

**City of Moorhead
Committee of the Whole
Meeting Minutes
July 18, 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 July 18, 2011, 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:	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 until 7:31 p.m.
4th Ward Council Member:	Mark Hintermeyer	Present
4th Ward Council Member:	Greg Lemke	Absent
Mayor:	Mark Voxland	Present

Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. **Presentation: F-M Ambulance Service**

Minutes: Ken Krupich, Sherm Syverson, and Tim Meyer, representatives of F-M Ambulance Service, provided a presentation regarding emergency medical services in the City of Moorhead and surrounding metropolitan area. F-M Ambulance staff clarified the following in response to Mayor and Council questions:

- Academic classes are conducted in local facilities and online.
- F-M Ambulance responds to every call. Lights and sirens are utilized only when warranted.
- Calls for service are rated by dispatch according to seriousness from Code A (least serious) to Code E (most serious). In most cases, Moorhead Police Department and Fire Department respond to all calls for service. Fargo Fire Department responds to some Code C calls and to code D and E calls.
- Each community in the metropolitan area determines how local police and fire staff will respond to service calls where F-M Ambulance is also responding.
- An analysis of service calls in the City of Moorhead could be conducted.

The Mayor and Council Members stated the following:

- Any new policy on response to calls for service should consider how to utilize Moorhead City staff resources most efficiently and still provide adequate resources to the public.

2. [Presentation: City of Moorhead Assessment & Board of Equalization Procedures](#)

Minutes: Nancy Gunderson, provided a brief overview of assessment and Board of Equalization procedures and clarified the following in response to Mayor and Council questions:

- City staff made an effort to study assessment impact on riverfront properties. Some properties were overvalued, likely due to location stigma and insurance costs. Some structures were lowered during the 2011 assessment.
- Within the last year Clay County conducted an assessment of Oakport property values.
- Special Assessments are collected through the Finance Division and have no bearing on how property value is assessed.
- Assessors have the right to conduct assessments at a place of business during operational hours.
- City of Moorhead procedures on assessments meet all state requirements.
- Exterior home renovations are typically valued based on issued building permits. Inspections are typically conducted for interior renovations to gauge increased assessment values.

The Mayor and Council Members stated the following:

- It would be helpful to post information on the City's website related to assessment and the role of the Board of Equalization.
- City staff is encouraged to provide information to Oakport residents in advance of the 2015 annexation on how their property taxes will be adjusted once annexed into the City.

3. [Proposed 2012 Operating & Capital Budget Discussion](#)

Minutes: Michael Redlinger, City Manager, provided a presentation entitled, "2012 Operating & Capital Budget Planning" and clarified the following in response to Mayor and Council questions:

- The City of Moorhead has seen significant growth but at the same time has had a 5% reduction in City staff. A sound strategy is needed to retain and attract qualified staff for the future.
- The City has budgeted very conservatively and contained expenditures. The City may have reached a point where the public is asked for additional resources.
- Property values in Moorhead rose in early-mid 2000, but currently remain level. Market value increases primarily drove tax increases during this period of time, not budget expenditures.
- In recent years Local Government Aid (LGA) allowed the City to fund debt service while containing costs for homeowners. Currently there is unprecedented LGA volatility. The City is in need of a new, long-term revenue strategy.

- Discretionary bonuses are not optional within bargaining unit contracts. Bonuses for non-union employees are difficult from a morale and equity standpoint.

The Mayor and Council Members stated the following:

- It will be important to plan for the 2015 annexation of Oakport.
- Concern was noted on the potential loss of expert staff due to lower compensation patterns as compared to the larger metro area.
- Residents expect a high level of service. It will be important to educate the community on the City's financial position and get their input.
- It would be helpful to outline how property taxes are distributed between different taxing districts.
- In the current economy, many residents have tax increase concerns.
- City streets are deteriorating at a rapid rate. Investment in preventive care will avoid future costly repairs or reconstruction.
- It will be important for the City to find ways to partner with other entities where possible.

The Mayor and City Council directed staff to provide a property tax comparison between homes in Moorhead and those in the larger metro area.

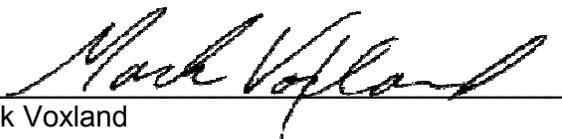
4. City Manager Reports

A. [Preview 2011A G.O. Improvement Bond Sale](#)

Minutes: Redlinger stated that the City Council will consider a resolution providing for the competitive negotiated sale of General Obligation Improvement Bonds at the July 25, 2011 City Council Meeting with the scheduled award in late August. The interest rate has typically been set at 1.5% above the bond interest rate level to absorb delinquencies and pre-payments. This amount has been an area of concern for some Council Members. City staff requested feedback on the Council's direction regarding this interest rate level. It was determined that a 1.5% interest rate above the bond interest rate level be figured for the upcoming bond sale.

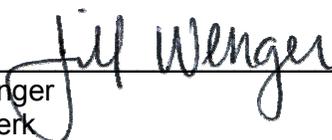
Meeting adjourned 8:37 p.m.

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:
Jill Wenger, City Clerk