

**JOURNAL OF JOINT WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE GREAT FALLS CITY  
COMMISSION AND CASCADE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CIVIC CENTER, GIBSON ROOM**

**FEBRUARY 15, 2011  
9:00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:** City Commissioners: Michael J. Winters, Bill Bronson and Fred Burow. Cascade County Board of Commissioners: Joe Briggs.

Also present were the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Clerk, Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief, Directors of Library and Public Works, *Tribune* reporter Karl Puckett and KRTV reporter Daniel Johnson.

**1. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
ON USE OF CITY FIRE HYDRANTS UPDATE**

Commissioner Briggs reported that the objection from the Rural Fire Council was the requirement for backflow adapters. There was agreement on everything else.

Public Works Director Jim Rearden and City Manager Greg Doyon discussed the City's concern regarding direct hook up to hydrants and the potential of contaminating the water supply system for the City of Great Falls.

After further discussion regarding operational issues, Commissioner Briggs suggested that Mr. Rearden submit to him a list of the specific questions the City needs answered.

**2. LIBRARY PARKING**

Commissioner Briggs discussed parking issues at the Courthouse Annex. On behalf of Commissioner Salina, he inquired if there were spots available to rent in the lot north of the Library. Library Director Kathy Mora referred to a map and noted that there are six spaces available to lease in the area outlined in red. The Library is limited in public parking spaces.

Commissioner Briggs commented that the County's problem is the growing presence of State employees within their campus that, according to the judges, the County is required to provide parking spaces for. He also noted that the County's attempt to alter the configuration of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North for additional parking was untenable for everybody.

In response to Mayor Winters regarding the area outlined in red, Ms. Mora commented that it was her preference to keep the lot to the north side for the public because kids come in through the back door of the Library for story hours. She reiterated that there are six spaces available for rent at \$25 each per month.

Commissioner Burow suggested use of the parking garage. Commissioner Briggs responded that option was explored and was cost prohibitive. With regard to 4<sup>th</sup> Street North, the end result was

a land trade wherein the City paid the County for property the City needed for the West Bank project rather than negotiating a deal with the County for parking and other things the County was trying to get done.

Mr. Doyon asked if Commissioner Briggs was saying the reason that 4<sup>th</sup> Street North didn't work out was because the City didn't negotiate parking stalls out of that garage. Commissioner Briggs responded affirmatively that that was part of it.

Mayor Winters inquired if there was room for negotiation regarding the parking garage. Mr. Doyon responded the City could take a look at it. However, he reminded the Commissioners that last year the contract was renewed for parking enforcement and maintenance of those facilities. The rate was adjusted due to the prevailing wage requirement. All of those facilities have a fair degree of operational capital maintenance that is required.

Mayor Winters concluded that they will keep working on this with Commissioner Salina to see if they can come up with a resolution.

### **3. JOINT RESOLUTION UPDATE, RE: FIRE DISTRICTS**

Commissioner Briggs commented that the past practice has been that, after the City went through its processes to accept the request and set the assessment, then the County had to modify the legal boundaries of the rural fire districts. His understanding from Commissioner Salina's update was the County Attorney has suggested not going through that process of moving the rural fire boundaries. It then becomes an issue if the City's conditions are met and the assessment is acceptable to the land owner, then it becomes a contractual issue between the land owner and the City. The County, then, doesn't have an official role in it.

Fire Chief Randy McCamley provided background information of the intent and purpose of the joint resolution that City and County staff have been working on. He explained that decades ago the City entered into an inter-local agreement with Cascade County to provide fire and EMS service to residents that live outside of the City, known as contracted fire districts. The intent of the joint resolution is to have a process to create/expand contracted fire districts for citizens requesting fire and EMS service by Great Falls Fire Rescue. The record doesn't indicate the exact process that the City and County used to create these districts years ago. There has almost been no expansion or creation of fire districts for many decades. Mr. McCamley explained the process needs to be identified for residents/business owners in the County requesting City fire and EMS protection.

Over the past several months the City has been working with Commissioner Salina to develop a process. The process does include the Cascade County Commission because that is the party the City has an inter-local agreement with. The City cannot contract with a resident outside of going through the County Commission. The fee/taxation part of it also goes through the City Clerk and County Clerk and Recorder to record when a property becomes part of a contracted fire district. This is important because jurisdiction determines responsibility and liability. He noted that the proposition of leaving a property in a rural fire district to continue to pay rural district fees, in addition to the City assessment, is very problematic to him. It is frustrating for him that there

hasn't been a process in place to explain to requesters. If requesters are willing to pay additional assessments to the City to compensate Great Falls Fire Rescue for its role and responsibility, that should be their choice. He doesn't believe it is reasonable to have requesters continue to pay rural fire fees when there is no expectation of service delivery.

Commissioner Briggs concurred with Chief McCamley. He will discuss the legal process with the County Attorney and Commissioner Salina regarding modifying the boundaries.

On behalf of Commissioner Weber, Commissioner Briggs reminded the Commissioners of the scheduled March 3, 2011, meeting with presenter Cathy Costakis to promote healthy communities. Also, Commissioners Weber and Bronson are working on scheduling a meeting with local legislators during transmittal break between February 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Winters inquired if slower speed signage could be installed on 6<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest. Commissioner Briggs commented that the County has to conform to the State's sign code. He would check with County sign staff to determine if a cautionary speed limit sign could be installed.

Mayor Winters asked if there were inquiries or comments from the public.

Linda Metzger, 32 Windy Ridge Lane, suggested that metal detectors be installed at the entrances in the County Courthouse. Commissioner Briggs responded that the County has a plan to reduce access down to a single door into the courthouse, and has a magnetometer for it. However, the cost is \$1.4 million per year for staffing. Thus far the State has been unwilling to assist with that cost.

Greg Renville, 103 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Black Eagle, discussed SB 154 and cuts from senior citizen funding. He noted that 50% of the revenue generated from medical marijuana businesses was incorporated with the bill to go back to aging services. He suggested the Commissioners talk with legislators to secure funds for security measures at the courthouse. Commissioner Briggs explained that SB 154 is regulation of medical marijuana. It creates a robust regulatory and taxation system. Senator Lewis has the money targeted within the bill largely to come back into the senior services arena.

Ken Lindeman, 2515 Old Airport Road, added that 50% of the medical marijuana revenue is already dedicated for senior citizens, and 50% is available for local grants. He pointed out that this industry has a huge economical value. Mr. Lindeman expressed that the biggest problem is the lack of education in the community. He concluded that the media is painting a biased picture. He requested support for SB 154.

## ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Winters adjourned the informal joint work session meeting of February 15, 2011 at 9:40 a.m.