

July 7, 2025

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA  
July 7, 2025**

The city council of the city of Grand Forks, North Dakota, met in Council Chambers on Monday, July 7, 2025, 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Bochenski presiding. Present at roll call were Council Members Weigel, Osowski, Berg, Lunski, Fridolfs, Sande and Vein - 7; absent: None.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor and City Council.

**MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Bochenski commented on various items: great 4th of July celebration and fireworks put on by Sertoma; groundbreaking for the Altru Behavioral Health facility; Grand Forks County Fair and his participation in the dunk tank; Little Red Reading Bus and participated as a guest reader; ground breaking for Altru Sports Complex; change of command at the Grand Forks Air Force Base; expressed condolences to the family of Blair Sondreal, retired long-term City employee in the Cities Area Transit department; and wished Fire Chief Gary Lorenz well on his new position as Fargo Fire Chief, as his last day is July 11.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES**

1) Held a public hearing, with no comments or protests received, on adoption of a resolution declaring an insufficiency of protest relating to Project No. 8915, District No. 790, Reconstruct 30<sup>th</sup> Ave S (S 34<sup>th</sup> St – S 38<sup>th</sup> St). Motion by Weigel, second by Sande to adopt the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON ACTION ITEMS**

The following submitted electronic comments: Jeannie Schultz, Jody Thompson and Josh Albaugh.

**ACTION ITEMS CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Berg moved, and Council Member Weigel seconded to approve the following items on consent agenda, with the motion passing unanimously.

1) Approved a request from Johnny's Lounge, Inc. to transfer Class 1 (General On/Off-Sale) Alcoholic Beverage License to RG Investments, Inc., subject to final review of various city departments and payment of fees.

2) Approved a request from BGF, Inc, formerly doing business as Vinyl Taco, for an extension of time to December 31, 2025 to transfer their Class 4 (Food & Beverage) Alcoholic Beverage License to a new owner.

3) Adopted a resolution to award the contract for Project No. 8915, District No. 790, Reconstruct 30<sup>th</sup> Ave S from S 34<sup>th</sup> St to S 38<sup>th</sup> St, to Opp Construction LLC in the amount of \$817, 493.40 and approve any necessary budget amendment.

4) Approved an expansion to the Special Assessment District for Project No. 8921, District No. 612. Hwy 81 & Associated Area Sanitary Sewer, Phase 3.

5) Approved accepting Urban Grant Program Funds for Project No. 8981, Reconstruct N 4<sup>th</sup> St (University – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave North)

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6) Approved purchase of Non-Revenue Service Vehicles, two Ford Escape vehicles from ND State Bid and declared at a total cost of \$66,242 and one 2025 GMC Sierra 3500 at a cost of \$52,714 and to declare 3 vehicles as surplus: 2010 Ford Fusion, 2007 Kia Sportage and a 2011 Ford F-250, all of which will be disposed of through GovDeals once the replacement vehicles arrive.

7) Received the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (RRVWSP) legal and technical update and approved expert consultant, Precision Water Resource Engineering and scope of work as part of the review of the RRVWSP Project Participation Agreement (PPA) and Associated Exhibits in the amount of \$139,435.22, along with any necessary budget amendment from the Water Works Enterprise Fund, subject to final review and approval of the Finance Department and City Attorney's Office.

#### ACTION ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

1) Considered a revised Memorandum of Understanding with Grand Forks County for Inspection Services, with the change to have the Certificate of Occupancy issued by the City of Grand Forks instead of the County. City Council received information on the revised agreement and legal protections that are included. Compensation to the City will still be the amount of permit fees and mileage. Motion by Sande, second by Osowski to approve the revised agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

2) Considered adoption of resolutions awarding the contract Alternative #1 for Project No. 8848, District No. 365, Project No. 8849, District No. 620 and Project No. 8966, District No. 621, utilities for 47<sup>th</sup> Ave S, S 30<sup>th</sup> St, and S 34<sup>th</sup> St (Columbia Rd to S 34<sup>th</sup> St and 45<sup>th</sup> Ave S to 47<sup>th</sup> Ave S), to the low bidder Robinson Excavating in the amount of \$2,399,711.92. Al Grasser, City Engineer, explained that there is still some paperwork outstanding on the recording of the plat, so approval should be subject to an access agreement being signed with the City. Motion by Weigel, Second by Fridolfs to approve staff recommendation. Motion passed unanimously.

