

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Regular City Commission Meeting

Mayor Kelly presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

Commission Chambers Room 206

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL/STAFF INTRODUCTIONS: City Commission members present: Bob Kelly, Tracy Houck, Mary Sheehy Moe, Owen Robinson and Rick Tryon. Also present were: City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson; City Clerk Lisa Kunz; Finance Director Melissa Kinzler; Planning and Community Development Director Craig Raymond; City Attorney Sara Sexe; and, Police Chief Jeff Newton.

Public participation is welcome as follows:

- Attend in person. Please refrain from attending in person if you are not feeling well.
- Provide public comments via email. Comments may be sent via email before 12:00 PM on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, to: commission@greatfallsmt.net. Include the agenda item or agenda item number in the subject line, and include the name and address of the commenter. Written communication received by that time will be shared with the City Commission and appropriate City staff for consideration during the agenda item and before final vote on the matter; and, will be so noted in the official record of the meeting.
- Call-in. The public may call in during specific public comment periods at [406-761-4786](tel:406-761-4786). All callers will be in a queued system and are asked to remain on hold and be patient. Calls will be taken in the order in which they are received. Callers will be restricted to customary time limits. This is a pilot service to test the feasibility of expanded public participation by phone. We ask for your patience in the event there are technical difficulties.
- The agenda packet material is available on the City's website: <https://greatfallsmt.net/meetings>. The public may view and listen to the meeting on cable channel 190, or online at <https://greatfallsmt.net/livestream>.

AGENDA APPROVAL: There were no proposed changes to the agenda by the City Manager or City Commission. The agenda was approved as presented.

CONFLICT DISCLOSURE/EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PROCLAMATIONS: Commissioner Houck read proclamations for NeighborWorks Homeownership Month (June) and PTSD Awareness Month (June), Commissioner Tryon read a proclamation for Men's Health Month (June), and Commissioner Moe read a proclamation for NeighborWorks Week (June 5-12).

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. MILITARY UPDATE FROM THE MONTANA AIR NATIONAL GUARD (MTANG).

Colonel Trace Thomas, MTANG, provided the following updates:

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

- Twenty percent of MTANG members participated in Coronavirus support, from working in nursing homes and labs in Montana to immunization lines.
- The first H-3 aircraft arrives tomorrow, with seven more arriving throughout the summer.
- A large exercise drill will be conducted the first week in July, causing some noise.
- Construction season is underway at MTANG.
- Fourth of July parades and flybys are scheduled across the state.
- MTANG's 75-anniversary open house is scheduled for July 22-24, 2022, with the Thunderbirds as the main act.

Commissioner Moe inquired if the Love's construction project is affecting productivity at MTANG.

Colonel Thomas responded that meetings have been scheduled with Montana Department of Transportation and the Airport Director regarding traffic control and he does not anticipate any issues or roadblocks.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Jerri Gertson, City resident, and on behalf of three neighbors present, expressed frustration about an issue with a pickup truck attached to a fifth wheel trailer parked on the corner of 9th Street NE and 36th Avenue NE. This street is an emergency and school bus route. She and her neighbors can verify that he has not moved the truck and trailer since he has lived there, other than a few inches to a foot when police personnel have marked his tires. She has been in contact with the police, and they have ticketed the vehicle's owner. She expressed concerns about school children getting off the bus on that corner. Drivers cannot see the stop sign until they are past the trailer, and oncoming vehicles need to pull over and stop because there is not room for two vehicles to pass each other with the truck/trailer parked there. She urged the Commission to address this hazard before a child is hurt.

Diana Hood, City resident, commented that she resides three blocks from 36th Avenue NE and 9th Street NE. The truck/trailer have not moved since last Fall or when the owner was ticketed. She indicated state law sets forth that campers cannot stay on the street longer than five days and then need to be moved. Due to the parked truck/trailer, other vehicles have to drive in the middle of the road and oncoming vehicles have to pull over to the left. She expressed safety concerns for school children that have to walk on that side of the street and cross at that intersection to walk to school. There is no sidewalk on the other side of the street. Additionally, the owner did not move the truck/trailer today for the street sweepers, which causes pine cones and other debris to plug drains down the street.

Three weeks ago there was a wreck at that intersection involving a young driver that could not see the stop sign. She urged the Commission to look into this hazard. She further suggested that the Commission consider City Codes about campers parked on streets, similar to other cities, for the safety of the people of Great Falls.

Mayor Kelly thanked both citizens for expressing their concerns to the Commission.

