



The Weekly Update – January 25, 2024

Attachments:

1. Journal of City Commission Work Session, January 2, 2024
2. Journal of Special City Commission Work Session, Commission Priorities for 2024, January 8, 2024
3. City of Great Falls Total Cash and Investments as of December 31, 2023

City Commission Work Session
Civic Center, Gibson Room 212

Mayor Reeves presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Cory Reeves, Susan Wolff, Joe McKenney, Rick Tryon and Shannon Wilson.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson; City Attorney David Dennis and Deputy City Attorney Rachel Taylor; Public Works Director Chris Gaub; Finance Deputy Director Kirsten Wavra; Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry; Municipal Court Judge Steve Bolstad and Court Supervisor Morgan Medvec; Fire Chief Jeremy Jones; Police Captain Rob Moccasin; and, Deputy City Clerk Darcy Dea.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

1. LIBRARY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE.

Library Director Susie McIntyre reviewed and discussed the following PowerPoint:



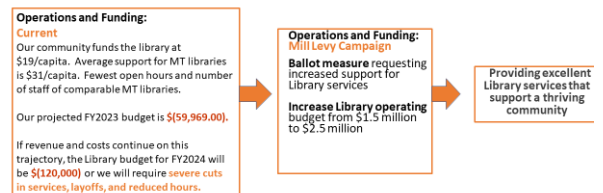
What kind of community do we want?

- ❖ An **informed** community where everyone has access to the quality information they need to live, learn, govern, and work.
- ❖ An **educated** community where parents are supported to be their child's first teacher, children start school ready to read, and students have access to resources to thrive as they grow to adulthood.
- ❖ A **connected** community with a safe, strong downtown.
- ❖ A **thriving** community where people have quality of life.

2022 Master Plan: Operations and Funding

- **What We Learned**
 - Community **values the library**, but it **isn't financially supported** at the level of value
 - **Parking** is a key issue also impacting library usage
 - Some residents don't feel **comfortable/safe** coming to the library
 - The community is interested in a **variety of Library services**
- **Recommendations to Address Issues**
 - Develop multiple pathways/strategies to **increasing library funding** to a minimum goal of getting up to the average MT library of similar size (\$31.00 per capita).
 - Use part of this increased funding to **address parking and safety concerns**.
 - Expand Library services to **meet community needs**

Master Plan Operations: From Vision to Reality



JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION

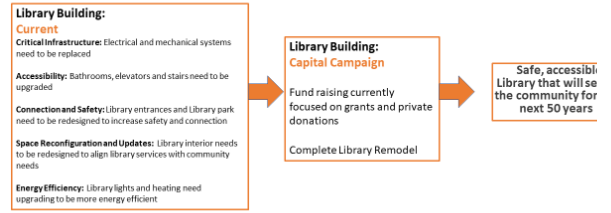
January 2, 2024

2022 Master Plan: Facilities Vision for the Future

- **Remodeled Library**
 - Vibrant anchor for a **thriving downtown**
 - Energy efficient, sustainable building that will **last for another 50 years**
 - Enhanced **social infrastructure** that builds community connection

Total Estimated Construction Cost: \$15 million

Master Plan Facilities : From Vision to Reality



Library Mill Levy: Special Election June 6

Shall the City of Great Falls be authorized to amend Article I, Section 3 of the Charter of the City of Great Falls to levy up to 17 mills, an increase of 15 mills, raising approximately \$1,594,500 for the purpose of providing funds for the operation, maintenance and capital needs of the Great Falls Public Library.

[] **FOR** amending the Charter of the City of Great Falls to increase the authorized mills to levy for the operation, maintenance and capital needs of the Great Falls Public Library from two (2) mills to seventeen (17) mills as provided for in Ordinance No. 3254.

[] **AGAINST** amending the Charter of the City of Great Falls to increase the authorized mills to levy for the operation, maintenance and capital needs of the Great Falls Public Library from two (2) mills to seventeen (17) mills as provided for in Ordinance No. 3254.

Total Mills requested = 15 MILLS ≈ \$1,594,500.00
INCREASE THE ANNUAL TAX ON A \$100,000 HOME APPROXIMATELY \$20.25
INCREASE THE ANNUAL TAX ON A \$200,000 HOME APPROXIMATELY \$40.50

Milly Levy Passed:

Vote of 7,223 (52%) for to 6,604 (48%) against (difference of 619 votes)

- We understand these are **difficult economic times** and that it is a difficult for many people to have increased property taxes.
- We are working to be **clear and open** about how funds are being spent and what we are accomplishing.
- We understand that we are **funded by our community** and we are **answerable to our community**.

Levy Implementation: Adjustments to timeline

- Original goal of opening 7 days a week starting in April
- Library Board will be evaluating staffing and developing a new timeline for hiring and implementation at their January Board Meeting
 - We **didn't fully understand** the extent that the Library fund would need to be built up in the Library fund to prevent future **cash flow problems**. (We will need 60% of the FY2025 operational budget in the Library fund on June 30, 2024 in order to avoid cash flow issues in FY2025.)
 - Our **expenses are significantly higher** than when we made the original budget. Electrical costs have increased significantly. Most union staff received an 8% raise. We had to offer higher salaries to the two new non-union employees.

Library Cash Flow

Cash Flow	Revenue	Expense	Fund Balance
FY2023			\$ (489,464.97)
July	\$ (33,651.20)	\$ 145,884.03	\$ 177,232.14
Aug.	\$ (32,327.46)	\$ 179,731.28	\$ 229,828.32
Sept.	\$ (41,000.58)	\$ 117,202.08	\$ 153,626.82
Oct.	\$ (63,500.08)	\$ 110,079.25	\$ 105,977.65
Nov.	\$ (72,907.88)	\$ 109,190.94	\$ (68,794.99)
Dec.	\$ (320,291.26)	\$ 159,606.36	\$ (429,479.49)
Jan.	\$ (135,365.36)	\$ 37,494.94	\$ (507,349.71)
Feb.	\$ (44,676.27)	\$ 107,868.02	\$ (449,159.36)
March	\$ (32,381.82)	\$ 158,506.78	\$ (317,034.40)
April	\$ (45,089.89)	\$ 107,582.66	\$ (254,541.63)
May	\$ (40,960.67)	\$ 161,763.81	\$ (133,738.49)
June	\$ (310,954.35)	\$ 189,240.12	\$ (455,452.72)

Cash Flow	Revenue	Expense	Fund Balance
FY2024			\$ (455,452.72)
July			\$ (35,912.48)
Aug.			\$ (29,262.47)
Sept.			\$ (25,826.79)
Oct. (donation)	\$ 184,717.35	\$ 121,466.53	\$ (197,543.87)
November	\$ (27,357.21)	\$ 125,850.88	\$ (199,450.72)
December (donation return)	\$ (1,556,036.74)	\$ 423,192.95	\$ (1,232,294.51)
January	\$ (90,359.01)	\$ 130,924.50	\$ (1,171,729.02)
February	\$ (1,859.01)	\$ 130,924.50	\$ (1,022,648.52)
March	\$ (1,859.01)	\$ 211,781.35	\$ (812,766.99)
April	\$ (1,859.01)	\$ 130,924.50	\$ (683,675.49)
May	\$ (1,859.01)	\$ 130,924.50	\$ (554,610.00)
June	\$ (1,102,333.79)	\$ 130,924.50	\$ (1,466,219.28)

FY2023: Library received monthly General Fund Subsidy \$29,166.67.

