

Regular City Commission Meeting

Mayor Stebbins presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

INTRODUCTION: Cub Scout Pack 26.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

Neighborhood Council Members Swearing In Ceremony.

1. Swearing In Ceremony of Neighborhood Council members.
2. There were no miscellaneous reports or announcements from neighborhood council representatives.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Res. 9715 and Ord. 2995, annexation and zoning for Segment of Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad Right-of-Way Along 14th Street Southwest. Adopted.

- 3A. **RESOLUTION 9715 ANNEXES A SEGMENT OF BURLINGTON NORTHERN AND SANTA FE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY ALONG 14TH STREET SOUTHWEST.**
- 3B. **ORDINANCE 2995 ASSIGNS ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF C-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO THE UNINCORPORATED SEGMENT OF BNSF RIGHT-OF-WAY.**

Planning Director Ben Rangel reported that a segment of Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad right of way located along 14th Street S.W. between Interstate Spur 315 and Park Garden Road has never been annexed into the City. This right of way is contiguous to the City limits. State statute allows cities to annex land, if the land is adjacent, including any lands used for railroad purposes. This action will also address the Commission’s interest to annex unincorporated enclaves into the City.

On December 4th, the Commission set public hearing for this evening. After conducting a joint public hearing, Mr. Rangel requested the Commission adopt Resolution 9715, which would annex the right of way and to adopt Ordinance 2995, which would assign C-2 General commercial zoning.

The City Planning Board/Zoning Commission unanimously recommends Commission approval.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing open. No one spoke in favor of or opposition to Resolution 9715 and Ordinance 2995.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing closed and asked for the direction of the City Commission.

Commissioner Bronson moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission adopt Resolution 9715.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Rosenbaum moved, seconded by Commissioner Bronson, that the City Commission adopt Ordinance 2995.

Motion carried 5-0.

Res. 9721, Building, Plumbing, Electrical and Mechanical Permit Fee Increase. Adopted.

4. RESOLUTION 9721, BUILDING, PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL PERMIT FEE INCREASE.

Community Development Director Mike Rattray reported that approval of Resolution 9721 will increase permit fees by an average of 3% effective March 1, 2008. At the City Commission's request, fee increases have been brought forth annually to avoid large fee increases.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing open. No one spoke in favor of or opposition to Resolution 9721.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing closed and asked for the direction of the City Commission.

Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission adopt Resolution 9721.

Motion carried 4-1. (Commissioner Jolley dissenting.)

Commissioner Rosenbaum commented that, even with the fee increase, Great Falls' fees are significantly lower than other major cities, and the inspections are performed with less staff.

Ord. 2993, Amending OCCGF Title 5.3.7.720 Special Business License and Create OCCGF 8.9 Emergency Medical Services. Adopted.

5. ORDINANCE 2993, AMENDING OCCGF TITLE 5.3.7.720 SPECIAL BUSINESS LICENSE AND CREATE OCCGF 8.9 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

Fire Chief Randy McCamley reported that pre-hospital emergency medical care is a critical public safety service essential in support of community health, security and prosperity. Ordinance 2993 is a key document which will help the City of Great Falls begin making improvements to how its EMS system is managed and operated. Areas for improvement were

identified during a comprehensive system evaluation performed by the Abaris Group in 2006. Over the course of the last several months, City staff and the incumbent ambulance company owners have worked together diligently to develop this ordinance.

Chief McCamley introduced Ken Riddle, lead consultant on developing this ordinance. Mr. Riddle reported that this process started two years ago. Mr. Riddle stated one thing that was lacking is that the City had components of a system, but not really a system. He was asked to draft an ordinance that would bring those components together, and he believes the new ordinance will unify those components. The Fire Department, the ambulance company and the hospital will work together in participation as a partnership to enhance the delivery of patient care and improve the system. The ordinance will also allow the Commission to establish an EMS advisory board, which is representative of all the partners in the community that have a stake in providing emergency medical services. Mr. Riddle stated that it will also give the community the ability to review the quality of care itself, and it allows the City to negotiate a contract with the current provider.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing open. Those speaking in favor of Ordinance 2993 were:

Dr. Rick Vega, 482 Flood Road, stated that he has been the medical director in this community for eight years. His position is that of frustration in seeing the present system deteriorate and become unsafe. At times, resources do not match the task, and he believes that is because there are no ordinances or consequences. He stated passing this ordinance benefits the families of this community and is a step forward. The performance contract will require attention to detail so that no one falls through the cracks. As a citizen and medical director, Mr. Vega encouraged the passage of this ordinance to protect the people of this community.

