

Memorandum

DATE: September 18, 2009
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of September 14-18, 2009

On Friday morning, Mayor Rossing and I attended the Dakota County Mayors and City Administrators monthly meeting. This month's presentation was on sustainable land use development and the LEED Development. The U.S. Green Building Council's President Mr. Kevin Flynn, delivered the presentation. Mr. Flynn is an architect with EcoDeep a firm specializing in "Green Development" and a member of the Hoisington Koegler consultant's team working on the Northwest Business Park Master Plan.

Thank you and a job well done to the Northfield Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments for their support of the Defeat of Jesse James Days event last weekend. The positive outlook and "get'er done" attitude is appreciated by event coordinators, visitors and I. Your individual efforts are much appreciated.

Two other items of special interest is the "Take it to the Box" program initiated this week and ice time being available starting next week at the City's Ice Arena, more information on these items is given below.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of September 14-18, 2009:

PUBLIC SAFETY

Submitted by Police Chief Mark Taylor

The Police have been working on several initiatives lately and I would like to draw your attention to a few of those.

Take it to the box- A prescription drug disposal program will start on Tuesday September 22, 2009. This program will feature two drop boxes in Rice County. One will be at the Northfield Police Department and the other at Faribault P.D. The public will be able to come to the police station and place their unused, unneeded prescription drugs in a drop box in the police station lobby. This is an anonymous program encouraging person(s) to remove their name from labels, leaving the drug name to aid us in safe disposal. Two of the main goals of this program are; safe disposal will impact/reduce opportunities for drugs falling into the wrong hands, leading to drug abuse. Secondly, safe disposal ensures drugs do not end up in landfills, city water, etc. having an environmental impact. The box will be available during all hours.

This project was a large undertaking that took the cooperation and hard work of many organizations. They include: Rice County Chemical Health Coalition, Northfield Healthy Community Initiative (HCI), Northfield Hospital, Faribault Police, Northfield Police, Northfield Mayor's Youth Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and the Rice County Drug Task Force. A special thank you to Northfield resident Mary Nelson, who contributed countless hours on this project.

Camera System - With the cooperation and financial assistance of the Northfield Street Department and Northfield in Bloom, the Police Department has been able to purchase a mobile camera system that can be used when an area in the community is targeted for damage to property, graffiti tagging, etc. This system will allow police to deter these activities as well as identify offenders of these crimes.

Crime Mapping - A few weeks ago the Northfield Police Department launched a crime mapping software on the City Police Website. This program will allow residents and businesses to look at the City Map to see where crimes are occurring in the community, in their neighborhoods etc. We believe this mapping software arms resident(s) with good solid and accurate information about what is happening in their neighborhood and community. With that knowledge they can keep a watchful eye, and ultimately take crime prevention measures to reduce crime.

The mapping software will help police to concentrate on areas targeted, and help determine when and where to schedule officers, etc. There are many other benefits to the police as well as the public. We believe this is an exciting and very helpful tool for Northfield Police and the public.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building

Submitted by Jim Kessler, Building Official

A partial certificate of occupancy is anticipated to be issued Friday of this week for Phase 2 of the Cannon Valley Vet Clinic (or PSI Strobel/Werner Project), office area. The manufacturing phase of the project is still in process.

Work is in process preparing for the Rental Board of Appeals meeting that will be scheduled for the beginning of October.

The KFC project is progressing. The designers are in process of making the necessary code changes.

Community Development

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

The bid documents for the construction of the Riverside Trail project are nearing completion so that this project can be put out to bid. It is anticipated that bids for this trail construction should be received in early October with actual construction on portions of the trail beginning in late October. Since the start of the construction of this project is so late in the construction season, it is certain that the completion of the construction of the trail will be during the summer of 2010.

The Community Development Director and City Administrator will be meeting with representatives from Highland Bank, Mendota Homes, Piper-Jaffray and attorneys from Kennedy and Graven this Friday. The purpose of the meeting is to determine what progress and willingness there is on the part of Highland Bank or Mendota Homes to complete the remaining site improvements in phase I of the Crossing project. Additionally the process of transferring the property from MnDOT to the City and then to Mendota Homes or Highland Bank will also be discussed. MnDOT still is rejecting the property valuation that the City and Mendota Homes has established for the excess MnDOT property. This valuation has been established through counter appraisals and appraisal revisions and MnDOT still is of the position that the property should be purchased for a price as if there is no polluted condition on the property.

