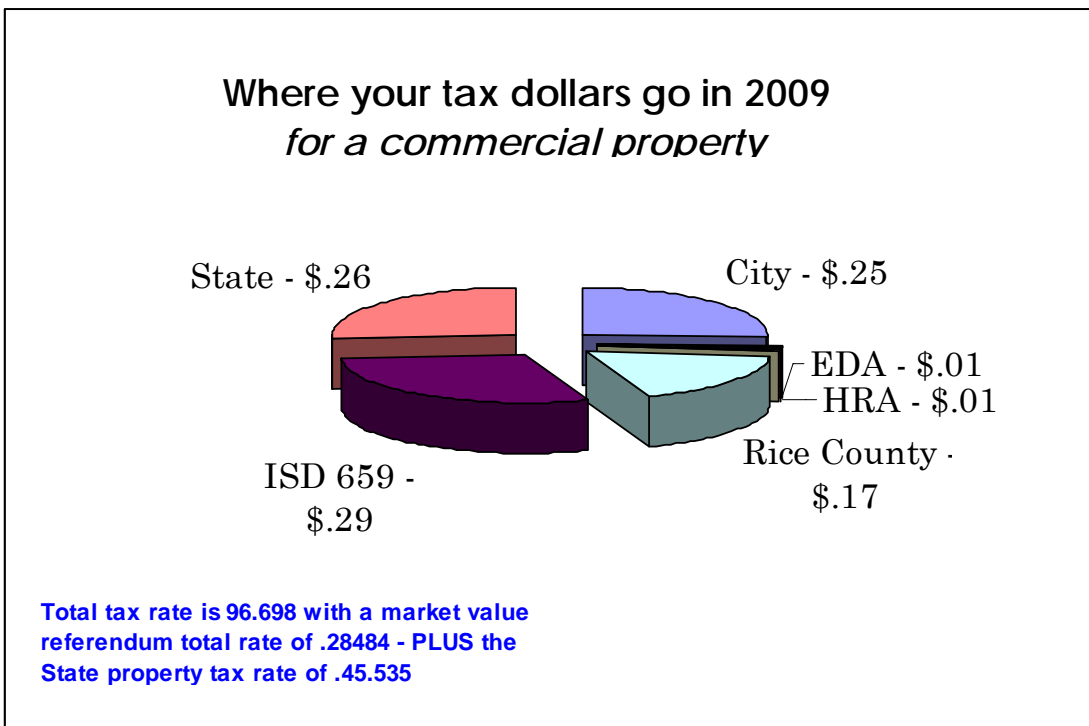
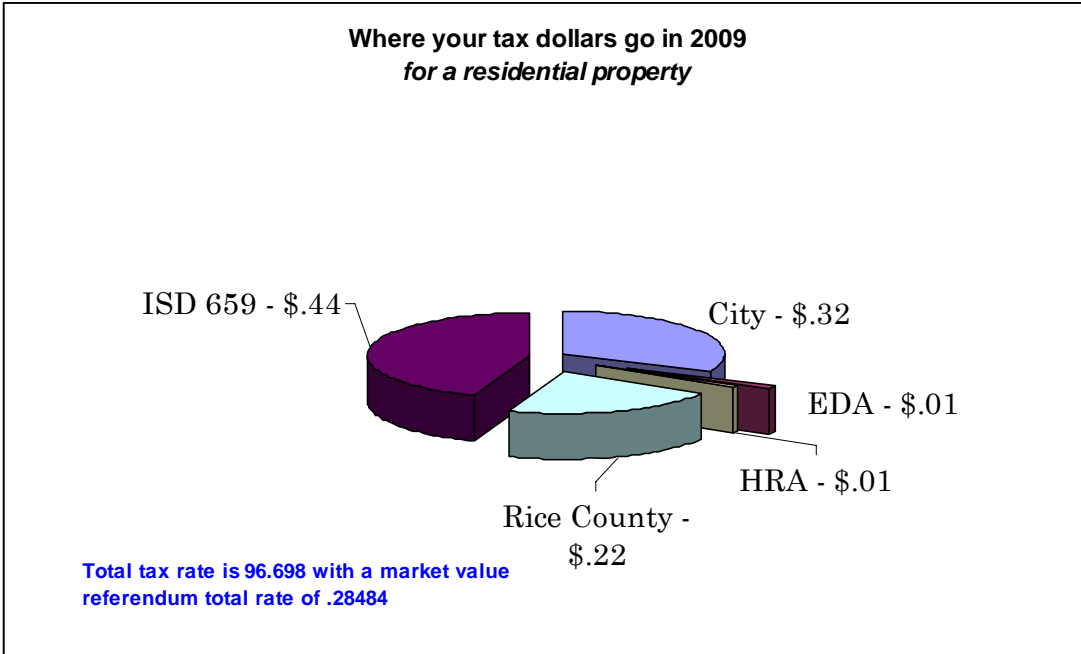
Deb Little, Mark Taylor and Rhonda Pownell met with representatives of temporary liquor license holders to gather input in response to training related questions that were raised during liquor license renewals. Those present shared information on the training that they are currently providing, safeguards that they use to ensure compliance and discussed a variety of other issues.