3) Considered an extension to the Letter of Intent (LOI) for Industrial Water Supply and Discharge Permitting with Northern Plains Nitrogen to December 31, 2025. City Council discussed that this is a continued extension of an agreement signed in 2013 and is still working through the permitting and funding process for this development. NPN needs to have this in place a condition to work through the remaining planning needed for the project and will be coming to City Council with updates as available. Motion by Sande, second by Berg to approve the extension. Motion passed unanimously.

4) Received an update on the Altru Sports Complex (ASC) Project and various requested approvals. Council Member Weigel informed the City Council of a possible conflict, as he volunteers his time as a coach with the BMX Group that has a request as part of this item, although he is not paid in his volunteer capacity. It was moved by Osowski and seconded by Berg to allow Weigel to vote on this item. Motion passed unanimously and Council Member Weigel will be allowed to vote on this item.

a) Staff provided an overview of the GMP #1 which was approved at the May 5, 2025 City Council meeting in the amount of \$50,379,912.00 which included the addition of the elevated walking track structure and Children's Museum Project Concrete Parking Lot Project Alternatives. GMP#1 also included an up to estimate for the pool package and initial bid results indicate the pool package bids are approximately \$1 million under the up to estimate. This is an informational item and no vote required.

b) City Council received preliminary information on GMP Bid Package #2 which had been estimated in the amount of \$46,054,320.00, and early review of bids received shows it to be

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approximately \$ 8 million under budget. The CMAR is still reviewing the bids and a recommendation will come to City Council on the next meeting cycle with final results.

c) With the GMP#1 and GMP#2 coming in approximately \$20 million under budget, including a \$3 million contingency, administration provided a recommendation to move forward with design engineering and funding for the addition of 4 high school basketball courts, which could be converted to 8 high school volley ball or 8 middle school cross basketball courts, 4,200 sq ft sports training/dryland, and various support areas. City Council received information on the timing for proceeding including an amendment to the JLG, Architect of Record, agreement in the amount of \$46,566.00 for programming and pre design scope of services, which is estimated to be a 10 week period, with reports back to City Council at the conclusion.

d) City Council received additional information on the request from Red River BMX relating to improvements on their facility, some of which can be included in the infrastructure work currently underway for the ASC through change orders, with would be within the administrations approval authority. Larger improvements including a building for registration and concessions and track improvements estimated at \$742,750.00 are being reviewed with consideration of looking at in-kind donations, fundraising, grant funding and possible City participation. The track has been successful in getting tournaments including a national and would like to continue to grow the sport. Having a facility that fits with the new ASC and Alerus so the property looks like a complex would be desirable. Staff is looking for approval to work on an agreement with the club on possible partnerships, perhaps with fundraising goals as triggers for proceeding.

Adam Davidson, JLG, provided information on some of the other potential alternatives that were discussed including addition of a second bulkhead for the pool, which was taken out because the bigger benefit to the community was to have the second instructional pool. Discussion also included pool deck materials and finishes and the importance of having the best material for safety and cleaning purposes.

Oliver Finneman, McGough, provided information on the overall bid results which show the project approximately \$20.3 million under budget. City Council discussed FF&E which are not part of the facility budget, but are rather funded separately through the ¾% sales tax.