Economic Development

Submitted by Jody T. Gunderson, Economic Development Director

The Economic Development Director has been gathering information for Hoisington Koegler consultants as they prepare to begin the master planning of the proposed business park. The Economic Development Authority Board will have a joint meeting with the Master Plan Steering Committee on Thursday, September 24. The purpose of the meeting is to establish the expectations of the EDA Board and Steering Committee as the master planning process proceeds.

Additionally, over the last several weeks the Economic Development Director has been working with a number of Northfield businesses that are contemplating expanding their operations. The Director has

provided information that is important to businesses as they evaluate the timing of a proposed expansion, and potential resources that might be utilized.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

Staff attended the 2009 Minnesota NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organization) conference in Duluth last week. Along with a nomination and appointment to the State Board of Directors, staff sat in on several sessions about funding availability, reasonable accommodations, rent and utility allowances, and foreclosure information. As always, the conference was excellent and very informative. The focus has greatly shifted from building affordable housing to community revitalization, in the form of blight control and occupying and rehabbing existing structures.

Staff also continues to work closely with Three Rivers Community Action. Originally, the Northfield HRA was going to submit a solo application to MN Housing for the fall round of grant funding. However, after discussing this in depth with Three Rivers, it was decided to do a joint application because the application would be more viable. The HRA will need to leverage funds from the 2010 budget in order to submit a successful application. The proposed levy increase discussed by the Council Monday evening, potentially could leverage nearly \$400,000 in available funds for foreclosure acquisition and demo or rehab if successful in the grant award process.

Also happening this week is some upgrades to the HRA's rental property in the form of new windows.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met on Tuesday to continue their discussion of the draft Land Development Code (LDC). An update on the progress of reviewing the LDC will be on the City Council's agenda for September 21st. The Planning Commission is meeting on a weekly basis to continue their review. Staff is also scheduling meeting dates for various Boards and Commission to review the Praver-Gill annexation request, as directed by the City Council at their meeting on September 14th.

LIBRARY

Submitted by Lynne Young, Director

Booker was a hit in DJJD parade on Sunday. Thanks to Diana Tallent for driving the bus and to Bill North, Mary Schier, Kathy Sommers and Debbie Navarro of the Friends of the Library for their animated accompaniment.

Children's programs resumed this week, and the library is again open from 8-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The library remains closed on Sundays.

On Thursday, September 17 library staff members Kathie Schlegel and Leesa Wisdorf hosted a book discussion (with appropriate refreshments) on the Diana Gabaldon Outlander series. Kathie Schlegel is donating 20 paperback copies of the first Outlander book that includes a chapter from the newest book, *An Echo in the Bone*, a book that is supposed to be "thrilling, shocking, surprising, and brilliant!" (*An Echo in the Bone* will be released on September 22, 2009.)

The Library Board met on Tuesday evening.

- Library staff is considering some changes in the way the process for retrieving long-overdue materials will be handled. Although that process has been streamlined and formalized over the last several years, the staff is constantly looking for ways to provide better service more efficiently.
- The Board also considered some changes in the meeting room policy; staff will come back with draft revisions.

- The Board approved the text and layout of a new “welcome” brochure. The last design was done in 1999. The Friends of the Library are paying for the printing. Melissa Flynn Hager has done the design work and Tom Roster, the photography.
- The RFP for the fund-raising feasibility study was released several weeks ago. Responses are due Friday, September 25. The Board appointed a review committee.
- The PR and Partnership Committee of the Board continues to plan for the Carnegie Library building centennial in 2010.

September 22 will be the last time Booker will visit the City of Lonsdale. With cuts from the State of Minnesota and reduced adjusted net tax capacity, Rice County has been unable to fully pay for rural library services for the last couple of years. The Northfield Public Library continued the service to Lonsdale (after ceasing service stops in Morrystown, Warsaw, and Webster earlier this year) in order to provide uninterrupted library service until the originally scheduled date of the opening of the new Lonsdale Public Library – September 2009. Although the new library is currently scheduled to open in early 2010, the City of Northfield is unable to continue this service.

LIQUOR STORE

Submitted by: Stephen DeLong, Liquor Operations Director

“Spanish Wine & Tapas” was the theme for the Wine Club tasting--the first in our Fall Series--held Thursday, September 17 at The Grand Event Center. We featured the wines of Spain accompanied by a variety of *tapas* (little plates of appetizers) prepared by Just Food Co-op. Our next Wine Club event will be held November 19.

