

**City of Moorhead
Committee of the Whole
Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2010 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 19, 2010, 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

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Mayor Voxland called the meeting to order.

1. **Flood Response Discussion**

A. **Overview of Temporary Flood Protection Measures**

Minutes: Robert Zimmerman, City Engineer provided a brief overview detailing comparisons between the 2009 and 2010 flood events including probabilistic forecasting, forecast changes, organizational structure, preplanning strategies, flood mitigation projects, and contingency levees and sandbag efforts required after completion of planned flood mitigation projects.

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

- The River Forecast Center is located in Chanhassen, MN. Forecasting utilizes the last 50-60 years of weather as a comparison and converts weather conditions into river levels. Forecasting will become more accurate as more information is learned about the river bed.
- There were over \$5 million in public expenditures in 2009 and approximately \$4.5 million of this has been received in reimbursements from FEMA. There were approximately \$1.6 million in public expenditures in 2010. The City expects to see a large share of this in reimbursements.
- Currently there are no major anticipated obstacles to a North Dakota Diversion. Agencies are working to mitigate any environmental impacts caused by the structure. The biggest challenge to the project will be to diminish downstream impacts.

- Following completion of planned flood mitigation projects, City infrastructure will be protected to approximately 43.5 to 44 feet. Private properties would need additional protective measures at this level. These projects will greatly reduce the number of sandbags required in future flood events, but sandbags will not be completely eliminated as long as there are private properties alongside the river.
- There is some speculation on why the river is cresting more frequently and earlier in the season. The data is not currently conclusive.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will submit a detailed project schedule for the diversion project. Some project elements will be eligible for state bonding money. Bonding money for design efforts will not likely be available if the diversion is based in North Dakota.
- The City would prefer to conduct early sandbag production as a planning strategy in response to forecast flooding probabilities. Very valuable time could be lost if an inventory of sandbags are not available as early as possible in a flood fight.
- Construction of a sandbag production and storage facility will be brought before the Mayor and City council for consideration at a future council meeting.
- Private properties with walkout basements require the most sandbags. Most of these properties are being reduced with flood buyouts, but there will still be a fair number of properties that will need sandbags at a 39 foot level flood event.
- The City does not have a complete and accurate inventory of elevation levels for private properties along the river or those with walkout basements. It would be a very expensive undertaking to get ground survey data on each property. The City could only provide best estimates and related risk levels.
- There is not a longstanding City policy for sandbag production. In 2010 the City appears to have crossed a threshold for pre-event sandbag assembly. This technical planning strategy allowed the City to quickly and efficiently address the flood event. With crest unpredictability, it would be unwise to change this practice even though it may result in out of pocket expenses if the event is not FEMA reimbursable.
- The creation of a special assessment district to charge residents with lower elevation levels for the cost of sandbag production would be a challenging policy consideration.
- A minimum elevation requirement for Moorhead residents could be determined; however policy compliance would be difficult.

The Mayor and Council Members stated/noted the following:

- If the City plans to provide sandbags for private citizens, the expense for such should be incorporated into the City's annual budget as this expense is not always reimbursable from FEMA.
- Concern was noted regarding the level of responsibility the City should have in protecting those properties with the lowest elevations.

B. [Employee Compensation Policy Review - State of Emergency Events](#)

Minutes: Michael Redlinger, City Manager, provided an overview of the current employee compensation policy in state of emergency events.

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

- Currently the City pays straight time to exempt employees in a State of Emergency event. Exempt employees in the City of Fargo receive time and a half compensation.
- State of Emergency compensation would not be a budgeted expense. It would come from General Fund reserves, if needed.

The Mayor and Council Members stated/noted the following:

- It would be appropriate to allow exempt employees to receive time and a half overtime in future State of Emergency events.
- The Council would like to consider providing retroactive pay to exempt employees for their work during the 2010 flood event at a future Council meeting.
- A concern was noted regarding a time and a half compensation rate for exempt employees.

2. [2011 Operating & Capital Budget - Community Partnerships Discussion](#)

Minutes: Michael Redlinger, City Manager, provided an overview of the City's correspondence with agencies interested in receiving FY2011 City of Moorhead Community Partnership funding.

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

- The template used to solicit information from current community partners could be used for new requests if the Council finds it useful.
- In the past, an unallocated discretionary account was available to the Council to respond to unanticipated needs during the year as opposed to designating funds to specific groups as part of the annual budget.
- A little over one-half of 1% is currently designated to community partnership funding.

- In previous years, funding for outside agencies were incorporated into different program areas of the budget. The Finance Department found it to be more suitable to consolidate all outside agencies into one section of the budget to enable staff to better identify, track, and report information.
- It is up to Council discretion to determine the overall amount designated to the entire group of community partners.
- The community partnership requests are available for public review on the City's website.
- Additional information desired by the Mayor and Council Members can be routed to the applicants through the City Manager's Office.

The Mayor and Council members noted the following:

- It may be beneficial to allow other organizations to request funding instead of limiting it to only those that have received funds in the past.
- A concern was noted regarding the role of the City in providing funds for any of the community partners.
- Community partners provide services in the community that the City might otherwise have to develop if they were not being performed.
- Non-profit budgets are vulnerable. If funding is not continued with any of the community partners, ample notice should be provided so that they are able to plan for their organization.
- The City should consider asking funded agencies to report their program outcomes at the end of the year.
- The Council needs to adopt a process for decision-making that is open and public.
- It is not necessary to schedule organizational presentations at a future City Council meeting.

3. [City Manager Reports](#)

Minutes: Redlinger announced that an Open House for the Halliday Motel site will take place on Thursday, July 29th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Comstock memorial Union.

A. [Committee of the Whole Meetings Discussion](#)

Minutes: Michael Redlinger, City Manager, stated that this item was brought forward for discussion at the request of a Council Member concerned about the length of meetings. Future scheduling is at the discretion of the Council.

The Mayor and Council members noted the following:

- Committee of the Whole meetings go much longer when there is an Adjourned City Council meeting on the same evening.
- It is beneficial to meet in a Committee of the Whole format to allow for deeper discussions prior to Regular City Council meetings.
- The Council should be cognizant of City staff time as meetings become longer and more frequent.

The Mayor and Council Members directed staff to schedule an additional Committee of the Whole meeting on the 1st Monday of each month. It will be left to the discretion of the Mayor and City staff to arrange the scheduling of agenda items or cancel meetings when appropriate.

The new Committee of the Whole schedule will begin on Tuesday, September 7, 2010 since the first Monday of September is a Holiday.

4. Executive Session - Labor Negotiations

Minutes: The meeting was adjourned to executive session for labor negotiations.

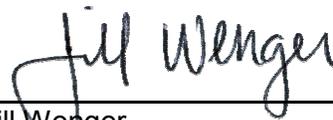
Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

APPROVED BY:

ATTEST:



Mark Voxland
Mayor



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