

Memorandum

DATE: June 18, 2010
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of June 14-18, 2010

The last item listed in today's Friday Memo is the draft agenda for July 2010. The draft agenda of the upcoming month's Council agenda items is subject to change. Additions and deletions of items will occur in an effort to best accomplish the Council goals and the necessary successful operation and business of the City. Also please note the scheduling of the Special Council Meeting on June 29, 2010 regarding the consideration of the annexation request in Bridgewater Township.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of June 14-18, 2010:

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Community Development**

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

Staff is now involved with review and procedural steps associated with the next phase of TIF disbursements and site improvements on The Crossing project. This activity is an outgrowth of the City Council decision to approve the Supplemental Agreement and Amended TIF note that occurred on June 15.

City staff is preparing background material to be provided to City Council in anticipation of the meeting with the Waterford Township Board of Supervisor next Monday evening June 21, 2010.

An initial meeting with the representative from the Union of Youth occurred recently which resulted in a clarification of the expectations from both the City perspective and the perspective from the Union of Youth as to the outcome of the property sale transaction. Follow up will meetings will continue in the effort to purchase this property for redevelopment purposes.

Building Inspections

Submitted by Jim Kessler, Building Official

We are still working on moving forward with the demolition of the burned out home at 421 Lockwood. Availability of court time and access for getting on the court docket appears to be a problem. This week in preparation for the demolition we had the gas and electric service for the building disconnected at the street. Gopher State One Call has been contacted for locates. Waste Management has been contacted to remove the trash and recycle containers.

We have completed the rental review of Rice County property records for all properties in Northfield. This is the first time this has been completed in over eight years. We have about 40 letters left to send out to property owners for additional information as it relates to the rental ordinance. So far this year we have licensed about fifty-five new rentals.

Permits for new houses are still coming in. We have the sixth and seventh houses for the year in the door and have heard about three more that are coming. That is ahead of last year's pace.

We have received permit requests for numerous additions and remodels. Plan reviews are in process. Carleton College has a number of updates scheduled for their buildings. New windows and roofing and elevator updates are included. St Olaf has been busy with the New Main project.

The demolition project at the old middle school (Carleton Arts Union) is well underway. The permit review for the foundation portion of the construction is complete. The above grade permit request is anticipated to be submitted to this office next week.

The Phoenix Building is progressing to full occupancy. The salon is complete and the Community Bank updates should be completed next week.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

STIMULUS FUNDING GRANTS

The Window Project: The design firm, I&S Group, out of Faribault has been selected to do the design work for the new windows and entry way at City Hall. Once their design work is complete, the project will go out for bid for labor.

HOME MATTERS

The Home Matters project house at 311 Cherry Street continues to draw the crowds for a variety of Healthy Homes Seminars and Public Open houses. We had Billy Weber from the University of MN speak on June 12 about renovation using sustainable products.

The next event in the Seminar Series is Tuesday, June 29 from 5pm – 6:30pm. We are so pleased to announce that representatives from Xcel Energy will be on hand to talk about ways to reduce energy consumption in your home. All events are located at 311 Cherry Street. For more information, check out the blog at www.home-matters.org

Seminar Series

3. Save Energy, Save Money

06/29/2010 5:00 - 6:30 PM

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met on Thursday and held a public hearing on the Mayo Clinic's request to annex 4.5 acres of land for a proposed radiation oncology facility. After the public hearing, the Commission recommended approval of the request to the City Council. The Council is expected to make a decision on the request at a special meeting on June 29th. Also, the Commission has nearly completed its review of the draft zoning regulations for the downtown commercial area, and will begin next week to review the regulations along Highway #3.

The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) met on Thursday and approved three signs for downtown businesses. The Commission also listened to audio for podcasts for a tour of downtown Northfield. This iPod project was made possible by a grant the City received in 2009. The project will be completed next month.

ENGINEERING

4th Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews finished up all utilities on Fourth Street from Division Street to Washington Street this week. They were also able to get the sanitary sewer and watermain finished in the Washington Street and Fourth Street

intersection. Crews continued on watermain on Fourth Street from Washington Street to Union Street late in the week.

Next week crews will continue with storm sewer in the Washington Street and Fourth Street intersection. Expect closures of the intersection early in the week to complete this work. Utility crews expect to continue with sanitary sewer and watermain construction on the remaining portion on Phase I which is Fourth Street from Washington Street to Union Street and Union Street from Fourth Street to Fifth Street. BCM Construction also expects to have their grading crew on-site either the middle or end of next week to start sub-cutting the existing roadbed materials out and prepping the sub-grade for select granular sub-base and class V gravel.