FINANCE

Submitted by Kathleen McBride, Finance Director

May 15th is Tax Day!: The first half of property taxes are due today. Accompanying this week's memo is the League of Minnesota Cities article, "Property Taxation 101."

The charts below detail how your property tax dollars are distributed in 2009:



ENGINEERING

Woodley Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech. Coordinator

Fridges continued with Storm Sewer installation. They concentrated on the area between Farehaven Court and Spring Creek Road. Rock was encountered. Options are being considered to contain costs related to rock excavation. Fridges also worked on subcutting the road from Spring Creek Road to the east towards the Quail Run area. Temporary roads have been built so access to the residents in the area is still maintained. Storm Sewer installation and road subcutting will continue next week, along with the installation of retaining walls.

Water & 5th Street Enhancements and Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech. Coordinator

Staff held a meeting with Heselton to go through punchlist items, and establish a schedule for the remaining work. A Brick Paver Crosswalk, Porous Pavement, Wear Course Pavement, and Striping are the major items that need to be completed. Please see the attached tentative construction schedule. Weather or unforeseen conditions could cause a change.

Staff will be mailing out a newsletter to the affected property owners with a more in depth description and timeline of the proposed construction.

Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance

Submitted by Katy Gehler-Hess, City Engineer

A draft of the erosion and sediment control ordinance has been completed and will be discussed at the Council work session on Monday evening. Please see the staff report for more information. A copy of the draft is attached for the Council review.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building

Submitted by John Brookins, Building Official

The building inspection staff continues to work on getting all the residential properties that are used as rental in Northfield brought into compliance with the rental ordinance. Staff has started the process to review every residential property in the city to verify the use of the property. We will determine if the property is owner occupied or is being used as a rental. This process will take several months to complete. Monthly progress reports will be provided to the Community Development Department Manager.

The St Olaf Old Music Facility remodel project is about 75% complete. Building Inspection staff visits the site two days a week to keep the project on schedule. Staff also visits the new Carleton Student Resident Hall project twice a week as this project is approaching the critical time of bringing the completion schedule together. The Building Official will schedule and conduct a construction meeting and provide the general contractor with a required inspection completion list to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy. This meeting will greatly reduce any last minute potential problems for completing the project on time. Building Inspection staff will increase site visits as necessary to assist the project manager with keeping inspections up to date to prevent any possible delays. This project is scheduled to be completed in mid August.

The Cannon Valley Veterinary Clinic Addition is coming along however the original date for occupying the office and warehouse has been set back from July 1st to around the middle of August. This is primarily due to equipment not being delivered on time and the flooring installation not being on schedule. The project manager fully expects the project as a whole to be completed on schedule some time in early October. Staff will increase site visits for this project to assure the project is completed in a timely fashion.

The Building Inspection staff also continues to survey the city for blight conditions. Staff will issue about 10 blight orders this week. We have had good success in getting the blighted areas cleaned up. This process is time consuming but well worth the effort.