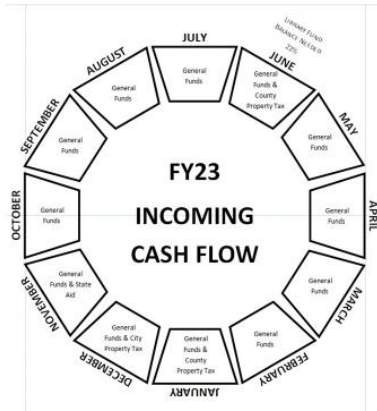
FY2024: No general fund subsidy. 97% of funding from property taxes received in December & June.

FUTURE CASH FLOW:

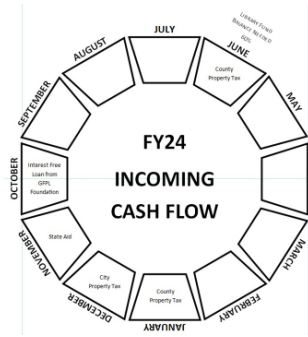
At the end of each fiscal year, Library Fund will need to have 60% of operating budget for next fiscal year.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION

January 2, 2024

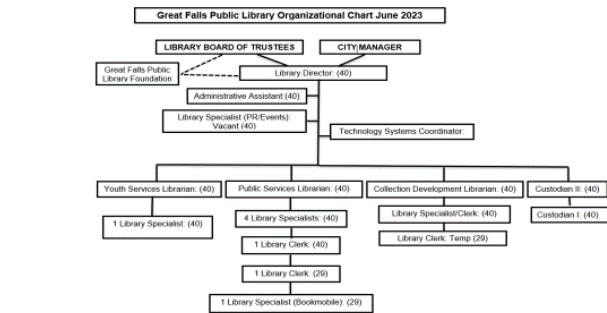


Great Falls Public Library Cash Flow

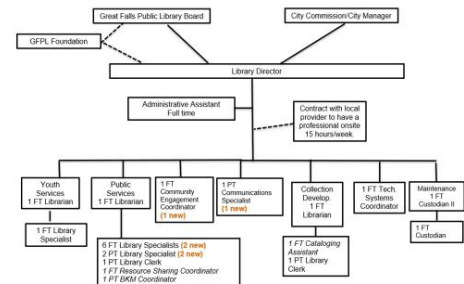


Great Falls Public Library Cash Flow

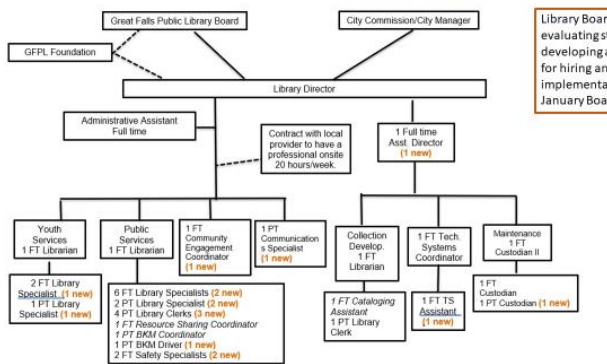
LIBRARY MILL LEVY IMPLEMENTATION: Hiring Plan



Great Falls Public Library Organizational Chart: January 2024



Great Falls Public Library Organizational Chart: ORIGINAL STAFFING GOAL



Library Board will be evaluating staffing and developing a new timeline for hiring and implementation at their January Board Meeting

Library Crossroads

- Mill Levy Passes:**
Funding for increased staff and services
- Continuing and expanding early literacy and afterschool programs for children and parents
 - Expanding homework services and programming for people who are disabled and seniors
 - Providing computer and technology classes and expanded support for job seekers
 - Providing a College Readiness Program for teens that includes literacy programs, test prep, and application assistance
 - Expanding our hours to be open seven days a week providing more service to all community members
 - Expanding Bookmobile services to six days a week providing more services to daycares, schools and seniors
 - Improving library safety so that parents, seniors and families feel welcome at the library
 - Providing free parking to reduce barriers to using the library

- Mill Levy Doesn't Pass:**
Limited funding resulting in decreased staff and services
- Reduced early literacy and afterschool programs for children and parents
 - No homework services and programming for people who are disabled and seniors
 - No computer and technology classes and reduced support for job seekers
 - No College Readiness Program for teens (literacy programs, test prep, and application assistance)
 - Reducing our hours to be open only five days a week providing less service to all community members
 - Failing to meet Montana Public Library Standards disqualifying the library from receiving State Library Aid of around \$30,000
 - Bookmobile service maintained at only 3 days a week providing inadequate service to daycares, schools and seniors
 - Failing to adequately address library safety so that parents, seniors and families feel welcome at the library

Continuing and expanding early literacy and afterschool programs for children and parents

- Organizing library spaces to accommodate new staff
- Promoting Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Hiring 1 FT Library Specialist & 1 PT Library Specialist as part of Levy Hiring Plan
- Planning expanded programs
- Planning Summer Reading 2024
- Seeking feedback regarding additional services



Providing a College Readiness Program for teens that includes literacy programs, test prep, and application assistance

- Organizing library spaces to accommodate new staff
- Seeking feedback regarding additional services
- Planning "We Learn" programming series
- Hiring 1 FT Library Specialist & 1 PT Library Specialist as part of Levy Hiring Plan



Green = completed
Orange = in process
Purple = coming soon

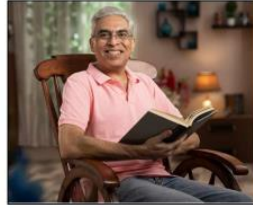
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JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION

January 2, 2024

Expanding homebound services and programming for people who are disabled and seniors

- Meeting with Meals on Wheels about possible collaboration
- Developing expanded Bookmobile schedule (additional stops and homebound service times)
- Updating Homebound services procedures
- Recruiting volunteers to assist with Homebound service



Providing computer and technology classes and expanded support for job seekers

- Library spaces organized to accommodate new staff (phones, desks, computers...)
- Hired 1 FT Community Engagement Coordinator
- Hiring 1 FT Technology Assistant as part of Levy Hiring Plan
- Collaborating with GFC-MSU & Job Service
- Book-A-Librarian program
- Seeking feedback regarding possible classes

