

JOURNAL OF CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION
April 16, 2019

City Commission Work Session
Civic Center, Gibson Room 212

Mayor Kelly presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Kelly, Bill Bronson, Tracy Houck, Owen Robinson, and Mary Sheehy Moe.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson; City Attorney Sara Sexe; Finance Director Melissa Kinzler; Human Resources Director Gaye McInerney; Park and Recreation Director Steve Herrig; Planning and Community Development Director Craig Raymond, Deputy Director Tom Micuda, and CDBG Administrator Maria Porter; Public Works Director Jim Rearden; and, City Clerk Lisa Kunz.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Shyla Patera, North Central Independent Living Services, 1120 25th Avenue NE, thanked the City for its work on the Community Needs Assessment and the sizable amount for ADA improvements. Ms. Patera spoke in support of HB 16 that establishes the affordable housing loan program, and building accessible housing. She also encouraged the City to enforce the van accessible loading and unloading zones and suggested adding a volunteer to assist with parking enforcement. Ms. Patera also encouraged the City to continue with ADA sidewalks and curb cuts, as well as programs to assist homeowners to keep up with preservation of same.

1. CITIZENS FOR CLEAN ENERGY

Shannon Wilson, 1201 6th Avenue South, on behalf of Citizens for Clean Energy (CCE) reported that CCE is a volunteer group of Montana citizens from many backgrounds and political persuasions. CCE has been active in the community to promote adequate, clean, efficient, and cost effective energy without destroying health, lifestyle, environment, and heritage. CCE sponsors annual awards for middle school and high school students at the Region II Science Fair, and has donated funds to the Ice Plex to help with costs to replace lighting with LED fixtures.

CCE's objective is to promote and assist the City in working to create a more sustainable, resilient community. Ms. Wilson continued that a big step has been taken already by the Planning and Community Development Department by having McKinstry Engineering complete a study that included energy savings.

Ms. Wilson provided educational and employment background information. She commented that many communities now are taking action on developing solutions for conservation and sustainability, including the Montana cities of Bozeman, Livingston, Missoula, Red Lodge and Whitefish. As a long term solution, it would be a benefit to Great Falls to be a city that wants to go green, conserve energy and sustainability, to attract companies also willing to go green.

Ken Thornton, 31 Paradise Lane, discussed the importance of cutting back on fossil fuels, and totally eliminating fossil fuels by 2050. Examples of the enormity of that task is 94 million barrels of oil, and a trainload of coal stretching from Great Falls to Los Angeles, are burned every day. Mr. Thornton provided a graph showing the price of solar panels from about \$77/watt in 1977 to more recently under \$0.50/watt. A six to eight kilowatt system would provide for a resident's needs, and the solar panels come with a 20 year warranty. Mr. Thornton commented that the solar panels are being installed on awnings over parking lots and the systems are paying for themselves. He encouraged the City to start looking at these ideas.

Shannon Wilson concluded that there are grants available to assist with the costs that will result in medium to long term benefits. She provided helpful links for resources to assist the City with conservation, efficiency and sustainability efforts. She referred to the City of Missoula and suggested that the City of Great Falls also adopt an Action Plan.

Commissioner Houck commented that it would be good timing for Great Falls to be looking at grants and developing an Action Plan.

2. BUILDING ACTIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVES – WALKABILITY STUDY

Jerry Clark and Shyla Patera, North Central Independent Living, and **Kim Skornogoski**, Building Active Communities Initiative (BACI), reviewed and discussed the attached PowerPoint presentation of the Great Falls City Park Walk Audit. They covered the strengths and weaknesses of Heron Park, Rhodes Park, Sandhills Park, Grande Vista Park, and Jaycees Park. Strengths included picnic tables under awnings, benches along pathways, playground equipment, neighborhood connectivity, free library, and pet stations. Weaknesses included lack of connectivity to the neighborhood due to lack of curb cuts, no buffer zone between street and sidewalk, signage not visible, needed path repairs, playground equipment needing upgraded or replaced, tennis court in terrible shape, and inaccessibility issues.

