

Regular City Commission Meeting

Mayor Stebbins presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

- ACTION report.**
1. **Karen Grove, NC 8**, reported that the group working on the ACTION project had a successful presence at the Christmas Stroll held Saturday, December 2, 2006.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- CDBG and HOME Grant needs public hearing.**
2. **CDBG AND HOME GRANT/CONSOLIDATED PLAN COMMUNITY NEEDS PUBLIC HEARING.**

The purpose of this Consolidated Plan community needs public hearing was to allow citizens, especially lower income citizens, an opportunity to advise the City Commission of the community's issues. The comments heard at this public hearing will be considered when allocating the 2007/2008 Community Development Block Grant and HOME Grant funds.

Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing open. Those addressing the City Commission were as follows:

Don McGiboney, 405 24th Avenue NE, requested the City Commission allocate 15 percent of the CDBG funds for public service projects. He explained that those funds could be used to provide important materials associated with the Neighborhood Watch program.

Sheila Rice, 509 1st Avenue South, Executive Director for Neighborhood Housing Services, emphasized the impact CDBG and HOME funds have made in Great Falls by assisting with home ownership and improving blighted neighborhoods.

There being no one further to address the Commission, Mayor Stebbins declared the public hearing closed.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS**ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS**

Ord. 2957, Sign Code revisions. Accepted on first read.

3. ORDINANCE 2957, SIGN CODE REVISIONS.

Community Development Director Mike Rattray reported that Ordinance 2957 would amend the Official Codes of the City of Great Falls (OCCGF) Title 17, Chapter 60 pertaining to signs. The proposed revisions address minor housecleaning items; provide additional clarification; and add a provision to address signage if a premise was subsequently subdivided.

Specific changes included:

- Signs for home occupations, family day cares, adult group homes and other approved home uses would not require sign permits, provided size and location standards were met.
- All references to specific dollar amounts for fees and costs were deleted and instead payment of fees and costs would be as set by Commission resolution.
- To be consistent with the narrative description in the Code, Exhibit 60-6 was revised to note that one free-standing pole sign would be allowed per premise frontage for premises exceeding 50,000 square feet in area.
- Reference was made to the appropriate section of the Code that addresses signs for home occupations, family day cares and the like.
- Clarification was provided that on-premise signs were authorized for approved commercial uses in residential zoning districts, neighborhood commercial zoning districts, and central business periphery zoning districts.
- A new provision was added to address signage if a premise was subsequently subdivided.
- If a sign permit was revoked and the sign was not removed, the City may remove the sign and the sign owner may then reclaim the sign within ten working days. After that time, the sign may be destroyed. The requirement that the owner pay a \$50 fee to reclaim the sign was removed.

Commissioner Hinz moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission accept Ordinance 2957 on first reading and set December 19, 2006, as the date to consider adoption of Ordinance 2957.

Motion carried 5-0.

Res. 9626, Great Falls West Bank Urban Renewal District – Blight

4. RESOLUTION 9626, DECLARING A BLIGHTED AREA EXISTS WITHIN THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA AND THAT THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THAT AREA IS NECESSARY IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF

**Designation.
Adopted.**

THE RESIDENTS OF GREAT FALLS AND TO DETERMINE THE BOUNDARIES OF THAT AREA.

Planning Director Ben Rangel reported that Resolution 9626 establishes the boundaries of the proposed West Bank Urban Renewal District, identifies the area as a proposed urban renewal district and establishes that the area is “blighted” per Montana Statute.

Specifically, the “blighted” conditions in the district include:

1. Physical deterioration of buildings and properties. Many of the structures in the defined area are in poor repair and properties are poorly maintained. Building permit information indicates that the majority of existing structures have not been substantially improved for at least twenty years.
2. Inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings. The presence of existing heavy industrial uses within the defined area is incompatible with retail, commercial, residential and parkland development. This land use conflict has proven to be a disincentive to the improvement of properties within the area by private enterprise.
3. Defective street layout. Much of the area is without streets, sidewalks, curbs or gutters resulting in poor traffic circulation and storm drainage problems.
4. Unsanitary and unsafe conditions. Portions of the defined area are included in the list of priority sites maintained by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality under the Comprehensive Environmental Cleanup and Responsibility Act (CECRA) and are designated a Brownfield site as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Contamination on the site is associated with historic industrial activity and has affected both the soil and groundwater and threatens to contaminate the Missouri River.

In conjunction with several area property owners, the City was interested in the revitalization and redevelopment of an area located near the west bank of the Missouri River, generally north and south of Central Avenue West. Initial steps had already been taken by various entities to address contamination in the area with an assessment of environmental conditions and with the development of a conceptual master plan, under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program.

In order to give the City an additional funding tool in this redevelopment effort, staff proposed to establish an urban renewal district and plan under Montana’s urban renewal authority, including a tax increment financing provision.

Commissioner Rosenbaum moved, seconded by Commissioner Beecher, that the City Commission adopt Resolution 9626.