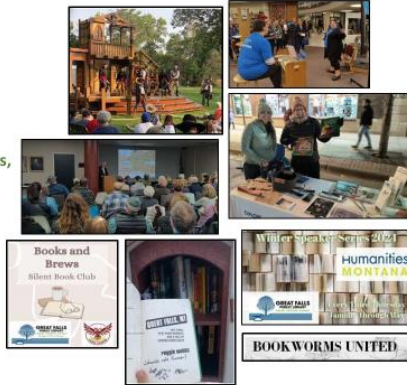


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Expanding programming for adults and families

- Hired 1 FT Community Engagement Coordinator
- Providing expanded programming (author talks, LFL program, community partnerships, more book clubs, humanities series...)
- Seeking feedback regarding additional services
- Book-A-Librarian program



Green = completed
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Expanding digital services resources

- New Advantage program for MONTANALIBRARY2GO (Libby App), investing \$1,600 per month to buy extra copies of popular eBooks and eAudiobooks for GFPL Library patrons started July 1, 2023
- MANGO LANGUAGES launched in September 2023
- LINKEDIN LEARNING launched November 1, 2023
- Continuing CHILTON AUTO REPAIR
- Seeking feedback regarding additional services



Green = completed
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Improving community awareness of Library services

- Hired 1 PT Communications Specialist
- Increased community communication (press releases, website updates, social media, radio, etc.)



Green = completed
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Improving Library safety so that parents, seniors and families feel welcome at the Library

- Continuing collaboration with Mary Rivers Whole Health to provide a mental health professional in the Library every weekday afternoon (ARPA funding)
- Enforcing updated Library Patron Behavior policy Park Task Force engaged community members and developed report.
- Engage with community organizations addressing safety issues.
- Providing continuing safety & behavioral training to staff
- Hiring 2 FT Safety Specialists as part of Levy Hiring Plan



Green = completed
 Orange = in process
 Purple = coming soon

Reducing barriers to Library Use

- Providing free parking



Green = completed
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Expanding our hours to be open seven days a week providing more service to all community members

Expanding Bookmobile services to six days a week providing more services to daycares, schools and seniors

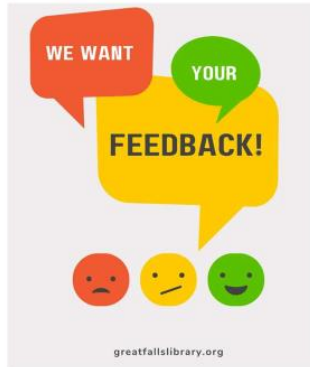
- Library spaces to organized to accommodate new staff (phones, desks, computers...)
- Hired 2 FT & 2 PT Library Specialist
- Hiring 1 PT Bookmobile Driver as part of Levy Hiring Plan



Green = completed
 Orange = in process
 Purple = coming soon

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION

January 2, 2024



Measuring Success: **DRAFT** Smart Objectives

Timelines and baseline numbers will be finalized when the Library Board approves a new Levy Implementation Plan.

Adult Programming & Community Engagement:

- By XXX, increase average monthly attendance at general adult programming by 40%.

Online Engagement:

- By XXX, increase number of social media followers by 10%.
- By XXX, increase monthly engagement on social media by 10%.
- By XXX, increase monthly web sessions and web visits by 10%.

Youth Services Programming and Community Engagement:

- By XXX, average monthly attendance at Kids Place programming (family programs and programs for children 0 – 12-years old) will increase by 15%.
- By XXX, the average number of monthly Kids Place programs will increase by 10%.
- By XXX, average monthly attendance at Young Adult programming attendance (programs for youth 0-18 years old) will increase by 10%.
- During Summer Reading 2024, participation of children 0 – 12-years old will increase by 10%.
- During Summer Reading 2024, participation of youth 0-18 years old will increase by 15%.

Measuring Success: **DRAFT** Smart Objectives

Timelines and baseline numbers will be finalized when the Library Board approves a new Levy Implementation Plan.

Technology:

- By XXX, increase average monthly unique users of Library Wi-Fi (bookmobile & main library) network and public computers by 10%.
- By XXX, increase average monthly Library Wi-Fi (bookmobile & main library) network and public computers usage sessions by 18%.

Collective Development Objectives:

- By December 2024, increase efficiency of Technical Services Department ordering/receiving/cataloging as measured by staff time spent on each step of the process.
- By December 2024, improve patron access to materials as measured by staff satisfaction surveys.

Measuring Success: **DRAFT** Smart Objectives

Timelines and baseline numbers will be finalized when the Library Board approves a new Levy Implementation Plan.

Patrons Cards:

- By XXX, increase the average monthly new card sign-ups by 5%.
- By XXX, increase the number of Library Card Holders by 5%.
- By XXX, increase the number of Library Card Holders by 15%.

Library & Bookmobile visitors:

- By XXX, increase the average number of monthly Library visitors by 15%.
- By XXX, increase the number of monthly Bookmobile visitors by 40%.

Circulation:

- By XXX, increase electronic circulation by 10%.
- By XXX, increase overall circulation by 15%.
- By XXX, expand use of Library's electronic databases (Chilton, Mango Languages, LinkedIn Learning) by 25%.

Patron Interactions:

- By XXX, increase the average monthly direct assistance interactions provided to patrons by 10%.

Measuring Success: **DRAFT** Smart Objectives

Timelines and baseline numbers will be finalized when the Library Board approves a new Levy Implementation Plan.

Long-term goal: XX% of students in Great Falls will start kindergarten ready to learn to read.

NOTE: This goal will require effort across the community. The Library will assist in this effort by meeting the following objectives.

- By XXX, the Library will host at least one event per quarter that expands marginalized parents' awareness of their role as their children's first teachers. (Examples: Conversations Count and/or Mind in the Making training at Cascade County Detention Center, Paris Gibson's Young Parents, YWCA, Cascade County Juvenile Detention Center, Cameron Center)
- By December, of 2024, increase Dolly Parton's Imagination Library sign-ups by 25%. Currently, we have 1,900 sign-ups. 1.25 x 1,900 = 2,375 kids (Kids also age out of the program when the turn 5)

Questions

Further Information

- Great Falls Public Library Strategic Plan
https://www.greatfallslibrary.org/files/cv/0ff719c01/uploads/strat_plan_public_library_strategic_plan_2023-2026.pdf
- Great Falls Public Library Master Plan
https://www.greatfallslibrary.org/files/cv/0ff719c01/uploads/27_1003_great_falls_public_library_master_plan.pdf

Mayor Reeves inquired if the library collaborated with the Benefis or Great Falls Clinic with regard to enrolling children in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. He further inquired if the library would be bringing forth a bond.

Library Director McIntyre replied that the library has not collaborated with either medical facility because of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) issues and both facilities being understaffed. The library has no plans to bring forth a bond. There are plans to do a remodel; however, that would be funded through a capital campaign such as private donations, governmental and private grants.

Commissioner Wilson mentioned that the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act created a \$2 billion Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant and the closing date for applications is November 2024.

