

**JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION**  
**November 17, 2015**

City Commission Work Session  
Civic Center, Gibson Room 212

Mayor Winters presiding

**CALL TO ORDER:** 5:30 p.m.

**CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael J. Winters, Bill Bronson, Bob Jones, Bob Kelly and Fred Burow

**LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Judy Riesenbergs, Mary Ellen Kropp, Dea Nowell, Mitch Tropila and Mary Brinkley

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Attorney, Directors of Fiscal Services and Library, Library Administrative Assistant, City Clerk 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. CITY COMMISSION/LIBRARY BOARD DISCUSSION**

Library Director Kathy Mora passed out a monthly board packet setting forth information about what is going on at the Library for the month, information on upcoming programs, as well as financial and statistical reports. Director Mora commented that it came to her attention that the Commission was only receiving the agenda and minutes of the Library Board meetings and will begin providing the full packets.

Commissioner Bronson suggested appointing a member of the Commission to the Library Board as an ex-officio member, who has a voice but not voting rights, as it builds better communication and the relationship between the boards. He further suggested redrafting the creating Ordinance to make sure it's in compliance with current State law. Commissioner Kelly will attend the December Library Board meeting until a Commission member is appointed in 2016.

Director Mora reported that coming into this fiscal year the Library had \$467,000 in reserves. Out of that amount, \$115,000 is restricted for capital improvements and the remaining unrestricted funds are used to operate the Library throughout the year. The majority of funding comes from City property tax revenues, County taxes, approximately \$28,000 from State aid, and revenue from overdue fines, copy charges and parking. An agreement sets forth that the City will support the Library with 7 mills. The Library has also received General Fund support.

Director Mora further reported that the Library Foundation was established in 1968. The Foundation's mission is to support the Library by fundraising, investing, and providing funding to the Library for expenditures other than for operations.

Director Mora noted that, since the Library reopened on Sundays, it is functioning at State standards for hours. She offered to arrange a Commission tour of the Library.

Chairwoman Riesenbergh discussed her experience on the Library Board the past nine years. She reported that the Library Board chose Kathy Mora out of 13 applications for the director position. The Board is pleased with Director Mora and supports her.

The Library's reserve funds and the City's budget development process were discussed, as well as the Library's concerns of low reserve fund balances, employee lay-offs and reduced hours.

Commissioner Burow suggested the Library look at what it is providing to the public well, and what programs maybe aren't that necessary any longer or could be reduced. All City departments are looking at what can be sustained with the money available.

Commissioner Jones noted a Library presentation in the past about the need for computers so that people could file for health care. He commented that the Library is an important function of the community. He also commended Manager Doyon for being fair across the board with every department. There were some tough calls in the past, but the City is now in a better position.

Commissioner Bronson commented that the City Commission supports the Library. The reality that everyone is working under is how to provide a service in a difficult time with limited resources. The Library is in a unique position with much more management and budgetary authority than any other department the Commission works with.

Manager Doyon inquired what the Library's vision is to make it relevant moving forward. Chairwoman Riesenbergh commented that the Library Board is a volunteer board servicing the City and County. She requested expenses be paid for attendance at important events such as the State Library Conference.

Mr. Tropila commented that the Library's usage is high; it's a community organization and he sees the Library as a living, breathing organism of the City. He inquired when internal service funds and rates are audited to make sure that rates are commensurate with fees.

Manager Doyon explained that he has been trying very hard to make the budget as transparent as possible. There are 56 different funds and a \$100 million dollar budget. There is an operating budget, draft administrative capital improvement plan, documents that show what was requested by the department and what was recommended by the manager, and the internal service charge booklet. The booklet shows how the internal service charges are assessed. It increases awareness and transparency between departments. Fees are reviewed on an annual basis. The City is also audited on an annual basis.

Director Kinzler discussed the trend of the internal services charges for the past five years.

The tax base, reappraisal process and tax appeals were briefly discussed.

Library Board members discussed Library programs and services, including more opportunities for kids through programs and technology in the future.

Director Mora indicated that early childhood literacy is a focus of the Library. She explained that the Budding Babies program, funded by the Library Foundation, delivers books to the Cascade County Health Department, Indian Health Services, daycares, and Head Start, has been well received.

It was suggested that the Library Board meeting with the County Commission would also be helpful.

### **3. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS**

Transitioning the City's Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program to NeighborWorks will be the topic for the next work session, and a budget review and the swearing in ceremony will be on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Commission did not request any topics be added to the pending list of work session topics.

### **ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Winters adjourned the informal work session of November 17, 2015, at 6:35pm.