

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION
November 1, 2022

City Commission Work Session
Civic Center, Gibson Room 212

Mayor Pro Tempore Wolff presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Wolff, Joe McKenney, Eric Hinebauch and Rick Tryon. Mayor Bob Kelly was excused.

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson; Interim City Attorney David Dennis; Finance Director Melissa Kinzler, Grant Administrator Tom Hazen and ARPA Project Manager Sylvia Tarman; Planning and Community Development Director Craig Raymond; Public Works Engineer Mark Juras; Municipal Court Judge Steve Bolstad and Court Supervisor Morgan Medvec; Fire Chief Jeremy Jones; Police Chief Jeff Newton, Captain Doug Otto and Records Manager Rachel Vallie; and, Deputy City Clerk Darcy Dea.

PUBLIC COMMENT


Written correspondence, via November 1, 2022 email, was received from **Terry Bjork**, suggested several options with regard to the Public Safety Levy Community Education Program RFP.

Kevin Weste, 602 35th Street North, discussed the following topics: recession, pollution, excessive government regulations, 401k Retirement Plans, Tax Increment Financing Tax Industrial District (TIFTID), Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospitals, crime and national forest management research.

Ben Forsyth, City resident, commented that he is a part of a group who are very opposed to marijuana and are attempting to help local governments find ways to deal with the harms of marijuana and some of the laws that apply to marijuana. The laws of the State of Montana and the OCCGF 17.4.050 specifically states that a City cannot do zoning that will harm the health, safety and welfare of the people. Mr. Forsyth added that if the public votes to allow recreational marijuana, his goal is that the Commission adopt Cannabis Ruderalis in its original form as the best way to meet the dictates of I-190 and the laws of the State of Montana that cover health, safety and welfare.

1. GFPD EVIDENCE EXPANSION UPDATE


Finance Grant Administrator Tom Hazen reviewed and discussed the following PowerPoint:



GFPD Evidence
WE ARE THE COMMUNITY, THEY ARE US
Expansion Update

November 1, 2022

Need for a Project



Need for a Project

Evidence Processing



Evidence Storage



Need for a Project

Evidence	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5-yr Total
Pieces In	13,891	10,094	10,177	12,726	15,086	61,974
Pieces Out	7,045	3,865	6,245	9,120	10,048	36,323

Homicide: 300 to 700 pieces per year

Other Growth:
COPS Grant
Crime Task Force

Project Status Narrative

August 2022 - enlisted BSpark Architecture to provide pre-design services to evaluate feasible project options



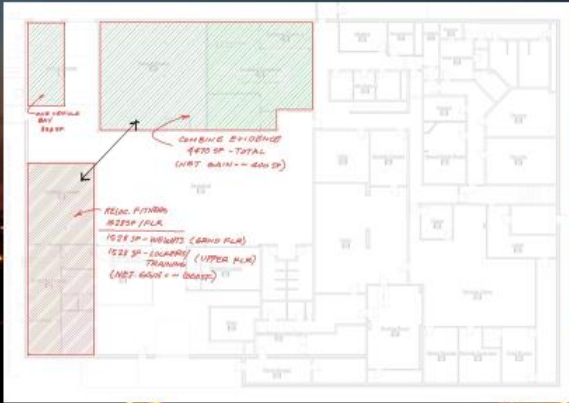

Great Falls Police Department
Evidence Room Expansion
Preliminary Options Study
Great Falls, MT
October 2022

Project Status Narrative

Project Options
A - Optimize/Remodel Existing Space
B - Building Expansion - Evidence

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Option A: Optimize/Remodel Existing Space



Option A: Optimize/Remodel Existing Space

Description	Optimization & remodeling of existing evidence processing and storage space, ~10% increase in evidence storage (4,130 sf to 4,470 sf).
Budget	\$1.10 million
Pros	Uses existing space with little to no impact on systems. Provides safe (ventilated) more secure vehicle bays using existing space.
Cons	Does not increase overall square footage/storage to allow for future growth despite the cost.