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION
January 2, 2024

Commissioner Tryon inquired how the library would make up the difference for the approximate \$390,000 more than what was on the ballot that the voters approved.

Library Director McIntyre responded that would need to be a conversation between the Commission, Library Board and community. The library would need 60% of the FY2025 operational budget in the Library fund on June 30, 2024 in order to avoid cash flow issues. The mills are worth more; however, the library's electrical costs have tripled and staff costs went up significantly.

Commissioner Tryon explained that City staff needs to determine how to fund the dire needs of public safety with the upcoming budget. Commissioner Tryon explained that he would like to see the 7 mills per the 1993 management agreement allocated for public safety. He inquired how the library would move forward with its plans for operational costs if the 7 mills was used for public safety. He commented that Library Director McIntyre had indicated that the library might be faced with some severe cuts in services, layoffs and reduced hours; however, the City may be faced with the same issues if there is not a way to determine how to fund public safety. Commissioner Tryon expressed concern about the Library Board not fully understanding and budgeting for the increase of electrical costs, union staff receiving an 8% raise and what the Library fund would need to prevent future cash flow issues.

Library Director McIntyre responded that the Library Board was not aware that electrical costs would triple and union staff would receive an 8% raise when the original budget was put before the Commission in December 2022. The discussion about electrical costs tripling was in the spring and historically, library union staff received 3% to 5% raises. The Library Board would not have known that the Collective Bargaining Agreement that the Commission approved in July would give library union staff an 8% raise. With regard to the cash flow issue, Library Director McIntyre explained that there were conversations between the library, Finance Department and City Manager's Office; however, she made an erroneous assumption that the general fund would cover it. This was the first time that there was a Library Levy in 20 years and the Library Board did not predict how big the cash flow would be.

Commissioner Tryon explained that because the Library Board did not anticipate these costs in the budget and ballot language, the 7 mills per the 1993 management agreement could potentially be put back into the general fund in order to fund public safety needs. He inquired how the library would meet the 60% by June 2024.

Library Director McIntyre responded that the library would have to stay within its budget and hiring additional staff has been pushed back to April 2024. She would not be asking for a subsidy in the general fund. A proposed spending plan with the funding the library currently has would be brought before the Library Board at its next meeting. The Library Board understands that hiring was pushed back in order to have enough salary savings to have the 60% by June 2024. She added that if the Commission decides to renegotiate the 1993 management agreement, it is important to remember that a majority of the community voted for expanded library services.

Commissioner Tryon responded that the community did not vote on the 1993 management agreement and may not have understood all of the nuances of the mill funding. The City has been triaging public safety and it needs to be addressed. Commissioner Tryon concluded that his main priority with the upcoming

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION
January 2, 2024

budget process would be funding public safety services up to the level they need to be.

Commissioner McKenney suggested that Library Director McIntyre, Library staff and the Library Board continue working through their challenges.

Commissioner Wolff commented that she served on the Library Board and is aware of the hard work that the board does. The library provides many services that make a difference, including the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. She added that one may not always know what questions to ask when trying to achieve success. Commissioner Wolff suggested that Library Director McIntyre continue working closely with the Finance Department and City Manager's Office. She commented that there would be difficult budget decisions; however, there is a need to do something with public safety. She received clarification that the bookmobile's main stops in the City are assisted living and daycare facilities. Commissioner Wolff commended Library Director McIntyre for her efforts and successes that have already been done.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW – STUDY COMMISSION.

City Manager Greg Doyon reported that the Local Government Review was initiated by the Montana Constitution and required every 10 years. The purpose is for a study commission to look at the structure of local government and determine whether there should be a change. The City has a Charter authorized under the State of Montana and dictates the form of government that it has. State Law dictates the types and forms of government that local jurisdictions that are incorporated can have.

A resolution must be adopted by the City Commission calling for an election on the question of conducting a local government review and establishing a study commission to do so and be submitted to the County Elections Administrator by March 11, 2024. At the June 4, 2024 primary election, voters in the City will be asked whether they wish to have their form of local government reviewed. If a majority of the electors are satisfied with the Commission-Manager form of government, the process ends here. If a majority of the electors vote in favor a local government review, the study commission members would begin filing declarations for nomination as a study commission candidate for the November 5th general election. The study commission would research the current form of government and provide recommendations in 2026/2027. There would be a process by which the community would adopt the new form of government. The amount of \$150,000 in the draft memo would potentially be increased because there would be additional expenses. There is no space in the Civic Center for a study commission and an alternative location would be needed. A study commission could also retain employees and services, which would be a cost for taxpayers.

City Manager Doyon concluded that City staff would continue to work on the resolution, adjust some amounts and would be before the Commission prior to the March 5, 2024 Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Tryon received clarification that the only thing the Commission needed to do by March 11, 2024, was to adopt a resolution calling for an election on the question of whether the voters wanted to empower a study commission to conduct a local government review.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS

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January 2, 2024

City Manager Greg Doyon mentioned that City staff is continuing to work on the audio aspect of the Owl Video device.

City Manager Doyon reported that a semi-annual budget review and CourseCo golf course update will be topics for the January 16, 2024 work session. A Park and Recreation fee update and lead and copper rule update will be topics for the February 6, 2024 work session. A House Bill 355 – award and funding recommendation discussion and storm water master plan update will be topics for the February 20, 2024 work session.

Commissioner McKenney requested that downtown parking challenges be added to an upcoming work session topic list.

Mayor Reeves added that other communities in Montana do not have parking charges or provide free parking. It would be worth exploring options to downtown parking.

Commissioner Wilson suggested exploring more Americans with Disabilities (ADA) parking downtown.

Commissioner Wolff added that several citizens are not tech-savvy with regard to the Passport Parking Mobile App and could also be a burden for those who do not have the app. She requested that an energy-consulting contract be added to an upcoming work session topic list.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Reeves adjourned the informal work session of January 2, 2024 at 6:40 p.m.

JOURNAL OF SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING
The Ranches at Belt Creek, 277 Armington Road, Belt, MT
January 8, 2024

2

City Commission Retreat

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

Staff present: City Manager Greg Doyon, Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson, and City Clerk Lisa Kunz. Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry arrived at 11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Ned Cooney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Reeves called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

**1. FACILITATED SESSION WITH NED COONEY ON
COMMISSION PRIORITIES FOR 2024**

Introductions were made and Facilitator Ned Cooney provided an overview of the retreat proceedings. He began with a roundtable discussion asking each Commission member to answer the following four questions:

1. What brought you to Great Falls
2. What do you love about Great Falls
3. What do you find most challenging about Great Falls
4. What led you to run for this office

Mayor Reeves responded that he was born, raised and educated in Great Falls. He loves the community and has loved serving it for 25 years in law enforcement. The people are wonderful. He heard that Mayor Kelly was retiring. He didn't want to run against Eric Hinebauch or Rick Tryon, so he ran for mayor and wanted to bring his ideas forward to the Commission. The biggest challenges are financial resources and the limited tax base to do all of the things the Commission would like to see get done.