Police Chief Jeff Newton acknowledge receipt of Ms. Gertson's email. Police personnel have dealt with this individual six times. He reported that he would be working with the City Attorney from this

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

point forward for a potential resolution to this problem.

Jeni Dodd, City resident, commented that Graybill Park was busy this Memorial weekend. She opined that more people could have used the park, but parking was limited due to a private business owner, who is also on a City advisory board, storing equipment and vehicles at one of the small parking areas for the park. She continued that the City has allowed this usage for several years despite City Code prohibiting overnight parking at City parks. She doubts the City would tolerate other adjacent property owners using the parking area of the park as their overflow parking for extended periods, or to store recreational vehicles, equipment or vehicles. Others are required to pay for storage for all of these things, while this person has received free storage for years. She alleged corruption of City government, and suggested the City charge this person for past storage, immediately ban the person from using the park for storage and remove this person from the advisory board position. Another potential safety issue is that this person parks a big trailer at the corner of the 34th Street and 8th Avenue North intersection making it hard to see oncoming traffic. Ms. Dodd concluded that the Commission has discussed RV parking since 2010 and nothing has been done.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

3. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Commissioner Houck commented that it was announced at the recent meeting of the Council of Councils that NeighborWorks would be providing a grant opportunity for each of the Neighborhood Councils to apply, up to \$500, to help with engagement, including ice cream socials.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

4. APPOINTMENT TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE.

Commissioner Moe moved, seconded by Commissioners Houck and Robinson, that the City Commission appoint Stephanie Berg to the Audit Committee to fill a private citizen position for a three-year term through June 30, 2024.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public or discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner Tryon noted applicant Gavin's qualifications, and inquired why applicant Berg was recommended for appointment.

Mayor Kelly commented that the committee had a robust discussion about the difficult choice to make.

Finance Director Melissa Kinzler added that the committee chose Ms. Berg because of her audit committee experience at Pacific Steel & Recycling. The other two applicants were also qualified.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kelly called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

5. REAPPOINTMENT TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Houck moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission reappoint Doug Spence for a five-year term through June 30, 2026 to the Great Falls Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public or discussion amongst the Commissioners. Hearing none, Mayor Kelly called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

6. REAPPOINTMENT TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (HPAC).

Commissioner Robinson moved, seconded by Commissioner Houck, that the City Commission reappoint Richard Ecke and Ellen Sievert to the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission for three-year terms through April 30, 2024.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public.

Susan Ashley, City resident, read bible verse Philippians 4:8. It makes her sad to see buildings be torn down and forgotten, and the stories of city and county ancestors disappear without an attempt to preserve the heritage of Cascade County for future generations to enjoy and to learn from. She believes in the existence of boards, but does not believe in reappointments. She urged the Commission to not reappoint, and to strive to find other community members that do not have a conflict of interest. Four of the nine-board membership also serve on the board for the Big Sky National Heritage Area. She further noted that the first goal of the HPAC is to assist the Big Sky National Heritage Area in their effort to create Montana's first National Heritage Area and to create a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines future cooperation between the two entities. She opined that it is unethical and against the law to be on both boards.

Jeni Dodd, City resident, commented that she is leading the fight against the National Heritage Area. One of the main reasons is that it includes all of Cascade County and all of the private property without notification to all of the private property owners. Mr. Ecke and Ms. Sievert are excellent people and she does not have a problem with them personally. However, she does have a problem with them serving on the HPAC while also serving as board members of the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area, Inc. Four people serve on both boards. She feels there are potential conflicts of interest. It has manifested itself into the City assisting a private non-profit in accomplishing its goals, which is against state law. She asked the Commission to decline the reappointments.

Trent Short, County resident and owner of property in Great Falls, noted his previously submitted written comments. He asked the Commission to decline the reappointments.

Written communication in opposition to the reappointments of Richard Ecke and Ellen Sievert to the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission was received from: **Gordon Jacobs, Steven Galloway, Lola Galloway, Trent Short, Mark Workman, Lewis Zanto, Katie Hanning, on behalf of Home Builders Association of Great Falls, and Rae Grulkowski.**

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Mayor Kelly noted that this is not the time to discuss the reappointment procedures. City Attorney Sara Sexe agreed, adding that the Commission has established procedures for appointments to boards and commissions.

Mayor Kelly asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner Robinson commented that he was proud to have made the motion. Rich Ecke and Ellen Sievert have done so much for the City of Great Falls and Cascade County in their historical works. The HPAC does not have anything to do with the heritage efforts, both just happen to have the same thoughts and beliefs. The HPAC will not be making motions to do something for the other board. He is honored to put their names forward for reappointment to the HPAC.