Motion carried 5-0.

Res. 9627, Relating to Swimming Pool General Obligations Bonds, Reimbursement Resolution. Adopted.

5. RESOLUTION 9627, RELATING TO FINANCING THE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN SWIMMING POOL IMPROVEMENTS AT MITCHELL, JAYCEE AND WATER TOWER POOLS ESTABLISHING COMPLIANCE WITH REIMBURSEMENT BOND REGULATIONS (OF 1484).

Finance Director Coleen Balzarini requested the City Commission adopt Resolution 9627, which establishes compliance with reimbursement bond regulations under the Internal Revenue Code. She reminded the City Commission that on November 7, 2006, Great Falls voters authorized the issuance and sale of general obligation bonds in the amount of up to \$2,270,000 to finance improvements and upgrades to swimming pools in Great Falls, including rehabilitating and designing, constructing and equipping improvements to the Mitchell Pool, the Jaycee Pool and its restrooms and locker rooms, the Water Tower Pool and its restrooms, locker rooms, and related amenities, and to pay the cost of the issuance of the Bonds. The term of the debt may not exceed 10 years and the Commission will set an interest rate for a competitive sale.

Commissioner Jovick-Kuntz moved, seconded by Commissioner Hinz, that the City Commission adopt Resolution 9627.

Motion carried 5-0.

Consent Agenda. Approved as printed.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes, November 21, 2006, Commission meeting.
7. Total Expenditures of \$1,401,687 for the period of November 15-29, 2006, to include claims over \$5000, in the amount of \$1,208,484.
8. Contracts list.
9. Set public hearing for December 19, 2006, on Resolution 9624, Nuisance Abatement at 510 11th Street South.
10. Set public hearing for December 19, 2006, on Resolution 9628, Land Development Principles and Guidelines for East End Development.
11. Change Order 1 in the amount of \$3,007.31 and final payment to Dick Olson Construction, Inc., for \$15,008.70 and the State Miscellaneous Tax Division for \$151.61 for the Renovation of the Women's First Floor Restroom in the Civic Center. (OF 1481.1).
12. Contract for Employee Group Health Insurance Third Party Claims Administration and Specific Stop-Loss Coverage with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana.

Commissioner Hinz moved, seconded by Commissioners Beecher and Rosenbaum, that the City Commission approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried 5-0.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

**Mansfield Center
for the Performing
Arts Advisory
Board, reappointed
Tryon and
Faechner.**

13. REAPPOINTMENTS, MANSFIELD CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS ADVISORY BOARD.

Rick Tryon and Al Faechner were appointed to the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board in 2004. Both Mr. Tryon and Mr. Faechner were interested in and eligible for another term. Mr. Kampfer was originally appointed in 2001 and due to a clerical error has only served five years. He was eligible to serve six years; therefore, it was recommended that he be appointed to a one-year term.

Commissioner Jovick-Kuntz moved, seconded by Commissioner Beecher, that the City Commission reappoint Rick Tryon and Al Faechner to the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board for three-year terms through December 31, 2009, and reappoint Robert Kampfer to a one-year term through December 31, 2007.

Motion carried 5-0.

**Planning Board.
Reappointed
Harding, Roberts
and Kinder.**

14. REAPPOINTMENTS AND APPOINTMENT TO THE PLANNING BOARD.

John Harding, William Roberts and Ron Kinder were appointed to the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board on July 1, 2005. Mr. Harding, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Kinder were interested in and eligible for reappointment. Mark Gunderson resigned his position on the Board; therefore, it was necessary to appoint a replacement.

Commissioner Hinz moved, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbaum, that the City Commission reappoint John Harding, William Roberts and Ron Kinder to three-year terms through December 31, 2009.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Hinz moved that the City Commission postpone appointing someone to fill the remainder of a three-year term through December 31, 2007, to the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board and direct staff to re-advertise the opening.

Motion carried 5-0.

**Transit Board.
Appointed
Eastman.**

15. APPOINTMENT, TRANSIT BOARD.

James Bellessa was appointed to the Great Falls Transit District Board for

a four-year term in 1998 and reappointed for another four-year term in 2002. Mr. Bellessa's term expired on November 30, 2006. Mr. Bellessa was not eligible for reappointment; therefore, it was necessary to appoint one new member.

Commissioner Beecher moved, seconded by Commissioners Hinz and Jovick-Kuntz, that the City Commission appoint Paul Eastwood to the Great Falls Transit District Board for a four-year term beginning on December 5, 2006, and expiring on November 30, 2010.

Motion carried 5-0.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Request for documents.

19. Neil Taylor, 3417 4th Avenue South, requested a report authorized to be done by the City Commission on November 4, 2003 related to a feasibility study for the Highwood Generating Station.

Fiscal Service Director Coleen Balzarini explained that request was also made at the Electric City Board meeting and she would provide a copy of the material that was available.

Adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the regular meeting of December 5, 2006, adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Mayor Dona R. Stebbins

Peggy Bourne, City Clerk