Participants of the audit included members from Building Active Communities Initiative (BACI), Get Fit Great Falls, City of Great Falls, North Central Independent Living Services, MSU Nursing students, and Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

3. CDBG PROCESS UPDATE – PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

CDBG Administrator Maria Porter discussed staff's proposed grant annual allocation based on the community assessment that was completed earlier in the year. She reported that CDBG and HOME programs are federal programs administered by HUD to help fund local community development. The goal is to assist low and moderate income persons. The 2019/2020 CDBG award is \$794,666, and the 2019/2020 HOME award is \$273,088.

She explained that staff's recommendations are based on the community survey that received 318 results, Neighborhood Council and Council of Councils feedback, the public needs hearing, and from meetings with the Great Falls Development Authority and NeighborWorks Great Falls.

The proposed budget is as follows:

	Estimated Amount (FY19 Annual Allocation)	Approximate Percentage
Administration	\$158K	
Loan Program	\$61K	
Fair Housing Program (Public Service)	\$22K	
Public Services	\$83K	15%
Economic Development	\$249K	45%
Public Improvements 20% ADA	\$221K	40%
Affordable Housing	\$1.5 Million	HOME Grant/Revolving Loan Program

CDBG Administrator Porter commented that targeted marketing will be focused on youth services as that was the number one need identified in the community survey.

CDBG Administrator Porter provided the CDBG/HOME Annual Action Plan Schedule. Following tonight’s briefing to the Commission on staff’s recommended funding priorities, there will be a 30-day comment period. The Annual Action Plan will come before the Commission for consideration on June 4, 2019.

4. ETHIC COMMITTEE UPDATES

Retained Attorney Jordan Crosby, Ugrin Alexander Zadick PC, and City Attorney Sara Sexe, explained that, after the first Ethic Committee hearing, it was determined that the process was too complex and confusing. Attorneys Crosby and Sexe recommended that the Commission maintain the process, but proposed the following changes to the Official Code of the City of Great Falls:

2.21.100 Committee duties.

The Committee shall meet and be presented testimony regarding matters referred to it. **When considering an ethics complaint** ~~Based on the information and testimony presented, the Committee shall:~~ **determine whether a complaint appears to be substantiated based on the information and testimony presented. If the Committee determines that a complaint appears to be substantiated, it may refer the matter to the Cascade County Attorney, or to the supervisor of a public employee who may be the subject of the complaint, for disposition. The Committee shall make written findings of its decision, which will be filed with the City Clerk.**

- ~~A. Make a written finding, filed with the City Clerk, as to whether there is an appearance of a violation of any provision on Mont. Code Ann. Title 2, Chapter 2, or a violation of this chapter;~~
- ~~B. Make a written finding, filed with the City Clerk, as to whether the appearance of a violation rises to a level of an actual violation; and~~
- ~~C. Make a written recommendation, filed with the City Clerk, in consultation with the City Attorney's Office, as to the correct course of action to eliminate any violation and/or reduce the appearance of any violation.~~

The proposed changes mirror the statutory requirements of an ethics committee as set forth in Mont. Code Ann. § 2-2-144, rather than making it more detailed.

The proposed changes, as well as complaint and response forms, will be presented to the Ethics Committee at their next meeting.

Commissioner Bronson requested a copy of a recent court decision in a Bozeman case that Attorney Crosby indicated would be applicable to the City of Great Falls.

Commissioner Moe commented that the Ethics Committee will seldom meet. Her concern is that they will be inexperienced and not familiar, as Courts are, with the protocols of due process.

Attorney Crosby responded that if the Great Falls Ethics Committee were dissolved, the decision would be made by the County Attorney. The likelihood that a County Attorney would have any more experience than the Great Falls Ethics Committee is minimal. Counties don't see these complaints at the same level municipalities do.

Commissioner Houck discussed the lack of process and noted that the hearing was painfully awkward. She was in favor of a better process and for forms for both the person articulating the complaint and the respondent.

It was the consensus of the Commission for staff to add the proposed changes to a Commission meeting agenda for consideration.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS

City Manager Greg Doyon reported that topics for the May 7th work session include radios for the Police Department and an update from the City-County Health Department.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kelly adjourned the informal work session of April 16, 2019 at 6:52 p.m.