Commissioner Tryon expressed concerns regarding cross-pollination between the executive board of the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area, Inc. (BSCNHA) and the HPAC. His issue is not about whether Rich Ecke and Ellen Sievert are qualified, or the good work they have done for our community. Their reappointment presents, at the very least, the appearance of a conflict of interest. If both are reappointed to the HPAC, the Commission will have three of the four City appointees on the HPAC that also serve on the BSCNHA, a private, non-profit corporation. Commissioner Tryon reviewed the HPAC meeting minutes and clarified that there is a sub-committee of the HPAC dedicated to promoting the Big Sky National Heritage Act. The sub-committee has made motions to send letters of support for the BSCNHA. He suggested the appointment policy be revisited, so that all board openings are advertised, regardless of whether members are interested in being reappointed.

Commissioner Tryon continued that the HPAC is intended to represent all of the citizens in Great Falls and Cascade County without a bias towards a political objective of a private, non-profit organization and to not use the public advisory commission as a platform to promote that political agenda. The Big Sky National Heritage Area has become a political issue. There are a number of organizations in Great Falls that represent hundreds of citizens in this community that oppose the Big Sky National Heritage Area.

Commissioner Tryon suggested that the Commission take a vote to not reappoint Mr. Ecke and Ms. Sievert, and to advertise the board openings for other people to apply. In the meantime, he further suggested that legal staff review City Code and advise the Commission whether there would be a potential conflict of interest because of the cross-pollination.

Commissioner Houck expressed frustration about the contradictory comments she just heard about appointments to this board versus appointments the Commission makes to other boards and commissions. This is not a debate about support for or opposition to the BSCNHA. The HPAC held numerous public meetings about the BSNHA going back to 2015. To grow our community, capitalize on our tourism and our heritage, we need the expert advice from those people. This meeting is an example of people who are against a particular organization and using it to block other things as a way to get their hidden political agenda in the news. This meeting is about the appointment of two people, and the criteria listed for appointments to this board. These two people have the qualifications and expertise for this board and are willing to serve.

Commissioner Moe commented that she is somewhat confused about the relationship between these two boards. She would like to hear from one of the applicants about what that relationship is.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Mayor Kelly agreed, but also requested that Director Raymond explain the role of the HPAC.

Director Raymond responded that the HPAC is a City and County member board, and participate in the advocacy and support of historic preservation in many forms. He pointed out that a goal in the 2013 City Growth Policy, voted on and approved by the City Commission, is to support the effort of the BSNHA. It stands to reason that members of the HPAC might serve in the capacity if they are in direct support of the BSNHA organization because it is a specific goal of the City Commission.

Rich Ecke, Applicant and City resident, reported that he is currently the Chairman of the HPAC and Vice-Chairman of the BSCNHA. He pointed out that there are specific requirements to be appointed to the HPAC. He qualifies to be a member because he owns a property that is listed on the National Register of Historical places. The HPAC did vote on sending a letter to the BSCNHA board endorsing the proposal to create the heritage area. In 2021, the NHA group is going to submit a feasibility study to the National Park Service. The study looked at whether there was a legitimate reason to create a heritage area, which included whether the area within the proscribed boundaries has interesting history and culture. The area includes four national landmarks.

Mr. Ecke commented that the members that are on the HPAC and the BSCNHA board are very attuned to the issue of ethics and following proper procedures. The City Attorney has advised City staff and the HPAC about what the proper procedures would be in a couple of instances. One instance pertained to the HPAC wanting to send a letter endorsing the proposal for the heritage area. The advice from City legal staff was to be open and transparent about the fact that there are some members on two boards. There are differing goals of each board. He will recuse himself in situations when advised by legal counsel that he should not vote on something. He concluded that the fact that the Commission already included this in its goals and objectives does not indicate to him that there is a problem with being on both boards.

Commissioner Moe commented that a couple of years ago she raised the question of how the Commission does appointments and that she would like to see them opened up fully to everyone prior to coming to the Commission. Her viewpoint did not prevail. Although she would like to see the board openings apply to everyone, she would also think the existing members have an edge because it does take a while to know the issues involved. She does take great exception to the perception language. Perception is gossip. Conflict of interest is a precise legal matter. The HPAC has been careful to find out if they do have a conflict of interest from legal staff. She thinks the Commission needs to be very cognizant of the difference between perception and reality. She is persuaded by Director Raymond's comments that it would be odd for a member of this particular board not to be involved with the Big Sky Heritage effort given the language in the Growth Policy that is in effect. It would be odd for the Commission not to appoint people who have done what the Commission said we wanted them to do.