Commissioner Wolff responded she came back to Great Falls in 2012 to be the CEO-Dean at Great Falls College MSU. After 45 years in that career field it was time for a change. She ran for office to serve the community after retiring. She loves Great Falls for its welcoming community. There are many opportunities to get involved to make a difference. Challenges are that it is a conservative community in that people do not like change, and balancing resources with the needs.

Commissioner McKenney responded his family moved to Montana when he was 16 years old. His father retired from the Naval Reserve Center in Billings. His family moved on, but he stayed. A mall job brought him to Great Falls. He felt like he could live his life here. The challenge is having

JOURNAL OF SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING
The Ranches at Belt Creek, 277 Armington Road, Belt, MT
January 8, 2024

the right leadership. His military and community service ethic are what brought him to run for office.

Commissioner Wilson responded her family moved to Great Falls when she was in third grade. She moved away after getting married, joined the military, and held several career fields. After having medically retired, she moved back to Great Falls. She loves Great Falls, the people here and the environment of Great Falls. It has big city amenities, with a small town feel. What she finds most challenging and the reason she ran for office is her concern about housing affordability, and people trying to make it but are forced out of their homes or can't afford them anymore.

Commissioner Tryon reported that he was raised in Great Falls. Great Falls is "home" and he loves the location and environment with the river and mountains. Great Falls maintains the small town vibe being family oriented. He ran for office because he thought he should "put his money where his mouth is." He raised his kids here and now his kids and grandchildren are all gone. The challenges that Great Falls has are keeping young people here, managed growth, and to keep Great Falls attractive for new people.

Facilitator Cooney continued the discussion with the Commission members responding to:

Mutual expectations for communication and engagement.

- Civil discourse, being respectful of one another, and providing respectful feedback
- Calling each other to stay in touch about what the others are hearing
- Be mindful about open meeting rules and not "replying all" via email
- Be 100% transparent and aware that written communication could be subject to a right to know request or litigation
- Frequent individual communications with each other, especially about hot button issues
- Be okay with agreeing differently
- Announce decorum rules at the start of the meeting
- Beware of attempts from outside forces for their own reasons to divide the commission members, making it an ineffective body
- Demonstrate that the Commission is not divided, and will lead by example
- A pregnant pause before a motion is made is okay
- Don't call on Commission members unless a hand is raised; ask if there are any comments rather than calling on each member or invite input before moving to the next item of business
- Keep all discussion and comments relevant to the agenda item, and within the purview of what the City Commission can and cannot do; Commission initiatives is the time to bring up items not on the agenda, but still within the purview of what the City can do

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- Be mindful of the impact of tone and delivery of comments to staff; providing the City Manager a heads up on issues or requests for additional information prior to the Commission meeting is helpful

Break 9:31-9:37 a.m.

City Manager Greg Doyon added that the weight of the Commission's comments do carry significantly even beyond what is said to a department head. In order for everyone to work cohesively together, there needs to be a balance of support.

Housekeeping from City Manager Greg Doyon

- The agenda is assembled by the City Manager's Office, and then it gets approval at the Commission meeting. He tries very hard not to send agenda items to the Commission that the Commission is not ready to make a decision on. If there is hesitation or he doesn't have complete information, he will pull the item off the agenda.
- The work sessions are less formal but important because staff is constantly floating things up to the Commission to gauge if there is interest in it or to address something that the Commission has requested. Typically, when talking about an issue, if there doesn't seem to be disagreement, he will take consent by silence as a cue from the Commission.
- When individual Commission members make suggestions or propose initiatives at Commission meetings or Work Sessions, please offer more clarity. Specifically, the Commission, as a body, needs to express that the directive has or doesn't have a majority consensus to pursue. If there is no interest in pursuing something or concerns exist, please say so.
- If things are getting sideways at a Commission meeting, it is okay to take a recess to confer with the City Manager or legal counsel, or to amend the motion to table the item to obtain additional information and then bring it back for Commission deliberation. Same thing goes for work sessions.
- Utilize the "Commission Initiative" portion of the agenda to raise subjects to pursue. But, again, use your voice so the City Manager knows if there is a majority agreement for staff to pursue.
- Conversations are typically started at work sessions to explore and gather more information for future action at Commission meetings.
- Requests for information made only to Manager Doyon outside of meetings may be shared with other Commission members at his discretion or at the Commission member's request. He will keep doing what he has been doing until he is told collectively it isn't working.

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Review of prior Commission priorities

City Manager Greg Doyon reviewed and discussed Commission priorities from 2008 to present. The list tells a story of the priorities of prior elected officials and how they worked with staff and the community to accomplish some of those things. It is good to see how predecessors prioritized things, what some of the issues or concerns were, and what policy areas continue to be a challenge before this new governing body.

There are some problems that can't be solved. They can only be managed. Parking and homelessness are two of them. If you go into it with that mindset that the Commission is not going to be able to address it in one fell swoop, then you can work your head around what the best thing is that the Commission can do in the moment with the resources that the City has to help mitigate the problem that the Commission has been asked to solve. Development review may also fall under this category.

Today's meeting is not for strategic planning, but to identify priorities to focus on as a group or policy areas of concern for the Commission and then how to execute those priorities through the organization. Things will come up and things will be different six, eight months from now, and there will be outside influences that affect what happens in Great Falls. There could be internal things that happen that will shift the Commission's priorities. That is okay. Be mindful that if something is prioritized and the Commission is not going to be able to address it for whatever reason and it needs to be replaced with a different focus item, there is general acknowledgment that is what happened.

Manager Doyon reviewed and discussed FY2022/2023 Commission priorities, as well as his editorial comments:

- Focus efforts on passing the Public Safety Levy/Bond
 - Failed
- Growth Policy Update
 - Budgeted and RFP has been issued
- Align development review process with City Code and the Growth Policy
 - Ongoing
- Great Falls Legislative Delegation on board and representing the interests of the Great Falls community and keeping decisions local
 - Legislative session concluded. Mixed outcomes for cities and towns
- Engage more with the public at meetings when appropriate, and keeping management of the meeting and time
 - This effort is primarily a Mayor and Commission desire and focus
- Explore use of TIF funds for City properties in the TIF district, such as an evidence building or seating at the auditorium

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- The evidence building is out for BID using ARPA funding as directed by the City Commission. Use of Downtown TIF funds did not come to fruition; however, depending on the bid outcomes for Court and the evidence building project, it may
- Explore the proposition of creating a Transit District that includes the incorporated City limits and expands as new properties are annexed, and expanding routes
 - No progress. The Transit District is a separate entity with a governing Board. Will follow up with Andrew Finch regarding his level of involvement with the Transit District Board
- Municipal Court relocation after determining if Children’s Museum is a possibility
 - The Commission directed staff to locate Municipal Court in the Missouri Room and includes expansion in the meeting and IT training rooms. Renovation will be required in the basement of the Civic Center to offset loss of meeting, training and work space
- Cascade County agreements
 - No effort to update the agreements with Cascade County were made over the past year, due to the year’s focus on public safety
- Energy Savings report
 - Not complete
- City Manager’s annual review
 - Completed

He noted that if Great Falls does pick up on the growth spurt, the priorities will change again. When concerns are expressed about public safety or about capacity with growth, planning, and development review, he tells the department head team that the prior and current Commissions want growth, and that they need to be geared to being receptive and accommodating and meeting that turnover.