David VanSon, 2404 1st Avenue North, stated that he is the President of the Great Falls Fire Fighters International Association of Local No. 8. He represents 61 union members that work for Great Falls Fire Rescue that provide emergency care to the citizens of Great Falls 24 hours a day, seven days per week. The quality of patient care delivered to all that reside in Great Falls directly relates to the passing of this ordinance. As president of Local 8, Mr. VanSon stated that he shows the utmost support of the passing of this ordinance. He stated that what he has not heard consistently is what is best for the patient. Quality patient care is what the citizens of Great Falls need and that is what they will receive with the adoption of this ordinance. He said that some people have questioned why Great Falls has to be the first. He stated that Great Falls is not inventing the wheel. Actually, Great Falls is behind the curve in this system when it comes to performance based contracts with ambulance providers. Mr. VanSon concluded, "Why shouldn't Great Falls be the first in Montana?"

Ed Day, 5400 5th Avenue South, stated that he has been involved in EMS for the past 24 years in this community. The citizens and visitors to Great Falls deserve a stable platform. Mr. Day stated that in his 24 years of service he has witnessed four changes in ownership of the ambulance service, which averages to a new service provider every six years. Mr. Day concluded that he is raising two children in this community and has many elderly relatives. He believes his family, as well as the other citizens and visitors to the area, deserve a reliable and safe platform in which they can rely on pre-hospital care providers in a trustworthy manner.

Jim Kessler, 4432 3rd Avenue North, stated that he is a registered nurse in the emergency room. For the last 30 years he has been actively involved in EMS in Great Falls and Cascade County. Mr. Kessler supports the passing of this ordinance stating the City must have oversight of a private business when it affects public safety.

Tom Steinberg, Fire Chief for the City of Missoula, congratulated Great Falls Fire and Rescue and the City of Great Falls for being a leader in this state in working to adopt an ordinance that will strengthen and ensure a safe and stable EMS system in the city and community.

Ellen Stinar, 514 9th Avenue South, stated that she is in favor of this ordinance. However, she said she was appalled at what she had heard this evening. She explained that there were times when the ambulance service was taxed, but that was not a normal procedure. She disagreed with the statements regarding deteriorating treatment. Ms. Stinar said she and her staff have been trained in new treatments for patients. She said she and the ambulance company are here to work as a team and that patient care is of the utmost importance.

Dave Kuhn, Great Falls Emergency Services, stated that he appreciates the support in working together to make this ordinance the best it can be. Mr. Kuhn said "it is an ordinance we can both live with." Mr. Kuhn stated that he has concerns about the contract. He asked that it be fair and not over-reaching or punitive. He asked that it be a long term contract so that he can look into the future and do some planning for his company.

No one spoke in opposition to Ordinance 2993.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing closed and asked for the direction of the City Commission.

Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioners Bronson and Rosenbaum, that the City Commission adopt Ordinance 2993 and that Great Falls Emergency Services and Montana Community Ambulance are appointed the interim provider of emergency services during the negotiation of the performance contract with Great Falls Emergency Services.

Commissioner Jolley stated that tonight was the first time she heard that there have been dangerous, embarrassing, unsafe or unstable situations. A study did not show that they were not doing their job properly. The study said there was a potential for things to go wrong. The second study proposed the ordinance. That study also stated that conditions were improving. The Commissioners will next be shown the contract. Someone, as yet unknown, will be writing a lot of rules and regulations, as yet unknown. Two months of operating expenses will be put forth by the private company and that amount is unknown too. Once signed, there will be penalties and the penalties will go to pay for the new person who will be overseeing the rules and regulations. Half of that person's salary will be paid by the Fire Department and half by the private ambulance company, as yet to be determined. Commissioner Jolley stated she thinks there are too many yet to be determined things by a yet to be determined person. She believes the intent is to play "gotcha."

