

**City of Moorhead
Committee of the Whole
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2012 at 5:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held in the City Hall Council Chambers, on April 16, 2012, at 5:30 PM.

Roll call of the members was made as follows:

1st Ward Council Member:	Luther Stueland	Absent
1st Ward Council Member:	Nancy Otto	Present
2nd Ward Council Member:	Heidi Durand	Present
2nd Ward Council Member:	Mark Altenburg	Present
3rd Ward Council Member:	Mike Hulett	Present
3rd Ward Council Member:	Brenda Elmer	Present
4th Ward Council Member:	Mark Hintermeyer	Present
4th Ward Council Member:	Steve Gehrtz	Present (arrived 5:54 pm)
Mayor:	Mark Voxland	Present

Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. [Receive Parking Study Report \(John Shardlow, Stantec\)](#)

Minutes: John Shardlow of Stantec and Lisa Vatnsdal, Neighborhood Services Manager, presented the results of the Neighborhood Parking Study. The results were also presented at nine public meetings. Highlights of the report include:

- Staff met with MSUM and Concordia personnel, but not Eventide, as they have adequate parking
- National research shows that college and university towns experience some improvements with focused effortsMSUM has adequate parking but most people don't want to use the remote parking areas
- The University has to charge for parking per State law
- Concordia includes parking fees with general tuition and fees
- There is very broad support for aggressive enforcement and the City is viewed as less aggressive in enforcement than the schools, with less expensive parking ticket costs
- People like the idea of additional bike facilities
- About 1,600 households are affected by campus parking.

The Parking Study recommendations include:

- Increased communication and coordination between the schools and with the City of Moorhead
- Adopting a phased approach with Phase 1 focusing on safety and coordination of enforcement efforts and Phase 2 concentrating on reducing on-street parking and imposing time limits on parking in the

closest parking spots

- Streets need to be plowed of snow from curb to curb using a simplified odd-even system
- Parking should be on one side of the street, not both sides
- All the City's bike lanes and paths need to be connected

At Council questions, the following information was provided:

- Various options for street markings will be explored, especially those related to winter complications
- Faculty and staff at both schools take up most of the closer, on-campus parking spots, but changes in negotiated rates may be a union-mediated issue
- Enforcement on City streets is done by Police Volunteers, though they are not always available to check on-campus areas
- On-campus parking is monitored by campus security personnel and trained students; MSUM is conducting M|State's ticketing
- The schools want more aggressive enforcement
- Staff will work on these issues to be ready for Fall semester at the schools
- The City should increase efforts at the schools' orientation sessions and with student organizations to educate students about Transit and its use

Consensus of the Council was to prepare costs analyses of the recommendations and to move forward quickly with the Phase 1 and Phase 2 "3-hour parking" in Zone 1 recommendations.

2. [City Council Briefing Materials](#)

A. [Infrastructure Recommendations Overview](#)

Minutes: Michael Redlinger, City Manager, stated that the Homebuilders' Association (HBA) and City staff met to discuss ways to reduce costs for prospective future development in the City. The recommendations include:

- New road designations such as collector roads, arterial roads and narrower roadway widths to reduce costs on contractor or developer; increase roadway access to new developments
- A variety of sidewalk policies have been adopted over time; those policies need to relate to community-wide development
- Special assessments for streets, sidewalks and underground utilities need to be consistent citywide and changed from 20 years for payback to 25 years
- Engineering fees to be reduced from 25.5 percent to 15 percent
- Parkland dedication needs to be noted sooner so the public can see it and know they there will be parks in their neighborhoods

At Council questions, the following information was provided:

- The cost of special assessments in Moorhead are in line with those of Fargo and West Fargo
- One way to reduce the impact of special assessments is to lengthen the payment term from 20 to 25 years (the same as Fargo); staff will consult with Springsted, Inc. to explore possible longer terms and its effect on the City's bond rating
- Discussions with HBA regarding development in Moorhead were interrupted by floods, but now the process is continuing as this partnership is important to future growth of the City
- The City needs to ensure that developers are aware of sidewalk requirements in new areas
- Areas dedicated to parkland are determined by the size of the development and placement is decided by both the City and the development; the State Legislature is considering dedication fees, rather than placing a required park too close to another park, especially a large regional park
- The State mandates dedication of parkland in developments and limits use of payment in lieu of dedicated parkland.