City Council discussed BMX funding request, timing with getting more information on proceeding with the addition of courts and coordination overall with these items, as well as Prak District input on managing the facility with Courts. It was also discussed whether proceeding with work toward an addition should wait until the final base facility is complete. George Hellyer, Executive Director of the Park District provided input on management of additional areas and the need for courts in the community. An updated operational agreement would need to be negotiated for the new functions. There currently is a favorable bidding environment, so moving forward at this time could be beneficial in cost saving, both for the expansion and BMX request.

Discussion of utilizes on site and placement of parking that would shift with the expansion occurred, with consensus that those should be planned for regardless if we move forward if the expansion now or if it's some time in the next 5-10 years. Further updates will be provided to City Council in the coming meetings. In response to questions, Dan Gaustad, City Attorney, provided information on the uses of the sales tax that was passed to fund the ASC and Alerus capital needs, which can not be used for operations.

Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Sande seconded to concur with staff recommendation a. Motion passed 6-1 with Council Member Osowski dissenting.

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Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Sande seconded to concur with staff recommendation b. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Fridolfs seconded to concur with item c, GMP #2 analysis continued review and authorize the JLG contract amendment in the amount of \$46,566.00. Motion passed 5-2, with Sande and Osowski dissenting.

Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Fridolfs seconded to concur with item d, including authorizing staff to work with BMX on a plan for their facility, which will come back to City Council for review. Motion passed 6-1 with Osowski dissenting.

#### INFORMATION ITEMS

The following items was presented for City Council's information: Statement of Changes in Cash Balances as of April 30, 2025 and May 31, 2025.

#### APPROVE VENDOR LIST AND ENGINEER ESTIMATE

Vendor list 25-14, dated July 7, 2025, in the amount of \$3,828,084.97 and Engineers Estimate dated June 30, 2025, in the amount of \$11,222,848.78 was presented. It was moved by Council Member Berg and seconded by Council Member Weigel to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

#### APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes from the June 2, 2025, City Council meeting were presented. Council Member Berg moved and Council Member Lunski seconded to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

#### CITIZEN COMMENTS – GENERAL

The following addressed the City Council with comments – Barb Knipe.

Several electronic comments were distributed to City Council for their information related to installation of a mural on the ND Vision Service Building/School for the Blind.

#### CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Feland reminded the City Council of the joint workshop with East Grand Forks July 8 on the Safe Streets for All, WW Interconnect and Red River Valley Water Supply Project. Informed them that there would not be a joint meeting with the Alerus Commission this year and information related to the Alerus Center would be provided through the budget process.

#### MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Council Member Osowski asked questions regarding Agristo land purchase for their development (projected closing in September), when an update on Epitome Energy would be coming back to City Council (late summer/early fall), and whether sales tax could be used to complete the Plaza at the Beacon Development. She also shared concerns on the maintenance of that area (process is ongoing for a new group to take over the development and will work contact them regarding maintenance, sales tax can not be used for this project, as it is not owned by the City).

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Council Member Berg commented regarding a fundraiser for the Mission that was held by Love in Action and also asked for an update on the mural issue. Ryan Brooks, City Planner, gave a synopsis of the issue and that it is on the Planning & Zoning Commission agenda for July 9, which will bring it to City Council on July 21.

Council Member Fridolfs commented on the recent groundbreaking for Cirrus expansion and Altru Sports Complex and exciting improvements for the community.

Council Member Vein commented on recent articles about ND bridge insufficiencies, with some Grand Forks bridges included. Grasser provided information and that staff is aware and could be included due to code update changes. Vein also congratulated the water departments for their successful review and thanked Chief Lorenz for his years of service to the City.

Council Member Weigel recognized Chief Lorenz for his impact on the community and work with the merger of the PSAP into the Fire Department umbrella.

Council Members Sande made comments regarding the mural issue and asked questions related to sign code and length of time certain temporary signs are allowed to be up following a buildings completion.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member Osowski and second by Council Member Berg to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Storstad  
City Auditor

Approved:  
Brandon Bochenski, Mayor