Manager Doyon also reported that he thinks the City will be in a deficit position again going in to this year’s budget.

2023 greatest accomplishments

- Five Commission members worked together as an effective governing body – *Commissioner McKenney*
- City Manager onboarding new Planning and Community Development Director and Public Works Director [public perception better/more positive]; moved forward with the Public Safety Levy and showed willingness to try to address these tough issues (even though unsuccessful); Big Sky Aim High Aquatics Center and completion of the Civic Center façade project – *Commissioner Tryon*

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- Stepped up public communications efforts and pushed out the positive messages; and most effective use and management of Federal ARPA and CARES funds and Tom Hazen's new position of seeking new grants and keeping the Commission updated on how those dollars are being used – *Commissioner Wolff*
- Moving forward with the Growth Policy Update – *Commissioner Wilson*

Break 10:45-10:53 a.m.

Public Safety - Where do we go from here?

Manager Doyon commented, despite all the best efforts to get the word out, it feels like people made up their minds pretty early that enough was enough. They weren't going to support it. Something he would like to talk about is the public's expectations may not be where elected officials and City employees feel like they should be serving at this level.

Mayor Reeves agreed, adding that unless you are a crime victim or your family members have been the victim and you see how backlogged they are, people don't think there is a problem.

Commissioner Tryon noted that he has heard how bad drugs and crime are in Great Falls for years. People are aware that there is a huge drug and crime problem, but maybe people relate it to needing more mental health care.

Commissioner Wolff commented that a lot of people think, unless they have a police car, fire truck or ambulance in their neighborhood, the problem is downtown. When they don't live downtown, then it is not their problem.

Mayor Reeves commented that he thinks the Library played a little role, but when people saw their Department of Revenue property taxes they went into panic mode and said no, we are done.

Commissioner McKenney added that he hears that, even though people know there is a crime problem and a drug problem, they feel safe. If they felt unsafe, he thinks they would have voted in favor.

Commissioner Tryon and Mayor Reeves think the mistake was asking for so much all at once.

Commissioner Wilson added that it is a legislative problem shifting the property tax burden to residents and the PSC shifting the burden from industry to residential customers going up 28%.

Commissioner Tryon and Mayor Reeves opined the City would not be successful in passing a public safety levy this year.

Commissioner Wolff noted there would be a legislative session in 2025. Legislators are trying to take away local control and the ability to do levies. The school district will propose a levy because

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they are running out of their federal dollars. She suggested engaging a polling firm to poll the voters regarding what they would support.

Commissioner Tryon disagreed, noting that people are mad because the City spent \$150,000 on Wendt for public outreach services.

Mayor Reeves commented that polling is important, but he thinks it is the Commission's responsibility to be the pollsters.

Commissioner Tryon suggested proving to the public this year that the City is going to do everything within its power to fund public safety infrastructure with the means the City already has. Once the City has proven it has done everything it could with the resources it has, then in a subsequent year look at a refined levy or bond, based on priorities. Lay out a plan and make it public using the resources the City already has that the City is going to incrementally address public safety according to priorities.

Commissioner Wilson doesn't agree with taking away from a particular department where funds were approved by a vote of the people to fund a department where the levy was not approved by the voters. The public spoke about the Library levy.

Commissioner Wolff commented that she is concerned about the physical and mental safety of the police and fire personnel. She visited the schools. There are a lot of students, teachers and staff who are not okay. It is not safe. She doesn't want to wait for the unthinkable to happen.

Commissioner Wilson added her neighborhood had many shootings this past year.

Facilitator Cooney summarized that what he is hearing for a proposal going forward for 2024 is to potentially gauge why people voted the way they did. It may not be in the form of a poll and not spending a lot of money, but by the Commission members listening and asking people why they voted the way they did. Then, educate the public that since the levy did not pass for the City of Great Falls it has led to the continuation of particular needs and passing up on certain opportunities. Once departmental priorities get clearer, then take an incremental approach, whatever that may look like, but probably not in 2024.

Commissioner McKenney commented that the Commission has to take some steps and not kick the can down the road. He suggested a public safety advisory committee that he would discuss at a work session for potential action at a commission meeting.

Commissioner Wolff suggested tapping in to the police and fire citizen academy alumni who care about public safety and the downtown business community for support.

Commissioner Tryon noted with the budget coming up the Commission has to look at the available resources. To address the public safety immediate needs, he proposed that the Commission nullify the 7 mill management agreement with the public Library not voted on by the public. That would amount to approximately \$800,000, along with the \$350,000 no longer going from the general fund

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to the public Library, and approximately \$240,000 available in the general fund from the marijuana tax. That totals about \$1.4 million dollars that the Commission can put towards this budget cycle to start addressing public safety. It will be a huge statement to the public that the Commission is serious. It's not just lip service that we have a public safety crisis and that the Commission is actually willing to make the tough choices and the hard decisions to address the issue. He agreed with the incremental approach and setting forth a plan for the public to plan for.

Commissioner Wilson responded that the public should have known beforehand that the City was also going to take away that 7 mills from the management agreement. The community voted knowing the Library has that 7 mills, and would be giving back the \$350,000 to the City.

Commissioner Wolff requested that Manager Doyon provide a financial picture of the Library pre and post levy - resources, expenses and services, as well as if the 7 mills were taken away, what does the Library's revenue, expenses and services look like.

Anticipating that this conversation would come up, Manager Doyon requested Finance Director Kinzler to start working some scenarios. He reminded the Commission that, under that management agreement, the Library pays the City a certain amount of internal service charges. If that agreement is eliminated that is money the Library won't have to pay. However, in order for the Library to be properly structured, they would probably have to hire a finance person, as well as an HR person that Director McIntyre could probably do. The Library might have to readjust some of their other priorities to make it all work.

Commissioner Tryon added that the Library has other options to make up for that, including funding from the County. It is probably not as detrimental to the Library and their plans as we might think at first blush. The 7 mills was by agreement 30 years ago. The priorities have changed dramatically in his opinion. He added that the management agreement would need to be decided on fairly quickly, to provide for the proper notice to get out of the agreement.

Commissioner Wolff commented that the Commission is going to have to try to figure out who the people are that could get more involved to help educate and to have separate meetings with all affected public safety departments regarding the impact of not having passed the levy, including reduction in services.

Commissioner McKenney responded that fund raising could come from the non-profit foundations of the Fire Department and Police Department.

