

**JOURNAL OF JOINT WORK SESSION MEETING WITH  
CITY COMMISSION AND CRIME TASK FORCE  
Virtual Meeting by Zoom  
November 2, 2021**

City Commission Joint Work Session

Mayor Kelly presiding

**CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM**

Due to the COVID-19 health concerns, the format of the City Commission Work Session was held in a virtual video-conferencing environment.

**ROLL CALL/STAFF INTRODUCTIONS:** City Commission members participated electronically via Zoom Webinar: Bob Kelly, Tracy Houck, Mary Sheehy Moe, Owen Robinson and Rick Tryon. City Staff participating electronically were: City Manager Greg Doyon, Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson, Municipal Court Judge Bolstad and City Attorney Jeff Hindoien. City Clerk Lisa Kunz was present in the Commission Chambers.

Great Falls Crime Task Force Members (TFM) participated electronically via Zoom Webinar: Sandra Guynn, Sara Sexe, Jeff Newton, Shane Etwiler, Dugan Coburn, John Parker, Nichole Griffith and Ex-Officio member Rick Tryon.

To honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know (Article II, Sections 8 and 9 of the Montana Constitution), modifications have also been made for public participation.

To attend and participate in the virtual meeting utilizing Zoom, attendees must register in advance for the Commission Meeting at: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_P6nH5PaQT1mREJwM3mc8WQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_P6nH5PaQT1mREJwM3mc8WQ)

For all other participation options, please see **Public Participation Guide for City Commission Meetings**.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Written correspondence, via November 2, 2021 email, was received from **Terry Bjork**, explained several reasons why the Crime Task Force Recommendations should be either sent back to the Task Force for a re-do, or modified by the Commission and City staff.

Participating via Zoom were:

**Pastor Stephen Underwood**, City resident, expressed opposition to the Great Falls Crime Task Force's recommendation to ban syringe exchanges.

**Beth Morrison**, Cascade County Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist, expressed concern with regard to the language on page 4 P (a) of the Great Falls Crime Task Force Recommendations. She requested that the Commission and Crime Task Force members not consider the recommendation to ban syringe drop/exchanges in the current context.

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**1. NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL #6 UPDATES.**

None.

**2. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CRIME TASK FORCE.**

Mayor Kelly expressed appreciation to the Crime Task Force members, public and City staff for their time and efforts with regard to Task Force Meetings.

Ex-Officio TFM Tryon reiterated that it was the consensus of the City Commission at its February 2021 goal-setting meeting to form a Crime Task Force to address crime issues in the City. Ex-Officio TFM Tryon further explained the procedures and processes with regard to the forming the Crime Task Force. Referring to page 4 P (a) of the Great Falls Crime Task Force Recommendations, he clarified that the recommendation is to have City staff review what can be done about the syringe exchange program and not to completely ban the program.

Chairperson Guynn introduced Crime Task Force members: Sara Sexe, Jeff Newton, Shane Etwiler, Dugan Coburn, Jesse Slaughter, John Parker, Nichole Griffith, and Ex-Officio member Rick Tryon.

Chairperson Guynn explained that after several meetings, Crime Task Force members' recommendations included the following categories: resources; communication and education; consequences; partnerships and collaboration. A draft of the recommendations was posted on the City's website for public review and comment. The recommendations that were finalized at the September 27, 2021 Crime Task Force meeting are not in any particular order. She expressed appreciation to the Task Force members, agencies that presented, and City staff for their efforts.

Mayor Kelly commented that the Task Force Recommendations are a robust list that provides an overall assessment of the areas that the City is lacking.

City Attorney Hindoien explained that, if there are additional Police Department personnel and resources, there would also need to be additional personnel for the Legal Department and Municipal Court in order to handle the increased work load.

TFM Sexe explained that increased personnel for the Legal Department is an immediate and future need.

Municipal Court Judge Bolstad concurred with TFM Sexe and City Attorney Hindoien's statements. He expressed concern with the recommendations on page 5 S, stating that the suspension of driver's licenses is no longer allowed because of changes in legislation. He commented that several of the recommendations should coincide with one another.

TFM Parker commented that the recommendations include a constitutional structure.

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Commissioner Houck received clarification that the Crime Task Force would be dissolved after the presentation of recommendations. She further received clarification that the cost impact of crime to the local medical community was not provided to the Crime Task Force.

Chairperson Guynn reported that the Billings Community Impact Study showed the amount of money that repeat offenders are costing the City, as well as other entities. She suggested having a Community Impact Study done for Great Falls.

Ex-Officio TFM Tryon suggested staying focused on the Criminal Justice System and how to address crime locally. He reiterated that the Crime Task Force Recommendations are a starting point to give the community a look at what the City is faced with and what the options are.

Chairperson Guynn clarified that the Crime Task Force could only consider recommendations that were within the City's purview.

Judge Bolstad commented that educating the community about the limitations of the law, as well as legislative changes is an issue that needs to be addressed. He expressed concern with regard to courts of limited jurisdiction having mistrials due to not being able to seat a jury. He expressed support of the recommendation for the Pre-Trial Services Program.

Ex-Officio TFM Tryon responded that page 3 K of the recommendations addresses educating the community.

Commissioner Moe received clarification that TFM Coburn suggested recommendation Y on page 6. She expressed concern with regard to the recommendations not including findings and commented that the recommendations are untethered without them.

Ex-Officio TFM Tryon responded that the Crime Task Force met the requirements of Resolution 10395.

Chairperson Guynn added that the Crime Task Force had done what it was tasked to do, relied on assistance from City staff to line up speakers and brought forth the recommendations based upon input that was received from entities that presented.

TFM Etwiler commented that a goal of the Crime Task Force was to come up with actionable recommendations, short and long-term solutions and be comprehensive with data that was provided. He mentioned that the time constraint was a big challenge; however, the Crime Task Force did a great job putting together what it was tasked to do.

TFM Griffith explained that having a prior Community Impact Study and more time to delve into the issues would have been beneficial to the Crime Task Force, and then the Crime Task Force could have provided more specific recommendations. She concluded that mental health and substance abuse is a huge issue in the community.

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Mayor Kelly suggested exploring the recommendations that do not have a dollar amount attached to them and providing findings for the other recommendations.

**DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS**

City Manager Doyon reported that the November 16, 2021 work session includes an update from Neighborhood Council #8, as well as a presentation about change orders and alternate project delivery. A Special Meeting pertaining to the opioid litigation is scheduled for December 7, 2021. The December 7, 2021 work session includes an update from Neighborhood Council #3. There may be time at the December 7, 2021 work session to add ARPA or Crime Task Force recommendation discussions.

Mayor Kelly commented that the Commission members would respond individually about which topic to add to the December 7, 2021 work session.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kelly adjourned the informal work session of November 2, 2021 at 6:46 p.m.