

**JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSIONS**  
**September 18, 2007**

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Dona Stebbins presiding

**CALL TO ORDER:** 5:30 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:** City Commissioners present: Mayor Stebbins, Sandy Hinz, Diane Jovick-Kuntz, Bill Beecher and John Rosenbaum. Also present were the Assistant City Manager, Directors of Public Works, Community Development, Planning, and Park and Recreation, the Fire Chief, Police Chief, and City Clerk.

**1. OPEN WORLD LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (RUSSIAN DELEGATION)**

Sandra Erickson, Chairperson to the Advisory Commission on International Relationships, introduced four Russian leaders participating in the Open World Leadership Program, Alexandr Bronislavov Berjivskiy, Natalia Kozichuk, Ramazan Isayevich Bolloyev, Andrey Petrovich Kulagin, as well as their translator, Tanya Lukenbill.

**2. DOWNTOWN ONE-WAY STREET DISCUSSION**

Senior Transportation Planner Andrew Finch presented a power point slide show regarding converting two downtown, one-way streets back to two-way streets – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues South from Park Drive to 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Finch reported that the conversion was requested by the BID, which it hopes will improve downtown circulation, increase parking availability, increase the area of the downtown beautification project, slow traffic, revitalize properties along these roadways, and create a viable lifestyle environment in our core business district. Mr. Finch stated that this is only at the discussion stage and they are just getting the information to the public to get their feedback. A discussion paper is on the City's web-page and he has been getting responses via email. Neighborhood Council 7 opposes the proposed change.

Mayor Stebbins stated that she has received many phone calls regarding this issue and most are negative, primarily due to the increased traffic on 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the elementary school nearby. Commissioner Jovick-Kuntz asked if the business owners in the downtown area had been asked about the proposed change, and how do they feel. Commissioner Rosenbaum stated that people like streetscape/landscape, and suggested that a survey be conducted through the City water bills. Commissioner Beecher inquired if anyone had talked to any other neighborhoods. He suggested that it would be advantageous for future discussions if BID discusses where the money will come from so that people don't think they will be paying for the change. Commissioner Rosenbaum added that some businesses will be significantly impacted by such a change with regard to egress, signage, etc.

BID board member Phil Kizer stated that he walked 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South and polled the business owners regarding their thoughts and if they thought two-way traffic would be better, and most said yes. He stated that he will talk to every property owner on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>.

Commissioner Beecher stated that (1) a survey needs to be conducted, and (2) define the sources of potential financing.

### **3. PERFORMING ARTS CENTER IDEA**

Andrea Pierce discussed a vision she has to provide a permanent home for a Performing Arts and Cultural Center. The Center would be designed to bring the excitement of the performing arts to the people in our community and the surrounding region, by presenting a broad spectrum of vibrant art events while providing a home for a theatre, music and culture. Mrs. Pierce stated that she asked about the vacant building behind the Civic Center as a potential home for the Center. The Great Falls Police Department offered the blue prints. She is enthusiastic and dedicated in pursuing the resources for such a project. Attorney Patrick Paul agreed to incorporate the proposed Center as a non-profit organization. Mr. Tim Peterson is familiar with architecture and has agreed to donate his time in preparing an artistic rendition of the building. Mrs. Pierce has also begun the process of organizing Board of Directors. In conclusion Mrs. Pierce proposed that the City of Great Falls take the necessary steps to allow this building to become a Performing Arts and Cultural Center. She opined that the Center, in turn, will be a highly visible arts and cultural resource that enriches the quality of life for all ages, as well as provide revenue to the City.

Commissioner Beecher inquired when the artistic rendition would be done. Mrs. Pierce answered relatively soon. Commissioner Hinz asked Police Chief Corky Grove what the status was of the Police of Montana Museum. Chief Grove answered that it was re-established in the Holiday Village Mall. He stated that the police department has \$500,000 potential money from the federal government for a training center. He is waiting on the federal government monies, as well as how it is to be used. Commissioner Rosenbaum inquired of Mrs. Pierce where the money would come from. Mrs. Pierce answered that it would be a long term lease with the City. She expects to obtain grants, receive donations and host fund raisers.

### **ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Stebbins adjourned the work session of September 18, 2007, at 6:45pm.