

**City of Moorhead
Committee of the Whole
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2011 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 May 16, 2011, at 5:30 PM.

Roll call of the members was made as follows:

1st Ward Council Member:	Luther Stueland	Present
1st Ward Council Member:	Nancy Otto	Present
2nd Ward Council Member:	Diane Wray Williams	Present
2nd Ward Council Member:	Mark Altenburg	Present
3rd Ward Council Member:	Dan Hunt	Present
3rd Ward Council Member:	Brenda Elmer	Present
4th Ward Council Member:	Mark Hintermeyer	Present
4th Ward Council Member:	Greg Lemke	Present
Mayor:	Mark Voxland	Present until 7:30 p.m.

Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. [Discussion of the Proposed Street Improvement on 28th Ave S from 20th - 26th St. Eng. No. 12-A2-3](#)

Minutes: City Engineer Bob Zimmerman explained the two 28th Avenue South improvement options:

Option 1: Realign the eastern end of the segment to the existing 26th St & 27th Ave S intersection and revise the western end of the segment to match the future alignment recommended for the 20th St & I-94 interchange expansion project. This alignment requires significant right-of-way acquisition and business relocation. Funds now available include \$1M in federal dollars and \$904,000 in Municipal State Aid (MSA) funds; however, MSA can only be used for construction costs, not right-of-way acquisition. Special assessments could only be applied to one business until the area is developed. The project would need to be funded by bonds. If the City completes the project its on own there would be no extra federal requirements

Option 2: Realign the eastern end of the segment to the existing 26th St & 27th Ave S intersection and maintain the current alignment at the western end of the segment and intersection with 20th St. This alignment is not consistent with the future 20th St & I-94 interchange expansion project, but delays significant right-of-way and relocation costs to the future interchange project. Re-alignment would be needed when the interchange project begins. The entire project could be funded with federal and MSA funds and there would be no special assessments. When the interchange project is completed, Council may want to apply special assessment later for improvements.

City staff clarified the following in response to Mayor and Council questions:

- For either option, staff anticipates that railroad crossing gates would be installed. A traffic signal warrant analysis will be completed to determine if, and when, a traffic signal should be constructed at the 20th St & 28th Ave S intersection.
- If the Council wishes to pursue Option 1, staff could start on right-of-way acquisition immediately; if Council prefers Option 2, there is some flexibility on the start time.
- Since the Interchange expansion project is not currently funded, it is not scheduled at this time.
- The intersection has not had serious crash history; only 1 crash in 9 years and it was property damage only.
- The road is now rated for 10 ton traffic.

The Mayor and Council Members stated the following:

- If special assessments are not paid now they accrue interest charges making it difficult to develop the area. It was noted that this policy needs to be further discussed by the City Council.
- It was suggested that use of federal funds may be better directed toward a downtown underpass at 11th Street.
- Concern was noted regarding the significant costs of relocation and the impact of taking on a significant amount of debt now.

The Mayor and Council directed City staff to pursue Option 2.

2. [Sandbag Storage/Disposal Discussion & Riverfront Property Flood Mitigation Program Update](#)

Minutes: Council Member Elmer stated she would abstain from the discussion as her spouse represents the owner of one of the storage sites.

Operations Director Chad Martin provided a brief report on sandbag storage/disposal options:

- The City is currently storing 644,000 unused sandbags in two privately-owned buildings. This arrangement is only for flood event storage. The City is nearing terms on a lease agreement with the building owner, who requested some changes to the arrangements, so storage may not be available in the future.
- Option 1 - Debagging: The City could debag and reuse the sand in winter salt/sand mixture for City streets.
- Option 2 - Outdoor Storage: The City could store sandbags outside with a temporary cover to protect the material from sun damage.
- Option 3 - Indoor Storage: The City could store sandbags inside a building that could be heated later to thaw the material when needed in a future flood event.

- Storage costs are not reimbursable by FEMA, however debagging is reimbursable.
- Storage of bags currently costs about \$4,300 per week.
- The cost to thaw bags or store newly made bags is equal.
- The cost to destroy and remake bags is about \$3-\$4 per bag.
- The City of Fargo is storing 1.3M bags outside. With that volume, it's difficult to find a large enough and strong enough building.
- Additional funding is not available at this time for further buyouts; however, there may be instances where the City would need to buy property for infrastructure projects. Once the State budget is established and infrastructure projects are funded, there may be money available for more acquisitions.

The Mayor and Council Members stated the following:

- Concern was noted about the ambiguous storage building contract language. It was suggested the Council vote only on complete contracts that are in final legal form.
- In light of various mitigation efforts, a decision should be made on the number of bags required for future use and destruction of the remaining bags to avoid unnecessary costs.

The Mayor and Council directed staff to identify all possible storage sites for 400,000 bags and present the various options and finance plan to Council.

Council felt a 90/10 split for costs of the diversion was fair; however, concerns remain regarding veto power and Moorhead's rights, such as maintenance costs.

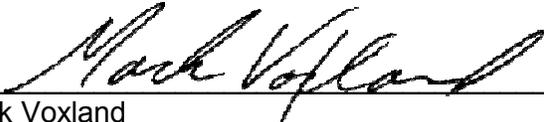
3. [City Manager Reports](#)

Minutes: City Manager Michael Redlinger reported the following:

- A meeting of the Metro Flood Study Work Group will take place next week.
- Staff will continue to monitor the outcome of the Legislative tax bill.
- An executive session will be scheduled at the next City Council meeting to discuss the Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) contract.
- A plaque from Trollwood Performing Arts School was presented to the Council in appreciation for the City's flood protection efforts.

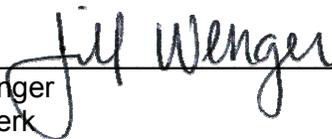
Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

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:
Jill Wenger, City Clerk