Commissioner Beecher stated that an ordinance of this nature is needed, not only in this type of arena, but any situation where you have multiple stakeholders. There needs to be an overall umbrella as to what would govern the operation of whatever system it is, and what performances are acceptable under that system. The original intent of the previous Commission was to get some type of a structure in place that would ensure the entities were acting in concert with one another and through common cooperation for delivery of that service. Another point is that nobody in the previous Commission had any interest in being in that service. It has always been understood that the Commission was in favor of a private provider delivering the ambulance service. The Commission wanted this ordinance to ensure that the quality was there and that people were held accountable if there was a slip up. He stated that the Commission will be looking at the contract as it is developed to ensure that it is fair, not punitive, and it accomplishes what the original intent of this whole exercise was.

Commissioner Bronson stated that he appreciates Commissioner Jolley's comments, but he supports this ordinance. He has been a practicing attorney for over 25 years. During the course of that time he has represented two private ambulance companies. Commissioner Bronson stated that it was his pleasure to interact with paramedics and EMT's. He has a sense of concerns that both sides have. Commissioner Bronson stated that what is being done here tonight is not new; it has been done in other parts of the country for many years. Commissioner Bronson stated that he can think of no better reason for this commission to act on a proposal like this than to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of this community. It is his belief that the only way to have any dialog about resolving issues is to have this ordinance in place so that we have performance contracts, standards, and a method of conflict resolution to resolve differences with the end goal in mind to protect the health and safety of people of this community. Commissioner Bronson commended all parties in working

together to craft this ordinance.

Commissioner Rosenbaum thanked City staff and the EMS provider for the level of trust and cooperation they had in putting this ordinance together and getting it to the point that it is. Commissioner Rosenbaum commented that nothing is really broken here; it is being dressed up and made more secure and better for our community. Commissioner Rosenbaum stated that all the people involved in drafting the contract will work together and bring a good product out of it.

Mayor Stebbins thanked City staff and Great Falls EMS for working together to craft this ordinance.

Motion carried 4-1. (Commissioner Jolley dissenting.)

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS

Consent Agenda. Approved Items 6 – 10.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes, December 18, 2007, Commission meeting.
7. Total Expenditures of \$3,094,847 for the period of December 11 – 28, 2007, to include claims over \$5,000, in the amount of \$2,915,158.
8. Contracts list.
9. Lien Release list.
10. Set public hearing for January 22, 2008, on sale of city-owned property located in Sand Hills Park.
11. Reaffirm the CDGB Policies and Citizen Participation Plan and approve the 2008-2009 Community Development Block Grant Funding Priorities.
12. Approve request for the City to co-sponsor the North-Central Montana MathCounts Chapter Competition by waiving the rental rates for use of the Missouri and Rainbow rooms.

Commissioner Jolley asked that Items 11 and 12 be removed from the Consent Agenda for further consideration.

Commissioner Rosenbaum moved, seconded by Commissioner Bronson, that the City Commission approve the Consent Agenda, except for Items 11 and 12.

Motion carried 5-0.

Community Development Policies and Citizen Participation Plan reaffirmed and the 2008-2009 CDBG funding priorities approved.

11. 2008/2009 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT POLICIES AND FUNDING PRIORITIES.

Commissioner Jolley inquired about the difference in the percentage allotment – stating something was going to Community Development.

Community Development Director Mike Rattray responded that every year the City Commission, by percentage, allocates how the Block Grant funds will be allocated. This year’s recommendation calls for 29% of the total funds to be allocated for public facilities improvements and handicapped accessibility. Commissioner Jolley interrupted him and stated that what she read was there was a difference in the allocation this year from last year. She wondered what the difference was. Mr. Rattray answered that the biggest difference between last year and this year is last year there was no allocation for economic development. This year’s allocation has 11% and that 11% was taken partially from public improvements and partially from housing.

City co-sponsor the North-Central Montana MathCounts Chapter competition. Approved.

12. USE OF MISSOURI ROOM WITHOUT CHARGE FOR MATH COMPETITION.

Commissioner Jolley stated that this item was not on the agenda during the agenda meeting.

Assistant City Manager Cheryl Patton responded that she knew about the request at the agenda meeting. However, the written request came in after. It was added to the agenda, and the request did go out in the Friday packet.

Commissioner Bronson moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission reaffirm the Community Development Policies and Citizen Participation Plan and approve the 2008-2009 CDBG funding priorities.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Jolley moved, seconded by Commissioner Beecher, that the City co-sponsor the North-Central Montana MathCounts Chapter competition.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Rosenbaum commented on Item 12 that the City has a policy for co-sponsoring events with children.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Preliminary Plat, Cottage Grove Addition Phase 3. Approved.

