

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
September 2, 2025 -- Regular City Commission Meeting
Civic Center Commission Chambers, Room 206 -- Mayor Reeves Presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL/STAFF INTRODUCTIONS:

City Commission members present: Cory Reeves, Joe McKenney, Rick Tryon, Shannon Wilson, and Susan Wolff.

Also present were City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Bryan Lockerby, Public Works Director Chris Gaub, Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry, Finance Director Melissa Kinzler, City Attorney David Dennis, Fire Chief Jeremy Jones (arrived at 7:10 pm), Police Captain Brian Black, and City Clerk Lisa Kunz.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

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

CONFLICT DISCLOSURE/EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner McKenney disclosed that he is a realtor specializing in single-family homes. Agenda Items 16 and 17 relate to single-family homes. However, he is not involved with either project, has no personal gain or loss, and he intends to participate.

MILITARY UPDATES

**1. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM
MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE (MAFB).**

Colonel Daniel Voorhies, Commander of the 341st Missile Wing, introduced Command Chief Lisa Thrasher-Stallard, who announced that she came to Great Falls in August after standing up the first Air Force Medical Command Medical Wing in Falls Church, VA.

Colonel Voorhies made the following announcements:

- Senators Daines and Sheehy toured the base in August.
- A simulated electronic minuteman test launch is scheduled in September.

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- The 40th Helicopter Squadron accomplished its first MH-139 rescue of a hiker in the Beartooth Mountain Range.
- A commercial access gate will be the first Sentinel project at MAFB to allow access for construction vehicles from the highway. He will provide an update of the Sentinel project in October.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

2. **Jeni Dodd**, City resident, spoke in opposition to the adopted FY26 Park District assessment, reading from a prepared statement. She questioned how many backlogged park projects had been completed since the levy was passed and requested clarification on how much of the funding had been allocated to the Aim High facility or other things.

Ms. Dodd emphasized that the original intent of the levy was to maintain the existing park system—not to expand it—and asserted that the Aim High Big Sky facility constitutes an expansion. She further noted that only 15% of survey respondents supported the development of a new aquatic center, suggesting limited public backing for such a project.

Additionally, Ms. Dodd raised concerns about deferred maintenance across city parks and cited the underperformance of the city's golf course as indicative of broader issues with management and oversight.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

3. **MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

None.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

4. **MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

None.

CITY MANAGER

5. **MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

City Manager Greg Doyon congratulated Great Falls Police Department's newest sworn in officers Cameron Watson, Remington Frick and Braden Hirst; Planning and Community Development Department's Deputy Building Official Joelle Cote who recently received her Building Official Certification credentials; and, Great Falls Fire Rescue's Nate Schmidt who was promoted to Assistant Chief of Support Services, and new fire fighter Shaney Fox.

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Manager Doyon announced that, in partnership with Veolia, a Hazardous Waste Collection event will be held on September 13, 2025.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes, August 19, 2025, City Commission Meeting.
7. Total Expenditures of \$4,757,828 for the period of July 31, 2025, through August 13, 2025, to include claims over \$25,000, in the amount of \$4,146,200.
8. Contracts List.
9. Award a construction contract in the amount of \$832,995 to Vortex Services, LLC. for the Sanitary Sewer Trenchless Rehabilitation Phase 27 project and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents. **OF 1839.0**
10. Award a construction contract in the amount of \$423,888 to Smith River Construction for the 1st Ave S/7th St S Sidewalk Repair and Streetscape project and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents. **OF 1786.2**
11. Award a contract in the amount of \$1,626,625 to Central Plumbing, Heating, Excavating for the Northwest Side Water Main Replacement – Phase 1 project and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents. **OF 1736.0**
12. Award a construction contract in the amount of \$480,280 to Copper Creek LLC for the Lift Station 15 VFDs and Power project for the Base Bid items and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents. **OF 1817.1**
13. Approve a Professional Services Agreement with TheatreDNA in the amount of \$96,447 to complete the Facilities Utilization & Feasibility Study and authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents.

Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

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

Jeni Dodd, City resident, referred to Item 13 and opined that the City doesn't consider the results of contracted surveys, master plans and feasibility studies unless they agree with the prevailing views and opinions of the City Manager and City staff. She commented that this will be another example of the City wasting taxpayer money on a feasibility study. She suggested that these studies should be part of the job duties of the City Manager and City staff.

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

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Commissioner Wolff noted that she was excited about the firm that was chosen for Item 13, because she likes the fact that they are starting with “why?”