Manager Doyon reminded the Commission that they will need to have a discussion with the Library Board of Trustees, whom they appoint. He thinks there is this perception that they are being criticized for being successful. But nobody can criticize the Commission for exploring all the options. He started this meeting off by saying the budget is probably going to start off in a deficit. A concern will be the status of the Calumet tax appeal before going in to this budget cycle.

Manager Doyon noted another option is to pay off and retire the Ag-Tech or Great Bear TIF Districts. There is money from the Centene sale that would be better strategically placed for needed

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equipment or a facility. There are also some CARES funds that he deliberately didn't touch because of the scenario with the taxes.

Commissioner Tryon commented that there are other departments besides the Library that are subsidized by the general fund in order to maintain their operations. Because of the needs of our public safety issues, those departments may need to reduce expenses or raise fees to make up the difference from what they are getting in general fund subsidies.

Manager Doyon responded that prior City Commissions did not like raising fees or using fees to offset General Fund expenditures. Manager Doyon stated he would pursue this as necessary, and would appreciate Commission support when introducing fees for cost recovery.

Commissioner Wolff commented that this City and every department head is so frugal. She doesn't want staff to feel like they are constantly being beat up. If we're saying you have to charge this much more, or whatever, she is afraid there will be a mass exodus of really talented people. She worries about their physical and mental health.

Facilitator Cooney summarized those items of consensus for more public safety consideration and/or follow up:

- Separate meetings with all affected public safety departments regarding the impact of not having passed the levy; reductions in response times, service, and other expenses
- Pay off and retire Great Bear TIF District
- Consider general fund subsidies to other non-public safety departments – reduce expenses or increase fees
- Consider public safety advisory panel. Commissioner McKenney will propose at a work session for potential action at a Commission meeting

Lunch break 11:55 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

2024 Commission Member Proposed Priorities

Facilitator Cooney called on each member of the Commission to share 3 to 5 priorities. Everyone agreed that public safety is a given and is their number one priority.

Mayor Reeves: (1) Planning and Community Department – work flows streamlined to be the best business and user friendly they can be; (2) infill housing and development; (3) economic development.

Commissioner Wilson: (1) affordable housing and, in particular, affordable housing for seniors; (2) advocating for veterans to participate in a survey of needs which will help get a long term care facility in Great Falls, and possibly help with buy-in from the City in the form of land acquisition to build the facility; (3) get participation by many organizations in the Growth Policy Update process.

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Commissioner Wolff: (1) the Commission needs to support staff and department head work and make sure they know that we appreciate what they are doing, and to be aware of some of the decisions the Commission makes may encourage them to look for employment somewhere else; (2) economic development through partnership with GFDA and the Growth Policy Update to attract new businesses to expand the tax base so that all of the tax burden is not on individual property owners; (3) prepare for 2025 legislative session regarding local control and explore lobbyist/lobbying capacity.

Commissioner Tryon: (1) concrete action on public safety this year, not just talking about it; (2) Commission involvement and support of the Growth Policy Update efforts as Great Falls is at a pivoting point; (3) preparing for the Sentinel project, being aware of what the City needs to be doing now and preparing for infrastructure impacts, and remaining informed; (4) inform citizenry about how local government works, what the needs are, and what the Commission can directly control.

Prior to discussing his top priorities, Commissioner McKenney suggested that it would be better for the Commission to consider fee/rate increases in one meeting, rather than several meetings throughout the year, similar to how the budget process is streamlined.

Mayor Reeves agreed, adding that he would like the fee/rate structures to be set for two year periods rather than every year.

The Commission also agreed to interview applicants of all governing boards, and requested a Housing Authority Board annual update.

Commissioner McKenney: (1) work with developers [GFDA, Chamber of Commerce, State] to attract primary sector industries to the community to grow the local economy; (2) similar to what was done with the golf courses, think outside the box with regard to entertainment options like leasing out the Mansfield auditorium, Convention Center and the swimming pools; (3) with regard to homelessness, tighten up City ordinances and define what camping is and what is legal, and bring a low barrier concept to community partners. Direct the City Manager to request that the City's grant writer research federal funding and grant funding opportunities for such a low barrier shelter.

Possible Initiative

Commissioner Wolff suggested exploring the possibility of the City recognizing a medical education research zone designation in the University of Providence, Great Falls College-MSU, Touro, McLaughlin Research Center, Clinic, Benefis and MSU College of Nursing region to assist with grants applied for by those organizations.

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry reported that, essentially, the option is a land use overlay zone for that area which will make it so that developing certain types of uses to benefit the health district are streamlined, such as no special approvals or public hearings. It also includes ancillary uses that support that land use. By creating a zoning district, with a medical

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district overlay, there would be an expedited process for certain land uses which benefit that district.

Everyone within that zone would need to come to consensus to initiate the zone change. What the Commission would achieve is community recognition that such a district exists and, therefore, that enhances their development efforts and what they are seeking budgeting for.

Director Cherry continued that the next step would be to invite the bigger players to have a discussion with staff to explain what the district is, what could be envisioned, and what could be of benefit to the organizations, and put it in their hands.

Director Cherry also clarified that creating such a district doesn't have anything to do with taxes, or eliminating taxes. It is solely land use entitlements.

Manager Doyon reiterated that if a Commission member is going to assign work, such as at the Commission Initiative portion of the agenda, then he needs to know there is a majority of the Commission in support.

2024 Commission priorities. Broad goal commonalities included:

- Public Safety
- Housing
 - Encourage/facilitate infill development; consider options and best practices
 - Continue to explore options (grant writing/legislature) to facilitate affordable housing and full spectrum of housing
 - Discuss camping ordinance and low barrier options with Continuum of Care group (two-four year plan)
- Economic Development
 - Streamlining zoning and permitting
 - Attracting primary sector businesses
 - Discussing ties between economic development to infrastructure and public safety
- Growth Plan
 - Living, breathing document
 - Inclusive process
 - Sentinel plan component with infrastructure considerations
 - Consideration of environmental sustainability

Manager Doyon commented that, as opportunities come up during the course of the year pertaining to land use changes, grants, or approving contracts, Commission members will need to keep in the back of their minds if the action is reflective of or meets the broad goals that the Commission adopted earlier in the year.

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Legislative Session Prep

- One on one relationships with local legislators/delegation as a whole
- Ensuring lobbying capacity from City staff and exploring how to fund lobbyist

Communication/Education

- Education to citizenry about what City government does and doesn't do
- Listening to learn sessions – small venue 2 to 3 per year with question and answer session

Break 2:18-2:30

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry facilitated a discussion: ***What is business friendly?***

Director Cherry commented that Planning and Community Development is one of the few departments that is very much public facing. Interactions with the public are diverse and in depth. One of the things that has been an ongoing conversation, especially when it comes to development review, is “what does it mean to be business friendly?”

As staff has been doing the development review audit, they have found that there are ideas and certain changes that could be made, which may be perceived as business friendly. He has also identified that sometimes there are conflicting ideals to being business friendly. He wanted the Commission to understand that some things are a little bit more complex than just on the surface of being business friendly.

