

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION
June 3, 2014

City Commission Work Session
Civic Center, Commission Chambers

Mayor Winters presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: City Commissioners present: Michael J. Winters, Bill Bronson, Fred Burow, Bob Jones, and Bob Kelly.

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager; City Attorney; Directors of Fiscal Services and Public Works; Police Captain; and the Deputy City Clerk.

*** Action Minutes of the Great Falls City Commission. Please refer to the audio/video recording of this meeting for additional detail. ***

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

2. BNSF SAFETY BRIEFING

BNSF Railway Regional Public Affairs Director Matt Jones provided and discussed the attached slide presentation on BNSF in Montana, including safety issues and response preparedness. Mr. Jones introduced BNSF Environmental Remediation Manager Nick Winslow and Trainmaster Cody Parker.

Mr. Jones reported BNSF will sponsor 730 first responders on the BNSF network to receive specialized HazMat training in Pueblo, Colorado. The focus of the training is a crude oil event.

Mr. Winslow noted that BNSF has a Geographical Information System (GIS) network of contractors with emergency response equipment, and that information can be shared with local response teams. BNSF also has trailers with specialized equipment that can be mobilized from several locations. Havre would be the closest location to Great Falls.

Commissioner Bronson questioned the condition of BNSF rails. Mr. Jones responded the BNSF capital expenditure program over the last ten years has been extremely aggressive, and he believes the railroad is in the best shape ever. Any inappropriate location should be reported.

Commissioner Kelly questioned BNSF's responsibility and coordination regarding the aggressive Calumet Montana Refining, LLC (Calumet) expansion. Mr. Jones responded BNSF has an economic development team that has been working with Calumet, and that team works with BNSF engineers and system designers to make sure projects meet or exceed operational and safety standards.

Con Moler, Calumet employee and previous BNSF Trainmaster, currently working with the Calumet expansion, reported the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) rules govern both BNSF and Calumet for use of rail cars.

Mayor Winters questioned BNSF's procedures to protect the local community when an incident occurs.

Mr. Winslow responded that BNSF has a system where an emergency response community member can contact the 24-hour Resource Operations Center. Immediate notification would then be made to all local emergency services. Calls would also be made to the National Response Center to notify local regulators, and to all stakeholders. BNSF has a system in place to mobilize teams and equipment around the country.

Commissioner Jones questioned training for local initial responders.

Mr. Jones responded that training is provided; the most recent local HazMat tank car training occurred in 2010, but efforts are being made to schedule training this year. However, tank car training occurred in Whitefish last year and all six regional HazMat teams (including Great Falls) participated. Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) also provides training around the state.

Deputy City Manager Jennifer Reichelt discussed local protocol for emergency situations, including activation of the Emergency Operations Center.

Mayor Winters questioned the responsibility of BNSF and Calumet to notify the general community when an incident occurs.

Mr. Jones responded that BNSF and other entities would provide specific information to local public safety authorities, but defer distribution of that information to them.

Ms. Reichelt reported that in her role as Public Information Officer, she would work closely with BNSF to obtain specific information.

Mayor Winters questioned how the general community could be involved in training exercises for possible rail incidents.

Mr. Jones commented that BNSF would be happy to work with the Commission and local authorities to develop appropriate training.

Mr. Jones reported the FRA has ordered, as of June 7, 2014, that any railroad delivering one million gallons or more of Bakken crude oil is required to provide a plan to the State Emergency Response Commission including the volumes expected to be shipped and the route to be used. The State Emergency Response Commission will make that information available to the communities on the route.

Calumet Health and Environmental Manager Hadley Bedbury discussed incident response communications and availability of equipment.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Winters adjourned the informal work session of June 3, 2014, at 6:29 p.m.