Commissioner McKenney acknowledged that the Commission has discussed non-performing assets within the General Fund for some time. He emphasized that the General Fund is supported by tax dollars, and due to the constraints of Montana’s tax code and municipal funding structure, managing these assets is becoming increasingly challenging. He inquired about the negotiation process and the expectations tied to the selected proposal.

Deputy City Manager Bryan Lockerby responded that the City received six responses to its RFP, with rate quotes varying significantly. The selected vendor submitted the lowest and most competitive proposal. Reviewers evaluated the proposals based on their approach to public engagement and methodology. TheatreDNA was distinguished by its plan to engage directly with the public and conduct additional surveys.

Deputy City Manager Lockerby noted that TheatreDNA is a smaller, specialized firm, and following virtual interviews, the review panel expressed the highest level of confidence in their capabilities. Reference checks further confirmed their strong performance. He concluded that he has full confidence in recommending the proposal.

Manager Doyon added that Event staff is not able to utilize space now as it was designed to be used, due to a lot of changes in the Civic Center building. Staff is looking at other ways to operate, including private sector. The Newbury is also competition the City didn’t have in the past. The City gained a building that has potential for meeting space, with the big vision of turning it into the Great Falls Development Center.

Mayor Reeves called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

OLD BUSINESS

14. CITY OF GREAT FALLS ELECTRIC SUPPLY CONTRACT.

- 15.** City Manager Greg Doyon reported that during the City Commission meeting on June 17, 2025, the Commission authorized him to execute necessary supply agreements with Guzman Energy for electricity supply to the City of Great Falls and extend the agreement period by three years, based on the indicative pricing rates. After receiving the firm proposal from Guzman Energy, Jim Morin with PowerGas Corporation determined the rates were not favorable for the City to execute the agreement at that time. There was a target amount the energy consultant was hoping to help the City secure to provide

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predictability, rate stability and potential savings over the default supplier, but it has to be done at the right time.

If the Commission allowed the City Manager to enter into a blend and extend agreement for the recommended five years, the proposal would be received tomorrow. If it met the parameters of a reduction in the rates, then he would execute that agreement. It remains to be seen. He may be back before the Commission asking to do this again.

Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Commissioner Wolff, that the City Commission authorize the city manager to execute necessary supply agreements with Guzman Energy for electricity supply to the City of Great Falls, upon consultant's recommendation of a competitive rate and formal proposal received, and extend the agreement period through June 30, 2030.

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing none, Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner McKenney commented that he doesn't see a downside as the City is not locking into higher rates.

City Manager Doyon responded that the only variable is the transmission rates that are determined by NorthWestern Energy.

Commissioner Wolff received clarification that the motion on the floor authorizes the City Manager to enter into a favorable agreement tomorrow. If that doesn't occur, he would come back at a later date to ask for authorization again.

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

Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

15. WATER SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT AND TEMPORARY ACCESS AGREEMENT FOR SRF LOAN FUNDED LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT.

Public Works Director Chris Gaub reported that the EPA has mandated replacement of lead or lead containing water service lines, including private service lines. City staff has been working on this with the Commission for the last couple years. The next step in the SRF funded Pilot Project is to approve an agreement and to authorize City staff to enter into these agreements with property owners. These agreements would permit City staff and its contractors to enter private property and replace these lines. These agreements are also required to utilize SRF loan funding. As a reminder, the SRF loan funding would reimburse the City, i.e. the rate payer, 60% of the cost of replacing these lines, with 40% of the cost being shouldered by our rate payers.

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City staff is requesting the Commission adopt the proposed water service line replacement and temporary access agreement, which would permit City staff to execute the agreements with private property owners. Staff has worked collaboratively with AE2S on developing the agreement. In September 2023, the Commission approved an agreement with AE2S to assist with the lead line replacement pilot project. The pilot project is an estimated \$300,000 project to replace up to 20 lines. This project is rate payer funded, but with 60% of the principal forgiven by the DNRC SRF loan. This loan utilizes funds made available through the federal Bi-partisan infrastructure bill.

If approved, staff will move forward with the pilot project. Also, this agreement may be used for future mandatory replacement of service lines, starting in 2027 if the City chooses or is required to do so, which could potentially affect about 1,000 locations across the city.

Commissioner Wolff moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, that the City Commission approve the form and the terms of the Water Service Line Replacement and Temporary Access Agreement and authorize the Public Works Director to enter into said agreement with individual property owners to carry out the activities associated with identifying and replacing the Lead or Galvanized Service Lines and Associated Work as required by the EPA Lead and Copper Rule Improvements.