In response to Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Tryon commented that this is not an issue about not appointing a board member if they have other outside interests. This is about using HPAC as a platform to specifically promote a non-profit, incorporated entity. He read excerpts from the December 11, 2019 and January 8, 2020 HPAC meeting minutes. He noted other dates that the HPAC meeting agendas contained an item for BSCNHA board updates on what this private, incorporated entity is doing, and how they are promoting the BSCNHA.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Commissioner Tryon noted that he didn't believe it was called the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area in 2012 or 2013 when the Growth Policy was updated. The BSCNHA was not formed until 2015.

Commissioner Tryon read sections of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls Code of Ethics. He concluded that it is obvious to him that by appointing members that sit on a board of a private, incorporated organization to a City appointed board to promote that private, incorporated organization violates the spirit of the City's Code of Ethics.

Commissioner Houck reiterated that the HPAC and the Growth Policy is how this non-profit started. This item is not about the BSCNHA. It is about the reappointment of two people to an advisory council that have to have specific requirements to be on the HPAC. Commissioner Houck called for the question.

There being no objection, Mayor Kelly called for the vote on the reappointment of Rich Ecke and Ellen Sievert.

Motion carried 4-1 (Commissioner Tryon dissenting).

7. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

None.

CITY MANAGER

8. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

City Manager Greg Doyon updated the Commission on the following:

- Aim High Big Sky Recreation Center (OF 1770) – The design team met on May 21st and primarily discussed final design renderings, construction timelines and bidding requirements, and pool features. The team began reviewing bid alternatives to include a splash pad, retractable walls, sound systems, flooring, acoustic panels, and some potential Covid preventative measures. The drawings are proposed to be completed by August 1st.
- The complaint filed by Mr. Faccenda still has not been resolved with the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC). In summary, Manager Doyon reported that staff has been willing in any way to assist OLDCC to resolve the concern; OLDCC is not indicating exactly what the concern is; OLDCC has requested some information, including minutes. He is not sure OLDCC will get the full context in just reading minutes and he provided links to meeting videos as well; and, he expressed concern about the bonding process and interest rates due to the delay of not hearing back from OLDCC after submitting a response and legal opinion to them on April 19, 2021.

Mayor Kelly commented that this project has been about partnership. With community support, the incredibly aggressive application deadline was met. The City's partnership with OLDCC has been incredible up to this point. He hopes OLDCC is aware of what these delays do to the

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

municipal process, including financing, planning, cost of goods, and the requirements they put on the grant itself, which is shovels in the ground by September 1st. He appreciated Manager Doyon's efforts to assist OLDCC in any way possible to get this problem resolved. As much of a nuisance as Mr. Faccenda's complaint is, and as expensive as it has been, he hopes OLCDD can expedite the process.

Manager Doyon noted that the OLDCC representatives he has been working with are responsive. The delay is residing within the Office of General Counsel and the attorney that advises them.

Commissioner Moe expressed concern that (1) there is no specification from OLDCC of what the concern is, and (2) the minutes do not capture everything that was said, do not capture the context, and particularly do not capture what wasn't said. She is disappointed that the City did not have an aquatic center going into this process and may not have one going out, but there is integrity in the City's processes against some challenges.

Manager Doyon commented when the original complaint came in the City submitted a response with backup documentation. At that point, it was indicated the City would be okay. The complaint persisted. It got to the point that there was concerns about potentially accepting the grant, and then only to have it clawed back. The City Attorney was involved in the entire process. When OLDCC requested an opinion from legal counsel, he went external and retained Jim Zadick. Manager Doyon feels comfortable with Attorney Zadick's response. He spent a lot of time looking at the particular sections of federal code pertaining to the acquisition part of it.

Commissioner Houck commented that she understands it has been very costly in both dollars and time responding to Mr. Faccenda's concerns. After submittal of Attorney Zadick's legal opinion, she inquired if there was any indication from OLDCC that Mr. Faccenda has supplied additional documents that the City is not in receipt of.

Manager Doyon responded that OLDCC indicated they have not been in contact with Mr. Faccenda.

Commissioner Houck inquired if OLDCC had been in contact with any members of the Commission.

Manager Doyon responded not that he was aware.

