

**City of Moorhead  
Committee of the Whole  
Meeting Minutes  
November 21, 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 November 21, 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 until 7:05 p.m.
Mayor:	Mark Voxland	Present

**Committee of the Whole Meeting**

1. Presentation: Cold Weather Homeless Awareness

Minutes: Council Member Wray Williams reported on the efforts of Sanford Health working with area shelters and other emergency agencies to find solutions to local homelessness.

- The capacity of the shelters is currently 331. Last January, there were 406 individuals seeking shelter.
- There are a growing number of homeless families with children and unaccompanied minors.
- In July, there were 65 families living in cars or tents; this month, there are 40.
- Project Community Connection was an event that invited homeless people to the Fargo dome to connect with service providers; 317 people attended. When asked what plans they had for winter, 155 said they didn't know.
- Sanford Health is working with all local shelters and emergency planners to find ways to address the homeless population needs. They agreed that they would rely on the National Weather Service for cold weather alerts and that First Link would be the clearinghouse for identifying the number of beds available.
- One idea is to work with area churches to find space for overflow capacity. They are hoping for at least one church on each side of the river. The churches can assemble hygiene kits, provide mattresses, stock non-perishable food, collect winter clothing, and coordinate volunteers for meals. The churches may need to pursue licensing and code inspections. The protocol would be the same as when churches are used as shelters during floods.
- The chronically mentally ill and/or chemical dependent homeless

people raise other issues in finding shelter; they comprise a large portion of the homeless population. Churches United and Dorothy Day both have case workers who try to connect the homeless person with various local services.

- About one-third of homeless people are veterans. Another vulnerable population is Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender (GLBT) teens who face discrimination and threats.

## 2. [Preliminary 2012 Operating & Capital Budget Discussion](#)

Minutes: Finance Director Harlyn Ault explained the various exhibits in the budget booklets and City staff clarified the following in response to Mayor and Council questions.

- Exhibit 2 is a comparison of 2011 and 2012 tax levies; all LGA funds will go to the General Fund; all other funds come from the tax levy.
- Exhibit 3, Item 6 shows tax rates from the County; it is parcel-specific for Truth in Taxation; it also shows market value exclusion.
- Exhibit 4 is the Truth in Taxation statement – there is a 3.1 percent tax increase; the sample house did not go down in value.
- The assessed value of a home is not included in the tax statements, but it can be found on the City's website. This is the proposed format from the County.
- Exhibit 5 is the property taxes for the cost of services from the City, County, and School District in 2012 per day.
- Exhibit 6 is a summary of revenue scenarios a), b), and c).
- Exhibit 7 is background information on the utility transfer; for the past 69 years, it has been 15½ percent on average; from 2000 on, there has been a significant increase in gross revenue.
- Reasonable revenue increases are needed to keep up with population increases. There has been an 18 percent population increase while the workforce has shrunk by 5 percent.
- The proposed increase on an average property value of \$139,900 is \$63. This reflects very little new spending and keeps staffing levels as they are now with no filling of unstaffed positions.
- The cost to fill unfunded positions is \$272,000. Unfunded positions include an Assistant City Manager, two Fire Fighters, one Police Officer, an Assistant Planner and a Streets truck driver.
- Reserves are cash in the bank; they are segregated from investment dollars; the City can manage if we get DNR and FEMA reimbursements; the City has been down as low as \$1M; there are other investments the City can draw from and as the City receives reimbursements, investment funds can be paid back.
- The City has approximately \$11M in the Treasury account; it's a pool amount and most of it is enterprise funds. Certain funds can only be used for certain items. A breakdown of various funds and their restricted uses will be provided to Council.
- There will be no new street construction and those dollars will be

diverted for flood mitigation projects.

- Outside agency requests will be forwarded to Council for discussion.
- An accounting of the golf course operations will be forwarded to Council.
- Rental registration and Economic Development Authority (EDA) have their own budgets. The fees collected are for those purposes only.
- Staff has discussed voluntary time off to help reduce the budget, but there are Fair Labor Standards Act (FSLA) rules to follow. It doesn't work in public safety, nor during winter with snow removal. The City needs just about every hour from every employee just to hold even, but staff will keep the idea under review.
- The adoption of the budget has to occur at a regular Council meeting and must be done by December 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Mayor and Council Members noted the following:

- Staff should look at selling land in the Industrial Park.
- Staff should continue looking at areas for cuts such as outside agencies, as there is no reason they have priority over other areas like public safety.
- Council needs to discuss the budget prior to another meeting. More information is needed regarding investments, private management ideas for the golf courses, and outside agency support.
- When Oakport comes into the City, the City will need more public safety and street maintenance personnel.

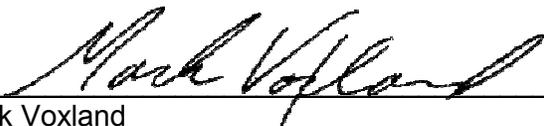
Mayor Voxland stated that the Truth in Taxation hearing will be held on December 5<sup>th</sup> with a Committee of the Whole meeting at 4:30 p.m. on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

3. [City Manager Reports](#)

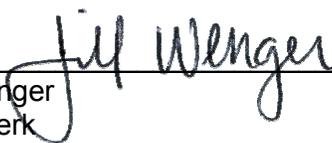
Minutes: City Manager Michael Redlinger informed the Council that the Finance Department again earned a prestigious Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 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*