Great Falls City Park Walk Audit:

Building a Healthier Community

Powerpoint Presentation
by
Shyla Patera and Jerry Clark
Independent Living Specialists at
North Central Independent Living



Walk Audits completed by group members from
BACI (Building Active Communities Initiative, Get
Fit Great Falls, City of Great Falls, North Central
Independent Living Services, MSU Nursing students
and MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Heron Park: Weaknesses

- Very little connectivity to the neighborhood due to lack of curb cuts
- Path needs some work but overall is in good shape
- A lot of open area that could be used: Calisthenics Park, Pickle Ball, ect.
- Swing set could use some attention

Heron Park: Weaknesses

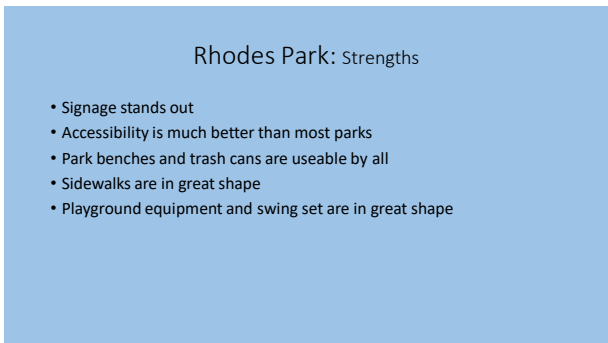
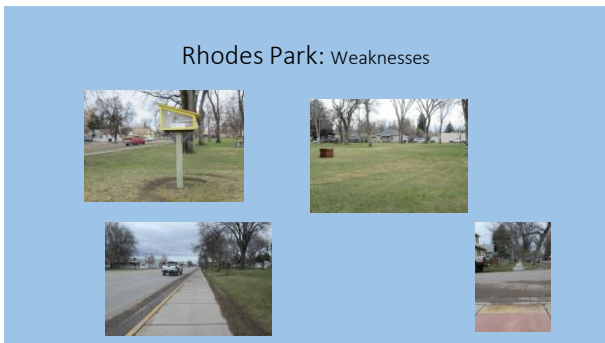
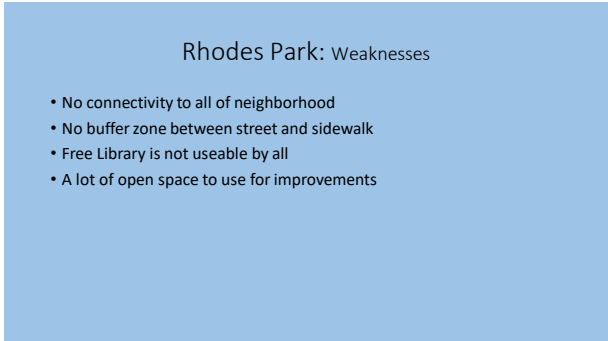


46th Street and 4th Ave N



Heron Park: Strengths

- Picnic tables under awning are useable for all
- Benches along path are placed well
- Free library and pet station are usable for all
- Path needs some work but overall is in good shape
- A lot of open area that could be used: Calisthenics Park, Pickle Ball, ect.
- Playground equipment is in good shape



Rhodes Park: Strengths



Sandhills Park: Weaknesses

- Signage is too far off to read clearly
- Nothing there besides a walking path and a drainage area
- Benches not useable by all

Sandhills Park: Weaknesses



Sandhills Park: Strengths

- Scenery is beautiful
- Park benches look great
- Path is in good shape
- Sidewalks are in good shape
- Trash cans are useable by all

Sandhills Park: Strengths



Grande Vista Park: Weaknesses

- Terrible connectivity to the neighborhood
- Path needs repairs
- Slide needs upgraded and more playground equipment is needed
- Basketball court needs repaired
- No signage noticed

Grande Vista Park: Weaknesses



Grande Vista: Strengths

- Park benches are useable by all
- Pet Station is useable by all
- Free Library is useable by all
- A lot of open area to add amenities
- A basketball court is there even though it needs improvement

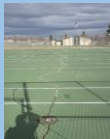
Grande Vista Park: Strengths



Jaycees Park: Weaknesses

- Tennis court is in terrible shape
- Majority of park is inaccessible

Jaycees Park: Weaknesses



Jaycees Park: Strengths

- Great Parking
- Great curb cuts, but they lead no place in the park but do connect to the neighborhood
- Playground equipment, park benches, trash cans, and other amenities are all in good shape but not accessible to everyone

Jaycees Park: strengths