- Manager Doyon reported that Collective Bargaining Agreements have been negotiated with Crafts, Great Falls Police Protective Association, and MFPE, pending approval from their members. If approved, those agreements will come before the Commission for ratification on July 6, 2021.
- Meeting dates and times that will work for the members of the Crime Task Force are being finalized.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

- Senators Tester and Hoven have a bill pending in the Senate to add funding for the High Intensity Drug Task Force (HIDTA), Operation Stonegarden, and Community Oriented Policing.
- The CDBG/HOME Annual Action Plan will be available for a 30-day public comment period beginning June 7, 2021.
- The Civic Center Façade project (OF 1525.2) began today. The contractor will start mobilizing job trailers and setting up fencing. It is going to be a long process. They will try to minimize disruption around the Civic Center.
- The filing period for municipal election seats for offices of the mayor, two commissioners, and the neighborhood councils ends June 21st. Municipal election paperwork is filed at the Cascade County Election Office.
- New hires include: Jacob Walmsley, City Prosecutor; Casey Dobson, Criminal Division Legal Intern; Jason Fladland, Water Treatment Branch Manager; and, Mark Juras, Senior Engineer.

CONSENT AGENDA.

9. Minutes, May 18, 2021, City Commission Meeting.
10. Total Expenditures of \$1,642,273 for the period of May 5, 2021 through May 19, 2021, to include claims over \$25,000, in the amount of \$1,219,463
11. Contracts List.

Commissioner Robinson moved, seconded by Commissioner Moe, that the City Commission adopt the Consent Agenda as presented.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public or discussion amongst the Commissioners. Hearing none, Mayor Kelly called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

12. **TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (TBID) 2020/2021 BUDGET AMENDMENT.**

Mayor Kelly declared the public hearing open and asked for presentation of the staff report.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Great Falls Montana Tourism Executive Director Rebecca Engum, 100 1st Avenue North, reported that this public hearing is for consideration of a budget amendment. Before the Commission is the fifth revision of the TBID budget throughout the year. They were diligent in securing outside funds. Because of the combined effort through Great Falls Montana Tourism, they secured safety funds through the CVB designation, relief funds through both the TBID and CVB, and \$502,646 additional dollars that the TBID did not have when the Commission approved the budget. They were opportunistic with strategies and objectives that would really spur the recovery for tourism in Great Falls. Adjustments were made to accommodate many of those strategies. One of the largest line items in the budget is an opportunity TBID took to occupy 15 Overlook Drive.

The TBID promotes Great Falls to potential leisure travelers, recruits meetings and conventions to Great Falls, supports tourism infrastructure, invests in new and growing events, advocates for the tourism industry, and assists in-market guests with having an “only in Great Falls” experience. To better perform all operations, the TBID Trustees have taken advantage of the opportunity to relocate operations to 15 Overlook Drive and make an investment in leasehold improvements. This strategic move will better showcase Great Falls to in-market guests and present a better first impression to meeting planners.

They also looked at the other strategic priorities and invested in infrastructure assets, such as supporting some airline efforts, and creating a new event in the community.

Funds were reallocate, expenses adjusted, and funds placed into reserve. As a result, they did not have to deficit spend this year out of reserves for operations.

Mayor Kelly asked if the Commission members had any clarifying questions. No one responded.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public in support of or in opposition to the TBID 2020/2021 Budget Amendment. Hearing none, Mayor Kelly closed the public hearing and asked the will of the Commission.

Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Commissioner Houck, that the City Commission approve the 2020/2021 Tourism Business Improvement District Budget Amendment.

Mayor Kelly asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner Houck applauded Director Engum and the team for all of their efforts during this difficult year.

Motion carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS

13. DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT AMENDMENT.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

I. RESOLUTION 10408, RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO APPROVE THE FAÇADE PROGRAM, THE LIFE SAFETY/CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY PROGRAM; AMEND THE DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL PLAN FOR THE DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT IN ORDER TO AUTHORIZE, APPROVE AND INCORPORATE THEREUNDER SUCH PROGRAMS; AND AUTHORIZE THE GREAT FALLS OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF SUCH PROGRAMS.

II. ORDINANCE 3229, APPROVING THE FAÇADE PROGRAM, THE LIFE SAFETY/CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY PROGRAM; AMENDING THE DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL PLAN FOR THE DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT IN ORDER TO AUTHORIZE, APPROVE AND INCORPORATE THEREUNDER SUCH PROGRAMS; AND AUTHORIZING THE GREAT FALLS OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF SUCH PROGRAMS.