Option B: Building Expansion - Evidence



Option B: Building Expansion – Evidence
***Recommended Option**

Description	Expand building and relocate / unify evidence processing and storage, add vehicle processing bays, office space, and circulation/multi purpose use areas, ~6,100 sf multi-level expansion.
Budget	\$4.42 million
Pros	Increases storage by 82%. Optimizes evidence processing by moving all procedures/interactions to one area. Adds vehicle search bays. Minimal impact on current operations via southern building expansion. Improves PD parking and provides secure parking and entrance for staff and evidence customers.
Cons	Lacks designated space for a new training room



Option Summary

	Option A	Option B
Budget	\$1.10 m	\$4.42 m
Potential Funding Source	ARPA	ARPA



ARPA Funds Must be Allocated by Dec 2024, Spent by Dec 2026

Grant Administrator Hazen reported that the Project Team recommends option B.

Commissioner Tryon inquired about the con for option B lacking dedicated space for a new training room.

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Police Chief Jeff Newton responded that a long-term goal is to increase the size of the training classroom to allow other vendors to utilize the training room because sending officers to outside training is expensive. If option B goes forward, there are other alternatives down the road for the training room and the current focus is expanding the evidence building.

Commissioner Tryon commented that expanding the evidence building is an absolute necessity and option B seems like the best option. He inquired about the additional \$3.5 million for the project.

Police Chief Newton responded that the \$1.5 million estimate for the project was derived several years ago for a freestanding, metal garage that would have had security issues and the Project Team determined that a freestanding building would not work.

Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson added that the additional money would have to come from ARPA funds. The red balance of \$1.4 on the ARPA Project Sheet is what would be available if all projects on the sheet were executed.

Grant Administrator Hazen added that the estimates are very preliminary and there will be adjustments to some of the numbers, except for the projects in the FY23 Budget category on the sheet are fixed.

Commissioner Tryon reiterated that, as he indicated and anticipated would happen at the beginning of this process, the decision to give \$3 million to community partners was made too early. He hopes moving forward, that the Commission will consider where the priorities are for the ARPA money. Commissioner Tryon commented that community partners receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other federal funding on a regular basis, whereas the ARPA money is one-time funding that the City could utilize for essential and necessary City priorities. He commented that City staff might have to seriously consider cutting back the \$3 million that was decided upon to be made available to community partners.

Grant Administrator Hazen responded that the application process is closed and the Review Committee has reviewed the applications; however, there would be more discussion at a special work session on November 17, 2022.

Referring to the ARPA Project Sheet, Commissioner Hinebauch received clarification that the asterisks indicate completed projects and other than the FY23 budget category, other identified uses are estimated costs that could change. He commented that the Commission needs real estimates with regard to the remaining projects on the list, prior to making any decisions about cutting back the \$3 million allocated to community partners.

Deputy City Manager Anderson responded that the ARPA Project Sheet is a living document that is being updated to reflect the most current dollar value.

Grant Administrator Hazen added that the ARPA Project Manager is a new position to specifically help reduce and tie down some of these costs.

Commissioner McKenney received clarification that there would be an increase in operational expense; however, current personnel would be utilized with regard to the expansion of the evidence building. He further received clarification that completion of the project could take approximately 18 months.

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Mayor Pro Tempore Wolff inquired if the evidence building would be structurally sound enough to add to in the future.

Keith Ballantyne, BSpark Architecture, responded that the recommended option B is at a schematic design level and option D offers the ability for future expansion; however, it is not being considered because of the cost.

2. GFFR STATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE

Finance Grant Administrator Tom Hazen reported that this project would improve the air quality by upgrading and improving the HVAC systems in all four fire stations. Social distancing capabilities would be increased by improving the dormitories and restrooms/locker rooms. Currently, the air systems do not accommodate fresh air properly or function at all. There have been repeated system failures due to age or malfunctioning equipment and is affecting the safety of the firefighters. Cushing Terrell Project Manager Tony Houtz established a scope for the project, anticipated it will go out to bid in early 2023 and projected it to be completed within a 12-month calendar year.