13. PRELIMINARY PLAT, COTTAGE GROVE ADDITION PHASE 3 LOCATED ALONG THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF 50TH STREET NORTH FROM 7TH AVENUE NORTH.

Planning Director Ben Rangel reported that Discovery Meadows, Inc. is the

property owner and developer of this subdivision. Mr. Rangel requested the Commission approve the Preliminary Plat and Findings of Fact for Cottage Grove Addition, Phase 3. The subdivision is located in East Great Falls, near the soccer park. Phase 3 consists of 28 single family residential lots.

The City Planning Board unanimously recommends Commission approval.

In the future, and as the developer is ready to proceed, the Commission will be requested to approve the final plat of Phase 3, its annexation and the assignment of City zoning.

Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioner Bronson, that the City Commission approve the Preliminary Plat of Cottage Grove Addition Phase 3, and the accompanying Findings of Fact subject to fulfillment of conditions stipulated by the Planning Board.

Motion carried 5-0.

**Preliminary Plat,
Bootlegger Addition,
Phases I and II.
Approved.**

14. PRELIMINARY PLAT, BOOTLEGGER ADDITION, PHASES I AND II, CONSISTING OF 51 PROPOSED SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOTS LOCATED BETWEEN NORTHVIEW ADDITION AND EAGLE'S CROSSING ADDITION.

McIntyre Enterprises and Murphy Real Estate are the property owners and developers of this subdivision. The Commission is requested to approve the Preliminary Plat and Findings of Fact for Bootlegger Addition, Phases I & II. The subdivision is located in North Great Falls, just west of Bootlegger Trail and between Northview Addition and Eagle's Crossing Addition. The two phases consist of 51 single family residential lots.

The City Planning Board unanimously recommends Commissioner approval.

When the developers are ready to proceed, the Commission will be requested to approve the final plat of Phases I & II, their annexation and the assignment of City zoning.

Commissioner Jolley moved, seconded by Commissioner Beecher, that the City Commission approve the Preliminary Plat of Bootlegger Addition, Phases I and II, and the accompanying Findings of Fact subject to fulfillment of conditions stipulated by the Planning Board.

Motion carried 5-0.

Preliminary Plat, West Ridge Addition, Phases V and VI. Approved.

15. PRELIMINARY PLAT, WEST RIDGE ADDITION, PHASES V AND VI, LOCATED ALONG THE WEST BOUNDARY OF 2ND STREET NORTHEAST BETWEEN 37TH AND 40TH AVENUES NORTHEAST.

S&L Development is the property owner and developer of this subdivision. The Commission is requested to approve the Preliminary Plat and Findings of Fact for West Ridge Addition, Phases V and VI. The subdivision is located in North Great Falls, just north of the former Skyline Education Center. The two phases consist of 48 single family residential lots.

The City Planning Board unanimously recommends Commission approval.

When the developers are ready to proceed, the Commission will be requested to approve the final plat of Phases V & VI, their annexation and the assignment of City zoning.

Commissioner Jolley moved, seconded by Commissioner Bronson, that the City Commission approve the Preliminary Plat of West Ridge Addition, Phases V and VI, and the accompanying Findings of Fact subject to fulfillment of conditions stipulated by the Planning Board.

Motion carried 5-0.

Edward Larry Gomoll reappointed and Carol Cassie and Joe Fontana appointed to the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board.

16. APPOINTMENTS, MANSFIELD CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS ADVISORY BOARD.

Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission reappoint Edward Larry Gomoll and appoint Carol Cassie and Joe Fontana to the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board for three year terms through December 31, 2010.

Motion carried 5-0.

Wyman Taylor appointed to the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board.

17. APPOINTMENT, GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD.

Commissioner Bronson moved, seconded by Commissioners Rosenbaum and Beecher, that the City Commission appoint Wyman Taylor to the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board to fill the remainder of a three year term through December 31, 2008.

Motion carried 5-0.

**James Morin
reappointed and Owen
Robinson appointed to
the Regional Airport
Authority Board.**

**18. APPOINTMENTS, REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
BOARD.**

Commissioner Jolley moved, seconded by Commissioners Rosenbaum and Beecher, that the City Commission reappoint James Morin and appoint Owen Robinson to the Regional Airport Authority Board for three year terms through December 31, 2010.