Planning and Community Development Director Craig Raymond reported that this item is a request to consider Resolution of Intent 10408 which presents the proposed plan changes by introducing three new workable programs to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan, publishes preliminary findings related to the amendment, and calls for a public hearing on the consideration of Ordinance 3229 for July 6, 2021.

The City Commission recently approved of another DURP amendment, which specifically targeted the inclusion of the Civic Center Façade renovation project as an eligible activity under the plan. During the course of that amendment, it became clear to City staff and the Commission that the downtown community was interested in further expanding the eligible activities in the Urban Renewal Area not unlike what other Montana communities currently offer. Specific activities discussed have included Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, ADA compliance life safety improvement program and a façade renovation program.

The Downtown Master Plan identifies the desire for preserving, restoring, and reusing downtown's historic buildings and sites as an objective to meet the goal of enhancing downtown aesthetics. The proposed Downtown Urban Renewal Area Façade Program opens up TIF financing to potentially assist in the financing of many more façade renovation efforts. The program provides for up to a \$50,000 reimbursement per project for eligible façade renovation activities.

The Life Safety Code Compliance Program is designed to stimulate increased public safety and handicap accessibility improvement projects. Due to the historic nature of the downtown building inventory, many buildings are rife with building and fire code violations as well as features that impede the use and enjoyment of services and activities for those with physical and mobility impairments. The total reimbursement available for each requested project under the Life Safety Code Compliance Program is \$25,000.

The Environmental Safety Program works toward the elimination of blight based upon the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (Environmental Safety) and other safety and security design principles. Environmental safety is a set of design principles used to discourage crime

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

and promote building security. It can also be used to create inviting and safe public spaces where people can gather and socialize. The total reimbursement benefit for each project is \$5,000.

At the initiation of the programs, the total annual TIF request to fund the programs is \$500,000. Depending on the success of the program and TIF fund balance health, it could conceivably be possible that a request could be made to the City Commission in the future to either increase or decrease the total program budget. It should also be noted that applicants may apply through all three programs at one time for a total possible allocation of TIF funds in the amount of \$80,000 under the program. Each property would be eligible for such consideration once every 15 years. Funding applications, which fall within the program funding caps, will be processed by City staff and final funding decisions will be made by the Director of Planning & Community Development or the Deputy Director when the Director is not available or has a conflict of interest on the application. One more important element of the program is that from time to time, unique high impact opportunities present themselves that may need funding beyond the prescribed funding caps. In these cases, applicants may indeed submit an application that staff will present to the City Commission for consideration. This process preserves the City Commission's discretion to grant funds in excess of the caps for special circumstances.

On May 25, 2021, the Planning Advisory Board found that the proposed plan amendments are consistent with the Growth Policy, and on May 26, 2021, the Downtown Development Partnership voted unanimously to recommend that the City Commission approve of the proposed plan amendment.

Commissioner Moe moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission adopt Resolution of Intention 10408, and set a public hearing for July 6, 2021.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public.

Brett Doney, Great Falls Development Authority (GFDA), announced that GFDA, along with other downtown partners and City staff, would be offering TIF workshops over the next couple of months so property owners are aware of TIF rules and how to apply for funds.

Joan Redeen, Business Improvement District, commented that they worked hard to create the programs at the Commission's request, and that they were modeled after other communities in the State. She requested the Commission's affirmative support.

Mayor Kelly asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Hearing none, Mayor Kelly called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Moe moved, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, that the City Commission accept Ordinance 3229 on first reading set a public hearing for July 6, 2021.

Mayor Kelly asked if there were any comments from the public or discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Hearing none, Mayor Kelly called for the vote.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

June 1, 2021

Motion carried 5-0.

CITY COMMISSION

14. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Commissioner Houck commented that an amazing group of young adults recently graduated in Great Falls. It was a difficult school year due to Covid. They succeeded when the odds were against them.

15. COMMISSION INITIATIVES.

Mayor Kelly requested the concurrence of the Commissioners to direct Police and Legal Department staff to look into what steps the Commission can take to address nuisance, traffic and children safety issues that exist around the community regarding trailers parked on City streets. No one objected.

Commissioner Robinson noted that addressing trailers parked on streets was Mayor Kelly's initiative over a year ago, and the Commissioners all agreed. However, due to Covid, that initiative was set aside and it is now time to do something about it.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Commissioner Moe, to adjourn the regular meeting of June 1, 2021, at 8:59 p.m.**

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Bob Kelly

City Clerk Lisa Kunz

Minutes Approved: June 15, 2021