B. [Tobacco Update](#)

Minutes: Redlinger provided information on what types of enforcement the Council has at its disposal if a tobacco product shop were to open in Moorhead. Much of the information was provided by Clay County. There is a business in Moorhead that has obtained a building permit and a mechanical permit for the air ventilation system for the remodeling of their current building. If a tobacco product shop were to open in Moorhead, compliance with all applicable laws will be closely monitored.

C. [Rental Registration Update](#)

Minutes: Redlinger presented an overview of Moorhead's comprehensive approach to rental registration and enhanced program enforcement. He said it is a very successful program, even though there are some challenges with parking. The Crime Free Multi-housing training program, required for rental registration, has reduced many problems. Moorhead's rental registration program is still one of the best in the state of Minnesota.

At questions from the Council, Lisa Vatnsdal, Neighborhood Services Manager, responded:

- There are some vacant buildings located throughout the City, and at this time, there are no penalties for leaving a building vacant as long as the building complies with Building Code requirements.
- There are various reasons a building becomes vacant including hardships for the owner or inheritance of a building by someone.
- There is a bill in the State Legislature to limit fees cities can impose on vacant buildings.

- Staff will explore the possibility of creating a rental property map showing locations of rental properties and whether or not they are registered.

3. [City Manager Reports](#)

Minutes: Redlinger reported the following:

- The Transit U-pass program will be placed on a May Committee of the Whole agenda
- In July, a preliminary operating and capital improvement budget discussion will be brought to the Council
- The \$3.6 M FEMA payment will close out the 2010 flood payments
- There will be several Engineering public hearings for infrastructure improvements at the next Council meeting
- The Council is invited to attend the Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting that is scheduled for tomorrow
- United Way is looking for volunteers from the City to assist with this year's campaign
- More information will be coming soon on an assessment district for the new SE Main Ave./CSAH 52/I-94 ramps.

Possible coordination between the City and the County in various areas was brought up, and in particular the opportunity to combine assessing activities. Redlinger stated discussions were ongoing with the County including the similarities and differences between each entity's requirements for assessing. The Joint Powers Committee has been researching and looking at various synergies and a consultant will be here sometime this year.

At a question from Council, Redlinger stated that providing the Council with quarterly budget reports has been his goal for some time. He will continue working toward this objective.

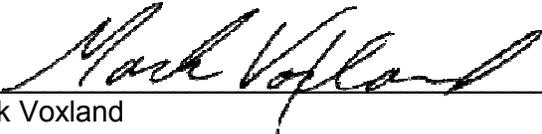
A. Discuss April 30, 2012 Town Hall

Minutes: An informal town hall meeting has been scheduled at the Hjemkomst Center on Monday, April 30. Event details include the following:

- There will be seating for 75 in the round so everyone can hear all the comments
- A wireless microphone will be available for speakers
- Light refreshments will be provided
- Invitations have been sent to all City Board and Commission members
- MCAM will record the meeting for later broadcast
- A brief summary of information on a topic will be presented and then citizens can provide feedback; the LMC report on their Community Conversations may provide a place to start.

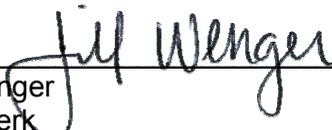
Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

APPROVED BY:



Mark Voxland
Mayor

ATTEST:



Jill Wenger
City Clerk

The proceedings of this meeting are digitally recorded and are available for public review.

Respectfully submitted by:
Becky Jahnke, Executive Secretary