Motion carried 5-0.

19. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

CITY MANAGER

**Marty Basta appointed
Park and Recreation
Director.**

20. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

City Manager John Lawton announced that today he appointed Marty Basta as Park and Recreation Director. Mr. Basta has been the interim director for approximately three months and has done a great job.

CITY COMMISSION

**Bill Bronson appointed
Mayor Pro Tempore.**

21. APPOINTMENT, MAYOR PRO TEMPORE.

The City Charter states that the Mayor Pro Tempore shall serve in the absence of the elected Mayor. The City Commissioners shall elect from among themselves a Mayor Pro Tempore no later than one month after taking office. The Mayor Pro Tempore shall serve a term of two years or until the City Commission has held an election. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by a special election among the remaining City Commissioners. Any person elected to fill such a vacancy shall serve the remaining portion of the term which the vacancy occurred.

Mayor Stebbins moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission appoint Commissioner Bill Bronson to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore for a two year term effective immediately.

Motion carried 5-0.

22. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Civil Liberty.

Commissioner Jolley stated that she looked civil liberty up in the dictionary because she is concerned about the five minute speech limitation at the public comment period of the meeting. Commissioner Jolley read definitions of the words civil liberty and civil.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**23. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Mayor Stebbins opened the meeting to Petitions and Communications.

**Request for Resignations.
Animal Shelter.**

23A. Ric Valois, 1606 Adams Boulevard, stated that he would like to preface his statements concerning resignation or recall that the new commissioners, Mary Jolley and Bill Bronson, are not enjoined. Mr. Valois called for the resignations of Mayor Dona Stebbins, Commissioners John Rosenbaum and Bill Beecher, Chief of Police Corky Grove, City Manager John Lawton and Shelter Director, Jamie Bennet, to be on the desk of Commissioners Mary Jolley and Bill Bronson by Wednesday, January 9, 2008. In the event this call for resignation is ignored, Mr. Valois stated that he would call for a legal public recall with signature gathering to commence this week. Mr. Valois also requested that the immediate care and responsibility of the existing shelter to be placed back in the domain of the Humane Society of Cascade County with a full team of citizen oversight. Mr. Valois called for HSCC to install Jason Dern and Amy Lowe to positions of authority of the reacquired shelter. He called for the return of all funds, donations, and financial resources raised by the City of Great Falls, Spay of the Falls, and the Animal Foundation of Great Falls, to HSCC immediately. Mr. Valois called for an immediate opening of the financial books of the City of Great Falls, Spay of the Falls, Animal Foundation of Great Falls and the City of Great Falls Police Department to be conducted and supervised by an independent specialist and citizens' oversight approved by the HSCC and all affected parties in an open public forum. In the event of procrastination on the part of the City of Great Falls, Animal Foundation, Police Department and Spay of the Falls to meet this criteria of an open public audit, Mr. Valois said he would then demand an investigative audit be conducted of the same financial books be enjoined. The U.S. Department of Internal Revenue will be given notice of this public audit. Mr. Valois called for the creation of a permanent independent citizens' oversight group to oversee local government as needs arise to ensure promises made will be promises kept. Mr. Valois concluded that the contempt and arrogance displayed concerning the animal shelter crisis, and lack of compassion for the animals in that shelter, have betrayed the false intentions to do good, making their official positions untenable.

**Owen Robinson – Great
Falls Airport Authority.**

23B. Loren Smith, 1500 51st Street South, congratulated the Commission on appointing Owen Robinson to the Great Falls Airport Authority. Mr. Smith stated that he is a pilot and his business relies on the airport.

**Owen Robinson – Great
Falls Airport Authority.**

23C. Lou Ronnau, 1318 1st Street South, President of Great Falls Hanger of the Montana Pilots Association and also an aircraft owner and user of the Great Falls International Airport. Mr. Ronnau also congratulated the Commission on appointing Owen Robinson.

Owen Robinson – Great Falls Airport Authority.

