

**JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION**  
**August 5, 2008**

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Stebbins presiding

**CALL TO ORDER:** 4:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** City Commissioners present: Dona Stebbins, John Rosenbaum, Bill Bronson, Bill Beecher and Mary Jolley. Also present were the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Directors of Community Development, Planning, Park and Recreation, Public Works, the Fiscal Services Operations Supervisor, City Attorney, Fire Chief, Police Chief, and the City Clerk.

**1. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – ALEC HANSEN, MONTANA LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

Members of the Cities and Towns District 6 attended the District Legislative Meeting. Executive Director of MLCT, Alec Hansen, discussed upcoming bills and policies that may be presented to the 2009 Legislature. Mr. Hansen discussed sharing the bed tax with local governments and encouraged the support of local option tax legislation to provide additional funding for cities, property tax relief for homeowners, and shared revenues for small towns and rural areas.

**2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – BRETT DONEY, GREAT FALLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Brett Doney provided a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Doney discussed challenges facing Great Falls that included the growth rate, wages and benefits, commercial tax base, diversifying the economy, improving quality of life by adding more recreational opportunities, housing, retail and dining. He reviewed strategic priorities and plans to expand and diversify the primary sector. Mr. Doney reported the emphasis is on energy and ag processing, and less on business-like services. There were 52 announced GFDA projects, and 43 qualified projects that he hoped would be announced within 18 months. Mr. Doney reported that, by working with the Office of Economic Adjustment, grant opportunities would be forthcoming. He stated that Great Falls is lacking in competitive real estate to offer prospects compared to competitors that have shovel ready sites. He reported that GFDA will be focusing on downtown Great Falls, some focus on the West Bank urban Renewal area, and will hold off on the Med/Tech District. He will be working on developing a positive relationship with rural partners required to strengthen economic development. Mr. Doney discussed GFDA loan programs.

Mr. Doney concluded by requesting that the City forgive the previous loan made to GFDA. He reported it would save GFDA \$65,000 per year. He also requested \$25,000 of TIF funds for the preliminary design and cost estimation for Highway 87 and Black Eagle Road

3. **WATER RIGHTS UPDATE – DAVE SCHMIDT, WATER RIGHTS SOLUTIONS**

Dave Schmidt provided information to the City Commission with regard to Claim 41Q-105494 (Gibson Park), Claim 41Q-110040 (Anaconda Hills), and Claim 41Q-123409 (Eagle Falls Park). Except for Anaconda Hills, Mr. Schmidt recommended that the Commission review and decide whether or not amendments were necessary to correct flow rates, places of use, and unsupportable volumes.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Stebbins adjourned the work session of August 5, 2008, at 6:15 p.m.