

- **Survey**

- The city of Great Falls should contract for an in-depth, statistically significant survey that probes the opinion of Great Falls residents regarding their opinions regarding public safety (courts, city attorney, police and fire).
- Survey should not begin with any assumptions and should honestly query Great Falls residents regarding their level of support for public safety agencies, the level of support that residents believe is appropriate and whether they would support increased taxes to cover that support.
- Survey should ask open ended questions regarding opinions regarding current city services, the cost of these services, etc.
- Survey should specifically probe as to the level of taxpayer support/funding that the citizens of Great Falls are comfortable paying in taxes to allow the city to provide these services.

- **Local option taxes for marijuana**

- All local taxes received from the State from marijuana sales should be earmarked by the city for public safety.
- The city should ask the legislature to increase the amount of taxes from marijuana sales that come back to the municipality.
- City should ask the legislature to allow for an additional local option sales tax on “vice” sales, ie, marijuana, tobacco, etc.

- **Fee for service**

- The city should consider increasing fees for fire/business licenses to cover expenses.
- The city should increase fees for nuisance calls, including false calls from fire and security alarms.

- **Fireworks**

- The city should give authority to the fire chief and the city manager to make final decisions regarding the allowability of fireworks in city limits in July and January dependent on weather conditions and fire danger.
- The city should significantly increase fines for those that do not follow fireworks ordinances.

- **Mental health/social worker usage for some disturbance calls**

- While highly skilled and empathetic, the police department is simply not always the best agency to respond to every single disturbance. There are a number of circumstances that may be better served by a mental health professional or social worker. These individuals may be more efficient at some types of circumstances, and are certainly at a lower cost per hour than a sworn officer.
- The city should investigate contracting with mental health and social work professionals to respond to some disturbance calls. Organizations like the CCHD, Benefis and/or the Great Falls clinic may be able to give a good response to an RFP.

- A crisis center, similar to the one in Yellowstone County (<https://www.crisiscenterbillings.org>), may be able to prevent some disturbance calls. Coordinating with local agencies, hospitals and NGOs to create a similar center here may be highly effective.
- **Private EMS usage**
 - Our private EMS contractor operates for significantly less cost than GFFD officers. Even if our EMS provider funded a significant increase in salary, officials from the Great Falls fire department cost approximately \$70 per hour for service. We should do all we can to minimize/eliminate the use of GFFD for strictly EMS situations.
 - If the geographic location of the EMS contractor is an issue, the city should investigate renegotiating the EMS contract to include usage (rental?) of bays in our fire stations to the EMS company so that it can operate out of multiple locations in town to minimize response time.
- **Minimization of overtime**
 - Overtime is an incredibly inefficient utilization of public funds. For every 80 hours of weekly overtime the city will have spent the funds that could have paid for one additional full-time position.
 - The city should creatively examine ways to minimize/eliminate overtime. This could include coordination for services with other agencies that may have surplus personnel (CCSO/MTHP/Malmstrom Air Force Base for law enforcement, volunteer fire department/ air force for fire) and/or hiring additional positions.
- **Inter-agency cooperation**
 - The city should do all we can to coordinate public safety with CCSO. Great Falls residents fund both agencies and there is a great amount of confusion and frustration with the need to find two separate law enforcement agencies in the same area.
- **Nature of Levy Funding Requests**
 - City should not ask for huge, multi-agency levies. Citizens may be willing to approve less expensive, highly needed priorities (such as a jury clerk or a software upgrade for the court system) if they can fund it separately.
 - If the city decides to ask for another public safety levy, it should break up the request into separate requests for each agency (fire, courts, police). It may be efficacious to ask for approvals for separate agencies on completely separate ballots over several years.