23D. J.C. Kantorowics, 166 Swift Road, immediate past President of the Great Falls Hanger of the Montana Pilots Association, and also the airport's support network volunteer appointed by the 410,000 member Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. As a representative of general aviation in Great Falls, Mr. Kantorowics thanked the Commission for appointing Owen Robinson. Mr. Kantorowics stated that both the City and County Commissions have been allowing the Airport Authority to start grading applicants for positions on the Airport Authority. As elected officials, he believes this is a bad situation as they are abrogating their responsibilities to an appointed board in allowing them to choose their own replacement. He believes they should start ignoring the recommendations by the Airport Authority and go on their own judgments on the applications. Further, Mr. Kantorowics stated that the airport needs to be run by people who understand aviation. There is not a single pilot on the Airport Authority Board.

Request for Resignations. Animal Shelter.

23E. Susan Overfield, 251 Gordon Road, **Christian Cornelius**, 1122 4th Avenue Northwest, **Pam Hendrickson**, 1321 5th Avenue North, and **Jody Wright**, 124 Cove Lane, concurred with Mr. Valois' statements regarding the animal shelter.

Cable 7.

23F. John Watts, 304 7th Avenue South, stated that Cable 7 was asked to leave their facility at TV 16 within 60 days. Cable 7 needs a new permanent place. Mr. Watts expressed that Kevin Manthey is the only full time employee and that no one can do the job as good as what he has done. His level of production is going to go down because his equipment is failing and he is relying on volunteers for his crew. Mr. Watts asked for assistance to find Cable 7 a new place and to look at grants to try to raise money to get this taken care of.

Water Rights.

23G. Brett Doney, 3048 Delmar Drive, applauded the City Commission and Manager for looking at the water rights issue. Two of the City's target industries are agriculture and energy, which require large amounts of water. Mr. Doney urged the Commission to move aggressively to acquire new senior water rights at a reasonable price.

Welcome New Commissioners.

23H. Kathleen Gessaman, 1006 36th Avenue N.E., welcomed the new commissioners and stated she enjoyed this meeting and it was nice to hear the discussions tonight.

Ordinance 2993, Additional Plats on the North Side of Great Falls, Coal to Liquid comments.

23I. Ron Gessaman, 1006 36th Avenue N.E., stated that, with regard to Ordinance 2993, it was his impression that the objective was for the Fire Department to take over the ambulance service. Regarding agenda items 14 and 15, Mr. Gessaman stated that the two additions are located on the north side of Great Falls, and other plats were recently approved. By Mr. Gessaman's account, that is 800 new houses in the area. As a resident of that area, he hasn't heard any talk about the new traffic problems that are being created. Mr. Gessaman concluded by responding to Mr. Doney's prior comments as an individual who participated in the start up of the coal to

liquid plant in South Africa and he suggested that Mr. Doney check his facts which are available on the internet.

Animal Shelter.

23J. Eileen Gallagher, 88 Bend View Lane, stated that she attended the town hall meeting regarding the animal shelter and, according to employees who work at the animal shelter and employees who have quit since the City's take over, deplorable actions are now being inflicted upon our City's animals in the name of improvements. Under the new director and the police department, she alleged that animals are being put down earlier than necessary in order to make the shelter look tidier; animals are being euthanized in a manner that makes them cry out in acute pain as the life drains out of them; injured and sick animals are allegedly laying there in agony, neglected or untreated, sometimes for days; and, there are no information cards posted on the cages that answer basic questions about the animal for potential adopters. Calls for help for animals to the police department get bottom priority according to Animal Control Officer Amy Lowe. The mistreatment and neglect of animals is unconscionable and must stop now. Ms. Gallagher stated that she doesn't believe in calling for resignations across the board. She thinks the focus needs to stay on stopping these wrongs for the voiceless friends. Charged with the job as caretakers, she asked what kind of job is the City of Great Falls doing. She asked the Mayor, City Manager and Commissioners to step up and do what is right and hold the new shelter director accountable for changing the policies. She concluded with "let's put humane back into our community."

Congratulation to Mary Jolley. Water rate increase. Parkdale Basketball Court. Havre Highway.

23K. John Hubbard, 615 7th Avenue South, congratulated Mary Jolley. Mr. Hubbard inquired about a water rate hike. Mr. Hubbard stated he tried to contact Mr. Robert Renke with the DEQ/EPA and Chad Anderson regarding the toxic Weissman dumping, and believes he just got the run around. Mr. Hubbard said at Parkdale there is suppose to be a fence around the basketball court. Mr. Hubbard discussed an experience he had with a school bus stopping in the middle of Havre highway and expressed concern that an accident will happen there.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum that the regular meeting of January 8, 2008, be adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Stebbins

City Clerk