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing none, Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

Commissioner Tryon received clarification that the general rate payer fund, not the individual rate payer, will subsidize up to 20 service line replacements. It is a calculated pilot project to replace up to 20 lines using rate payer dollars so that the City is postured for whatever the EPA may mandate next. The EPA will fine the City, not the individual property owners, for non-compliance of its mandates.

Commissioner Tryon inquired how the 20 service lines would be picked.

Director Gaub responded that volunteers sampled individual property owner taps, and 13 of those have signed the agreement and agreed to do this voluntarily, should the Commission approve the motion on the floor tonight.

Commissioner Wilson inquired if staff was confident the bi-partisan funds wouldn't be clawed back leaving the City being responsible for 100% rather than 40%.

Finance Director Kinzler is confident the DNRC has the money available and hasn't heard it will be clawed back. The funding of the projects will be contingent on having that money available.

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

Motion carried 5-0.

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16. EAGLE'S CROSSING ADDITION, PHASE II, ADDENDUM AGREEMENT NO. 2.

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry reported that this item is Addendum Agreement No. 2 for Eagle's Crossing Addition, Phase II, submitted by Eagle's Crossing Inc., and the current property owner, Cascade Communities LLC.

The original annexation agreement for this subdivision was approved on March 6, 2007, and required the installation of all public infrastructure within two years. A previous extension moved that deadline to March 6, 2011, but some infrastructure items have remained incomplete.

Cascade Communities, the new owner of the undeveloped portion of Phase II, has now expressed interest in completing all remaining improvements, which will bring 20 existing platted lots into active residential development.

Staff from Public Works and Planning met with the developer's representative, Stahly Engineering, to review outstanding requirements. This proposed addendum updates the property owner's obligations and establishes a revised completion deadline of July 1, 2026.

The remaining infrastructure improvements include:

- Installation of sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and water systems
- Street paving
- Conduit installation
- Curb and gutter construction

The developer will be responsible for all improvements; however, the City and the developer have agreed to partner on the required upgrades to the existing stormwater pond. The City's Utility Division will support certain improvements to bring the pond to current standards, including water quality controls.

The addendum also confirms that building permits may be applied for after the Preconstruction Meeting and issuance of the Transfer Certificate for the infrastructure, pending compliance with all applicable City regulations.

Staff recommends approval of this Addendum.

Commissioner Wilson moved, seconded by Commissioner Wolff, that the City Commission approve the Addendum Agreement No. 2 for Eagle's Crossing Addition, Phase II.

Mayor Reeves asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing none, Mayor Reeves asked if there was any discussion amongst the Commissioners.

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Commissioner Wolff thanked the developer and is excited for the potential of additional single-family homes in an area that has already been annexed.

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

Motion carried 5-0.

ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS

17. ORDINANCE 3277, TO ASSIGN R-3 SINGLE-FAMILY HIGH DENSITY ZONING TO LOT 4A, BLOCK 7, UNIVERSITY ADDITION, PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 1420 17TH AVENUE SOUTHWEST, AND THE ADJOINING RIGHT-OF-WAY OF 18TH ALLEY SOUTHWEST.

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry reported that Ordinance 3277 proposes annexation of property at 1420 17th Avenue Southwest, along with the adjoining 18th Alley Southwest right-of-way, and assigns R-3 Single-Family zoning.

This ordinance is presented tonight for first reading, with a request to set the public hearing for October 7, 2025.

Commissioner Wilson moved, seconded by Commissioner Tryon, that the City Commission accept Ordinance 3277 on first reading and set a public hearing for October 7, 2025.

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

Hearing none, Mayor Reeves called for the vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

CITY COMMISSION

18. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Commissioner Wolff cautioned whether a facility like Aim High Big Sky could be built and expected to be profitable this soon. It is a facility worth celebrating.

She also discussed being at the college when Google first came to the city of The Dalles and asked for tax abatements. Several entities said they would provide an abatement but expected a payment to come to each of those entities to support the services. Google has since expanded and now has five additions in The Dalles.

19. COMMISSION INITIATIVES.

None.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Tryon moved, seconded by Mayor Reeves, to adjourn the regular meeting of September 2, 2025, at 7:47 p.m.**

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Cory Reeves

City Clerk Lisa Kunz

Minutes Approved: September 16, 2025