Economic Development

Submitted by Jody Gunderson, Economic Development Director

On Thursday and Friday, the EDA sponsored an informational forum with representatives of Holland, Michigan. Staff will give a more detailed summary of this visit for next week's chatter.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

Staff participated in a webinar this week from HUD about the release of further Neighborhood Stabilization Program dollars aimed at foreclosures. The requirements are quite narrow and strict and staff is unsure at this time if a Northfield application is possible. The only way Northfield could submit an application would be in conjunction with another city or agency with a history of building and rehab of homes. Staff will be speaking with Three Rivers and Dakota County CDA to determine the ability to work together to submit an application, due July 17, 2009.

Staff submitted a request to CDA for further block grant dollars released by HUD as part of the continuing stimulus package. A request was made for rehab dollars for the HRA's rental property, and also some work to be done at the NCRC. Staff has not heard back from CDA if the request for application was approved, but will update HRA and Council if and when it happens.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met this week to discuss the process involved in reviewing the draft Land Development Code (LDC). Staff also attended the Economic Development Authority's forum with the city of Holland, Michigan. The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) will meet next week to review exterior improvements at 310 Division Street, and discuss the grant recently approved for the City by the State Historic Preservation office as part of the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The City Council approved the submittal of the grant application earlier this year.

PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor

Most of this week was again devoted to cooling issues within the City, we were able to finish up servicing the roof top units at City Hall, along with making some adjustments in the newly installed Johnson Controls automation system.

Public Works Administrative Assistant Barb Yaeger-Thompson has been busy this week doing the follow up paper work on the re-keying of City Hall. This involves collecting old keys and recording the new keys that were issued. The Facilities Department appreciates Barb's assistance with this immensely.

Facilities assistant Tom Spooner worked on various tasks at the Library this week, including repairing window grills that have been damaged over the years.

Recreation

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

The first two preseason pool pass sales have been great. 95 season passes have been purchased thus far. Remaining sales are May 18, 20, 26 from 3:00-6:00 and May 30 from 10:00-1:00. All sales take place at the pool. For more information please contact 645-3017.



NEW ARENA MASCOT

This little guy was found in the Arena on Friday morning. Facilities staff removed him later in the day. Staff feels that he has probably been there since maintenance work was done earlier in the week.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets & Parks Supervisor

Preparations were made this week for the Downtown flower basket install. Brackets & watering systems have been re-installed. City parks saw weekly chores and mowing along with City rights of way. Potholes were repaired around the City. Staff assisted the Water Division with annual hydrant flushing. The River Commons saw a cleanup along with some graffiti removal. The Veteran's Memorial at Riverside Park saw some turf enhancements from Farmers Mill & Elevator. They have donated their services and supplies for the turf enhancements for this year. Preparations for signage install on Declaration Drive and Legacy Lane were made.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien, Water Superintendent

Water Operators Scott Murphy and Dean Huschle and Street Operators Steve Petricka and Brian Haugen completed the spring hydrant flushing program on Friday morning. The water mains are flushed from 10 PM through 6 AM Monday through Friday. The flushing is done during the evening hours, to minimize disruptions to the public because of discolored water. The flushing process is necessary to remove minerals that accumulate in the distribution system and to assure that the fire hydrants are working properly. Thanks to Steve and Bryan for their help in completing the flushing program.

Water System Technician Jay Hall spent a lot of time locating utilities on West First Street. The locating is being done for the First Street infrastructure project that will start shortly. The scope of work extended from First and Madison to First and Linden Streets and six more side blocks between St. Olaf Ave. and West Second Street. The Water Division locates underground water, sewer and storm sewer for the contractors so they do not hit them during the reconstruction process.

Seasonal Employee Rod Svien started his duties at the Water Division on May 12th. Rod will be employed with the City until mid October.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

A new polymer was tested in the primary clarifier this week. An anionic polymer is used in the primary clarifier to group together small, difficult to settle particles in the waste stream, which improves settling and increases the efficiency of the unit. Every vendor that offers these products has an array of proprietary formulas that they market. Typically a vendor will come on site and do some bench scale tests to see which of their products exhibit the most desirable characteristics in the lab. If a product shows promise they will give us about a one week supply to test full scale. Staff makes physical observations on floc formation and settling characteristics as well as noting affects on other parts of the operation like filter head loss in the biological portion of the facility and sludge pressing operations. In the case of the polymer currently being tested there appears to be very little difference in performance or price between it and the product we normally use.