Riverside Trail Extension

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews were on-site early in the week to pave the base course on both the trail and parking lot of Just Foods Coop. Rain shut them down early in the week, and only a portion of the trail was complete. Crews were back on Wednesday to finish up the paving on both the trail and parking lots. Crews were unable to finish the paving on the trail due to the rain earlier in the week, but were able to put both base and wear courses on the existing parking lots.

Paving crews are scheduled for next week to finish the trail paving if weather allows. Mulligan's Landscaping is schedule to be on-site next week to install all the plantings throughout the trail corridor. Just a reminder, trail dedication ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, July 10th.

First Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews were on-site milling edges and around manholes and gate valves getting ready for paving. Paving crews are scheduled to be on-site Monday morning, and will start on the west end of the job near St. Olaf campus. Paving is expected to last 2 days. Staff encourages all vehicles to be off the road by 7:00 am Monday morning.

Stormwater Ordinance Development: Technical Steering Committee

Submitted by Katy Gehler, City Engineer

The draft documents will be presented to the City Council at the June 22, 2010 work session and several policy questions asked of the council to provide direction on. A final draft of the ordinance and policy document will be prepared for the next round of community meetings on July 12. Please see the project website for more information on these meetings and the project process as a whole.

LIBRARY

Submitted by Leesa Wisdorf, Adult and Youth Services Manager

The library welcomed many children and parents who began their summer vacations at the library this week. Monday the circulation staff checked out 2208 items and Tuesday they checked out 1970.

The Library Planning Committee met to discuss several issues. EcoTrans has volunteered to supply several driving hours per week. The committee is researching various summer programs to determine which would allow the bookmobile to serve the widest number of children in the community. The committee will be recruiting a library volunteer coordinator. Leesa Wisdorf and Barb Johnson will write up a job description before the next meeting. The library utilized the efforts of 130 volunteers during 2009. The committee discussed additional projects concerning the library expansion.

The Library Board convened on Wednesday, 6/9 to meet with Lynne Giovanelli from Library Strategies, a consulting group of the Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library regarding the library expansion.

Native jazz vocalist Meredith Fierke entertained 75 people at the June Carnegie Celebration Concert last Saturday night as part of the yearlong celebration of the Northfield Public Library.

The Friends of the Library met with Library Strategies on Tuesday night to discuss the formation of a library foundation.

A program on Food Preservation by the University of Minnesota Extension Service was held on Wednesday 6/9. The focus was on updated resources for people interested in gardening and preserving their own food. Thank you to Debby Nitz for organizing and hosting this well-attended program.

Over 300 Northfielders enjoyed the first Books and Stars program with the band "Sons of the Beach" at the outdoor pool on Wednesday. Japanese drummers Mu Daiko will perform next week at Way Park. All summer program information can be found on the library website or on Kathy Ness' "Children's Events" blog : <http://northfieldpubliclibrary.blogspot.com/>.

LIQUOR STORE

Submitted by: Stephen DeLong, Liquor Operations Director

Last week marked the start of a new in-store wine sale that will present the wines of one selected supplier, and run through the end of July. This sale highlights a wide variety of wine regions, with emphasis on Washington and California. In all, we have selected over sixty different wines to present to our customers for the duration of this sale.

The fifth annual Taste of Northfield is being held this week, Thursday and Friday, June 17 and 18, on Bridge Square. Thursday's festivities, which were to include an evening of Beer and Wine tasting on the 4th Street Bridge, were washed out by the storm. Friday, weather permitting, a variety of local food vendors will offer their wares, and there will be live music as well as a raffle drawing. Live and silent auctions will also be held, featuring a large number of valuable items donated by the Liquor Store and our generous suppliers. Proceeds benefit the NDDC.

The Liquor Store continued its strong performance for the first part of the year, putting up excellent numbers for the month of May. Year to date, we are running approximately \$51,000 over last year's figures. We expect a busy and profitable summer season, now that warm weather has finally arrived.

PUBLIC WORKS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Facilities Supervisor

Facilities has been busy this week tending to landscape issues around various City buildings, this year we are spending minimal time and money on these projects. Facilities temporary employee Annalise Haan has been doing a fine job keeping grounds in good shape with limited funds.

A meeting was held this week with the I&S Group to discuss the design phase of the City Hall window maintenance project. The I&S Group was selected after viewing recently completed projects by interested design firms, design fees were also a contributing factor in the decision. Next week design personal from I&S will be on site to take photos and measurements to get the project moving.

The Food Shelf HVAC project bids are due today, hopefully the successful bidder will be able to start the project soon and the employees in the food shelf area will be able to enjoy cooler temperatures for the remainder of the cooling season.