Fire Chief Jeremy Jones explained that infrastructure is needed because the plumbing, wastewater, heating and lighting are failing. The project is not niceties; it is a matter of keeping the four fire stations operational and functional.

Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson added that fire station 4 is back in operation after being out of service for a while because of some unknown infrastructure failures. He reiterated that this project is not niceties; it is necessities.

Mayor Pro Tempore Wolff explained that she toured fire station 1 and the dormitory was like walking into a meat locker and extremely cold. She added that the HVAC systems have issues and it is important to keep the firefighters safe.

3. CRIME TASK FORCE UPDATES/SAFETY LEVY

Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson explained that City Manager Greg Doyon had sent the Commission a draft Request for Proposals (RFP). He requested that the Commission provide feedback on items it would like to see emphasized, changed, increased, decreased, as well as to determine an amount it would like to spend. He reiterated that there has not been any final decision made about a Public Safety Levy; however, this puts in place an expert team that would assist the City form a clear message to the community.

Mayor Pro Tempore Wolff suggested the following changes to the draft RFP:

- Add the site of the article that City Manager Doyon sent to the Commission about Great Falls being the fourth largest growing community in the state
- Include Great Falls Fire Rescue (GFFR) to the last paragraph on page 1, and the judicial system
- Include the Sentinel Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) project

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Commissioner McKenney inquired if it is unusual to hire a PR firm with regard to a levy, because he does not recall the City doing that in the past.

Deputy City Manager Anderson responded that hiring a PR firm is not unusual. In 2009, the City tried a Public Safety Levy that did not pass; however, the Great Falls Public School District has been successful with its levies and received guidance from professional organizations.

Commissioner McKenney inquired if the City could endorse the levy and if a Commissioner could act as a private citizen to either publicly support or oppose the levy.

Deputy City Manager Anderson responded that the City would need to remain neutral; however, the City could propose to have an education campaign to help the community understand that the Commission could not publicly support or oppose the levy.

Interim City Attorney David Dennis responded that a Commissioner could act as a private citizen; however, they would need to be very cautious not to present their view in a Commission capacity. He recommended that it would be best that a Commissioner not get involved one way or another and to allow the educational campaign to work.

Commissioner Tryon reiterated that no decisions are being made at this work session and while he appreciates Mr. Bjork's comments and suggestions from his email, it is a fundamental misunderstanding of what is being done at tonight's work session. Commissioner Tryon concurred with Interim City Attorney Dennis's recommendation about the Commission not getting involved in any capacity and allowing the educational campaign to work.

Commissioner Tryon received clarification that the three-tiered proposal with service packages beginning at \$50,000, to \$100,000 and \$150,000 would come from a reserve fund. He further received clarification that ARPA funds would not qualify; however, CARES funds could potentially be utilized. Commissioner Tryon commented that he would prefer that CARES funds be utilized instead of the general fund.

Deputy City Manager Anderson commented that the Commission should determine an amount of money it would want to spend. He suggested that the RFP could request that soliciting organizations include options with a \$50,000 through \$150,000 range with multi-faceted bids, so that organizations include what it could provide for each dollar amount.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the RFP include Deputy City Managers Anderson's suggestion of having the proposals come with a range.

Deputy City Manager Anderson provided and discussed a draft Good Better Best options for a Safety Levy handout that included Fire, Police, Legal and Municipal Court. He explained that the next version of the handout would include dollar ranges associated with each individual cost, as well as budgetary item impacts. The Collective Bargaining Agreements that are coming up for renegotiation, as well as the November 8, 2022 Election, will have an impact on the cost going forward.

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DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS

Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson reported that the topics for the November 15, 2022 work session would consist of Downtown Parking Program, Civic Center Façade Project, Crime Task Force and Public Safety Levy. An ARPA Application Scoring update will be a topic for a special work session on November 17, 2022.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Pro Tempore Wolff adjourned the informal work session of November 1, 2022 at 6:40 p.m.