

JOURNAL OF SPECIAL COMMISSION WORK SESSION
Commission Retreat – Strategic Planning Meeting
January 24, 2017

City Commission Special Work Session
Great Falls College MSU, Room R278
2100 16th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT

Mayor Kelly presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 12:00 p.m.

CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Kelly, Bill Bronson, Bob Jones, Tracy Houck and Fred Burow.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Greg Doyon and City Clerk Lisa Kunz.

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Susan Wolff

1. GREAT FALLS COLLEGE MSU UPDATES

Dr. Susan Wolff reported that, currently, enrollment is down 3%. However, including students taking dual credits, enrollment is expected to be an increase of 50-75%. The average age of students is 26.4, with 72% being female. Dr. Wolff discussed the success of the engineering program that was started approximately three years ago, as well as class and on-line program overviews of changes in nursing education, accounting, industrial technician and coding programs. A pilot program of two – eight week class sessions proved a retention and success rate of 80%.

2. COMMISSION INITIATIVES

City Manager Greg Doyon and the Commission began discussion of a look back on past year accomplishments that included:

- Parking survey
- Arco water rights
- Sale of Med Tech lots
- Sign Code revision
- Library Board Updates
- HPAC
- Cell phone ban/fines
- Holman property
- West Bank Landing TIF
- Wild fire response
- Fireworks town hall discussions
- Paris Gibson mural
- Final ECP audit
- Park Master Plan

- August flooding/look at infrastructure
- Hired three cops/GFPD good use of social media
- Purchased fire trucks

The parties discussed the emphasis on making public safety a priority. The City Commission stayed focused and made progress. Discussion continued that, even though emphasis has been on public safety, each department is valued.

The parties discussed the positive feedback they have been hearing from the community, and that the attitude of Great Falls has changed. No one has heard anything negative except at City Commission meetings. Great Falls has good momentum in the right direction.

Looking ahead at 2017, the parties discussed areas of potential expansion and development projects, development impacts, as well as service levels and planning ahead for that growth.

The Commission discussed involvement with boards and commissions. After discussion about automatic reappointments on boards and commissions, it was the consensus of the Commission that Manager Doyon re-visit the boards and commissions appointment process and then prepare a resolution to amend the process that includes members having to apply for a second term. The Commission further directed Manager Doyon to look at inactivity/mission purpose and possibly dissolving the ACIR Board and Native American Local Government Commission. The Commission requested a list of all boards and commissions meeting dates/times via email as well as hard copies in their weekly packet. Mayor Kelly suggested that the Commissioners each pick two boards/commissions to participate in.

Break 1:55 pm to 2:05 pm.

Manager Doyon provided updates on recruitment of a Human Resource Director. After a director is in place, he wants assistance in preparing a model to institute salary adjustments to stay competitive on recruitment as well as retention. The Commission requested an update from Manager Doyon after the model was in place. Mayor Kelly suggested the focus be on Planning and Community Development to handle the wave of projects that are anticipated so that department can handle the pressure.

Manager Doyon further updated the Commission on the HPO, software issues, Planning and Community Development working in concert with Public Works staff and upcoming changes to the supervising department for IT.

The parties discussed a possible joint meeting with the Planning Advisory Board regarding the Commission's focus/vision for 2017 and becoming more proactive on land use matters. Commissioner Bronson suggested looking at the growth policy as a guide, possibly the JLUS study, and to review same with the City Attorney.

After discussion about implementation of the Park Master Plan, it was the consensus of the Commission to pursue a Park Maintenance District, but agreed that the fees imposed should be reasonable and not include golf or the Natatorium. Manager Doyon suggested that a more robust maintenance fee may result in more money in the general fund to support public safety and ultimately less cost to the public versus a public safety levy. The Commission concurred.

Commissioner Burow discussed the use of CDBG monies for playground equipment and park upgrades. He will get with Director Raymond and CDBG Administrator Porter to find out City eligible projects.

Manager Doyon reported that Director Raymond is putting together an RFP for the Civic Center façade project. Staff estimates the project will be \$6 – 8 million dollars. Funding the project will be a challenge with the golf fund deficit. The golf course owes the general fund \$1 million dollars. With the operating losses, the likelihood is low that the golf course will be able to pay back the general fund. The Commission was receptive to entertaining the idea of writing off the debt and closing the Anaconda Hills golf course. The P&R Master Plan has shown that the City of Great Falls doesn't need two golf courses. Golf funds could be used towards other needs instead of paying back the debt. The Commission requested cost figures of closing the golf course, and any land requirements when the property was deeded to the City. Manager Doyon discussed projected revenue increases and options to partially fund the façade project with debt and cash.

The Commission requested a work session with the Police Department to discuss officers handling mental health issues, police staffing, and engaging responsible organizations to help with mental health issues in the community versus hiring additional officers.

Commissioner Jones left the meeting at 3:15 pm.

Manager Doyon reported that the Gibson Room and HR remodel costs exceed what was anticipated and that the space would not be adequate in the long term. The Children's Museum lease expires in 2018. He would like to keep things status quo for a year and then review options with the Children's Museum space. The Commission concurred.

Break 3:25 pm – 3:35 pm.

Manager Doyon reported that the Deputy City Manager will start February 14, 2017. A candidate is coming in on February 6th for a follow up interview for the Human Resource Director position. Patty Rearden is the interim P&R Director. The new HR Benefits Specialist is looking into salary compression and health insurance alternatives.

The parties discussed recent correspondence regarding Malt Europ's EPA compliance issues that could result in \$1,000 fine per violation per day, as well as no longer needing the services of retained counsel for this issue.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kelly adjourned the informal special work session of January 24, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.