

**JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSIONS**  
**January 8, 2008**

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Dona Stebbins presiding

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 p.m.

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

**1. WATER PLAN – DAVE SCHMIDT, WATER RIGHTS SOLUTIONS**

City Manager John Lawton introduced Dave Schmidt of Water Rights Solutions, Inc. (WRSI). Mr. Lawton stated that Coleen Balzarini is the principal liaison working with WRSI. Mr. Lawton explained that WRSI inventoried the City's water rights in 2003 and is back to discuss the changes that have occurred since that time, i.e. law changes and water contracts with industrial users.

Dave Schmidt stated that he has been working with water rights for 30 years. First with DNRC, then the Federal Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and then founded his own company. He explained that his job is to assess, defend and acquire water rights. Mr. Schmidt addressed law changes in water rights and adjudication. He explained the City's water rights as claimed, as well as his recommended water strategy and why the City should be proactive in planning for future needs. Mr. Schmidt provided a power point presentation with graphs that compared municipal versus industrial flow rates and volume comparisons, as well as the water reservation flow rates and volume comparison.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the City of Great Falls is responsible to the State, and the State is responsible to the water users. He reiterated that Great Falls has not sold any water rights. The City of Great Falls contracts with industrial users for water. Mr. Schmidt stated that Great Falls has water for approximately 150 years. Mr. Schmidt concluded with commonly asked questions.

Mr. Lawton concluded the session by stating that this discussion was meant to spark interest and a reaction. This subject will need to be continually discussed to begin turning ideas into acquiring additional water.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Stebbins adjourned the work session of January 8, 2008, at 6:50 p.m.