As expected, the strong sales we experienced prior to and immediately after Labor Day came to a screeching halt the end of last week. Total receipts for Thursday, Friday and Saturday were approximately 21% below what would typically occur in any other week in September.

ENGINEERING

1st Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews finished with all utility installations on the remaining portion of First Street from Lincoln Street to the west dead end near the St. Olaf Campus. Testing was completed on the Watermain in that area, and all houses were switched back to the new watermain.

Crews paved the majority of Phase II, which includes First Street from Plum Street to Orchard Street, and Orchard Street from St. Olaf to Second Street. Mulligan landscaping was also on-site this week planting trees on all of Phase I and a portion of Phase II. Residents were given a choice of approved trees to pick to have planted in their boulevards. Tree varieties were limited due to the overhead electrical lines that run the length of the project on the south side. Residents were strongly encouraged to choose a shorter maturing tree to limit the future impact on the tree with the existing power lines. In all, 42 new trees have been planted thus far.

Crews continued with the sub-cut and placement of Select Granular and Class V gravel on the portion of Phase III on First Street from Way Park West to Madison Street.

Crews anticipate installing sod on all of Phase I and a Portion of Phase II starting early next week. Concrete crews will be back on-site early next week working on curb and gutter, sidewalks, and driveways on Phase III.

TH3/TH19 Modal Integration Study

Submitted by Katy Gehler-Hess, City Engineer

Staff working with the consultant assembled the final TIGER grant application and submitted it on Tuesday, September 15, 2009. An electronic confirmation of the application was received. The TIGER grant awards will be announced by February 2010. In the coming month the consultant will be finalizing the study report for adoption by the council in October.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ice Arena

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

Staff began the process of building ice in the arena Monday afternoon of this week, Wednesday the ice was painted for the season, and as of this morning, we have about 5/8 of an inch of ice throughout the skating surface. The standard is approximately 1-¼ inches. The arena will open for operation on Monday, September 21, one of the earliest times in recent history. On Saturday, September 26 from 6:15 – 7:45 PM we will have our Season Kick-Off Open Skate. New this year are rental skates, available for rent during open skate sessions.

Open skate dates and times are available on the City's web site at:

[Http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/parkandrec/arena](http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/parkandrec/arena) or for more information contact the arena at 507-645-6556.

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Building Maintenance Supervisor

There is a new face in the Facilities Division. Annalise Haan started this week, she may look familiar as she was employed in the Street Division for the summer. It will take Annie a few weeks to get into the swing of things so be patient; she's a quick learner!

Progress continues at the Safety Center for removal and containment of the underground fuel storage tank.

Bernie attended a meeting with the League of MN Cities to clarify some remaining hailstorm issues. We will be able to close out any remaining projects by the end of October.

Finally, there has been a change in the company hired to clean at the Library and City Hall. Service Master has taken over these buildings.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets & Parks Supervisor

The front part of the week focused on Downtown cleanup after the Defeat of Jesse James Celebration.

There were several parks that also needed extra cleaning due to the celebration. Most parks saw general cleanup and mowing. There were two storm sewer outlet pipes cleaned. Staff removed the covers off the shade structures at the City pool. They also performed some winter water drainage at the pool. There were four park tree removals performed.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien, Water Superintendent

#3 well was put back on line Wednesday morning after being down for rehabilitation for the last month. Jerry Aljets from E.H.Renner Balanced the motor last Friday. Jay and Scott started all the other booster pumps that run in conjunction with the well motor and everything is running smoothly.

The electrician that replaced the relay on #4 well emergency generator last week replaced the coil that was destroyed by lightning on 8/15/09. After he replaced the coil, the Generator still did not start. After further examination he found that there was also a circuit board that was damaged. The new circuit board has been ordered.

The last section of 12" watermain has been installed on the west end of the 1st street infrastructure project. Scott Murphy flushed the main and took a bacteria sample on Wednesday. The sample was sent to a lab in Janesville to be tested. The results of the test should be back by Thursday afternoon. The main should be in service by Friday afternoon.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

Wastewater staff spent the last two days taking systems in and out of service as new PLC's (programmable logic controllers) have been installed for the new SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system. The new PLC's are now operating facility. New computers have been put on line as well and the system integrator has been linking the PLC's to the computers to allow remote operations and data acquisition for maintenance and reporting functions. Staff is now trying all the PLC and computer functions looking for problems that can be corrected while the integrator is still on site.

cc: Department Managers