Recreation

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

The pool had a slow opening few days but has seen great numbers the past few days with the weather finally getting warm! Wednesday had just under 1200 people attended the pool, the Books and Stars event was big hit with almost 400 people attending that evening.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinricy, Streets and Parks Supervisor

This week quite a few tasks revolved around the rain and wet conditions. Staff was finally able to mow all of City parks and right-of-ways and weekly park chores were completed. Several deceased critters were removed from City streets. Staff mulched a few areas in the Downtown area. Sechler and Babcock park field maintenance has fallen behind due to all the recent rain and staff has had to resort to sweeping the turf due to all the leftover clippings from the long periods between mowings.

I appreciate citizens reporting areas that need pothole repairs. This provides us with an ongoing running list for these repairs when time allows. 2010 crack sealing and chip sealing bids have been released for quotes.



The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has installed Emerald Ash Borer traps in the following parks for the 2010 season. They are Central, John North, Oddfellows, and Riverside parks. They are purple traps hanging in Ash trees. There is also information about Emerald Ash Borers traps placed on the City of Northfield web site.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

The biological treatment systems at the wastewater treatment facility are receiving less load now that the schools are out of session and are adjusting to the lighter load conditions. With less food available some of the biomass dies and sloughs off of the reactors. In the short term this actually means an increase in sludge volume that staff needs to deal with. Adjustments to pumping rates and various other operational parameters need to be made thru this transitional period. It will take about a month for the biological system to adjust to the new load conditions and stabilize. Effluent quality typically degrades slightly thru this period but is expected to remain well within all MPCA effluent quality standards.

Water

Submitted by Jay Hall, Water System Technician

During an infrastructure watermain shutdown for the 4th street project, a 12" watermain valve was broken in the closed position on 5th and Washington. The Water Division staff will be assisting B & B Excavating today on replacing the watermain valve.

The Water Division hosted a demonstration on the newly developed fire hydrant wrench that was designed and developed by Jeff Backlund of Torq Buddy, Water Systems Technician Jay Hall, and Water Superintendent Doug Lien. The hydrant wrench was developed because of a severe injury that occurred last May 2009, to one of the Water Operators during hydrant flushing. Two members from The League of Minnesota Cities attended the demonstration and videotaped the demonstration on the old way of flushing fire hydrants with a hand held wrench, and to show how much easier it is to flush with the new electric fire hydrant wrench. The League of Minnesota Cities is planning to feature the video at the March/April 2011 Public Works "hot topics" loss control workshops held in various places throughout the state to help prevent similar injuries from happening. The new hydrant wrench is battery operated and weighs approximately 22 lbs. The Safety Committee, HR Director, Public Works Director, and the Water Division staff attended the demonstration and gave feedback on the new tool. The City of Northfield has ordered 3 of these new tools and plans on using it later this summer for hydrant flushing.

DRAFT AGENDA JULY

In an effort to accomplish the City Council's goals, the following is a draft agenda for the month of July 2010 (Note: Special Meeting added June 29, 2010 work session added on July 27, 2010). Regular Council meetings are the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month; work sessions are on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Note: ** meetings only if needed for items to be acted on. (These are subject to change). Additional meetings/work sessions will be scheduled as needed. The Draft Agenda of the upcoming months agenda items are subject to change. Additions and deletions of items will occur in an effort to best accomplish the Council goals and the necessary successful operation and business of the City.

June 2010

6/29 – **Special Meeting** – 7:30 a.m.

- Consider Approval of Annexation request In Bridgewater Township for Mayo Clinic (Regular, Resolution).

July 2010

7/6 – **Council meeting**

- Hospital Presentation – Drug Use Prevention
- Adopting 1Street Service Assessments – Resolution
- Budget discussion
- DJJD Temp liquor licenses
- DJJD lease agreement (may be moved to July 20)
- Authorize staff to prepare an agreement for the use of the ROW in front of the Historical Society, regular agenda as a motion
- Approve change orders and the final payment for the TH 3 project, consent agenda as a motion
- Approve Budget Policy Direction
- PC discussion regarding Land Development Code
- Safety Center Projects Discussion

7/13- **Work session**

- 2009 CAFR
- Budget
- Utility Rates
- LDC - Ag/Open Space and Commercial (C1-B, C2B and NC-F)
- Communications Policy
- Charter Commission
- Discussion re: Key Property

7/20 – **Council meeting**

- Update City Council on Stormwater Ordinance
- Accept Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for year ending 2009
- Safety Center Projects Discussion
- Budget amendment

7/27 – **Work Session**

- Budget Discussion

cc: Department Managers