A round table discussion followed in response to:

1. What needs to be changed in the Planning and Community Development Department to be more “business friendly”?

Responses from Commission:

- Clarity – easy to understand permit approval process
 - Expeditious processes
 - Does it still make sense? Still pertinent? And, never compromise safety
 - Solution oriented. How can we help you do that here?
 - Consistent, timely and helpful attitude
 - Educate
2. What is City staff's role in being business friendly?
 - Director Cherry explained that a one stop shop concept is extremely difficult and will take years to be at a suitable level. A lot of work has begun to reach that level. A one stop shop concept will revolve around software. Software is imperative in

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that staff is not in a single location. A one stop shop will be when software is working optimally, when the customer portal is fully activated, and when every member of the team is able to navigate that software with ease.

3. How can the City Commission assist with being business friendly?

- Director Cherry asked the Commission to understand that staff still has their day-to-day workload; the growth policy update; and, staff turnover. Director Cherry will list out for the Commission what could give Great Falls an edge to accelerate the timelines. It is not going to take five years to be operational. But, his standard for the department is extremely high. He wants it to be the best. The department does good work right now comparatively, but they know it could be improved.

Director Cherry asked the Commission to look at “business friendly” through two lenses. One is administrative and what the department has control over, like software and improving processes. The other pertains to policy and statutory requirements. There are also things at the State Legislature that are impeding certain types of good growth.

Commissioner Tryon commented that once in a while he still hears about a bad customer service experience pertaining to unfriendly staff, staff not knowing an answer or where to refer the person to obtain the answer, or having an attitude and saying it isn’t my job.

Director Cherry commented that, since he has been here, he and staff have been developing their own mission statement – the Planning and Community Development Promise, as well as exercises and training to pinpoint how to do certain things better. Because people go to the Commission when they have a bad experience, in order to offer the best customer service he requested that the Commission members provide him the details. He noted that it is also common that some things get misinterpreted and to give staff the benefit of the doubt.

The audit has identified that there are shortfalls pertaining to the Department’s website and brochures. Staff know that is something they need to do better.

The findings of the development review process will be provided Spring 2024, and will include recommendations on improvements from staff and the private sector.

Growth Policy Update

Director Cherry also provided an update on what to expect with the Growth Management Plan Update. If done right, it will protect future policy decisions because what is paramount in the Montana State Constitution is public engagement. The update will take 18 to 24 months to complete before final Commission adoption. Before issuing the RFP he reached out to certain community groups to get feedback and to establish connections. Public engagement will be a huge portion of the growth policy update.

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Director Cherry suggested a Growth Policy Steering Committee to assist with scoring the RFP proposals, reviewing ongoing drafts, objectives and goals, and to serve as the communication “conduit” for their field of expertise or representative group, and assist with public engagement efforts. He asked for the Commission’s feedback of this group that will serve as a funnel to help the Department get to the best deliverable possible.

Mayor Reeves would like to see three to five at large community members on the list. He suggested younger generation up and coming business owners that are investing in this community – Casey Kingsland, Seth Swingley and Michael Hallahan.

Commissioner Wolff would like to see someone from higher education and the medical community on the list. She also inquired about having some larger manufacturer businesses like General Mills, Pasta Montana or ADF International.

Commissioner Tryon suggested keeping special interest and broader political agendas out of this update process. It should be very clear what the growth policy is, what it is supposed to do, and have some clear definitions from the get go. He wants to encourage input and for everybody to have a say in the community, but he doesn't want to encourage a process whereby everybody tries to get their pet project or their special interest codified into the Growth Policy because that happened with the last policy. He also expressed concern about the large number of people on the committee list/size of the committee.

Manager Doyon commented that the committee is another means to get more citizen engagement and to help with the process as Director Cherry previously communicated.

Director Cherry commented that there doesn't have to be a steering committee. The Growth Policy has some goals and objectives which can be somewhat specific as far as the City Code would need to be changed to act. It is a way early on to get buy in for the changes the Commission wants to have following the Growth Policy Update.

Commissioner Wilson referred to the list of 30 committee members and commented that it is important to have good buy in at least to start the process.

Commissioner McKenney commented that the committee list is government heavy. He would like to see more individuals of private and primary sector companies.

Director Cherry wrapped up that the best thing the Commission could do is make sure where they are at with the steering committee so that they don't have any delays. He will continue to work with Manager Doyon and provide info he can pass along to the Commission. The Commission's feedback is paramount and he requested that the Commission make him aware of certain members they want to be part of the effort, and to be involved because the Growth Policy Update is the foundation of real pivotal change that could happen in the community.

Mayor Reeves would like more committee representation from the community, businesses, and young people. Then, if all the City employees listed are needed, have a separate meeting about

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what the committee is talking about. Then when people show up it is not 90% governmental officials and 10% citizens.

Commissioner Wolff agreed the committee should be less government and more community based. She also suggested sub-committee groups who have knowledge and skills and experience in certain areas. She doesn't think Director Cherry will get great commitment from such a large group if they are going to meet twice a month.

Facilitator Cooney summarized today's session that the Commission got to know each other a little bit, and there was good sharing of mutual expectations for how they want to operate going forward. The Commission heard from Manager Doyon about what has been worked on over the last year. There was good, in-depth discussion about the hard, painful topic of the public safety levy failure and how to pick yourselves up, dust yourselves off, and figure out where to go from here. The Commission did a great job getting those priorities known. There was also a great conversation with Director Cherry about a very important priority.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the informal special Commission Work Session of January 8, 2024, adjourned at 3:30 p.m.



Finance Department
Memorandum

To: Greg Doyon, City Manager; City Commission; Members of the Investment Committee
 From: Kirsten Wavra, Deputy Finance Director
 Date: January 12, 2024
 Re: Total Cash and Investments as of December 31, 2023

The City of Great Falls’ total cash and investments at the end of December 2023 was \$111,747,864.59. This included cash in bank accounts totaling \$13,642,468.04. Total cash and investments increased from \$100.8 million at the end of November to \$111.8 million in December. It is normal for this amount to fluctuate from month to month depending on payments made on large capital projects and funds received from utilities, taxes, and grants, for example. The General Fund cash balance increased from \$967,477 to \$11.3 million in December due to the 1st-half tax payments received. The General Fund balance includes a CARES Act balance of \$2,381,766. The graphs for the City’s total cash and investments as well as the General Fund, specifically, are on the next pages. All cash balances are monitored on a monthly basis.

Also on the next page is the summary of the City’s total cash and investments. The City's investment policy specifies the percentage the City of Great Falls must have of the different types of instruments allowed by state statute. The chart below lists those percentages compared to the City’s investments as of December 31st. The investments in the Montana Board of Investments (STIP) and US Bank Insured Cash Sweep (ICS) are liquid and may be called at any time. The current interest rates being earned in STIP and ICS are competitive. They are listed in the table on the next page.

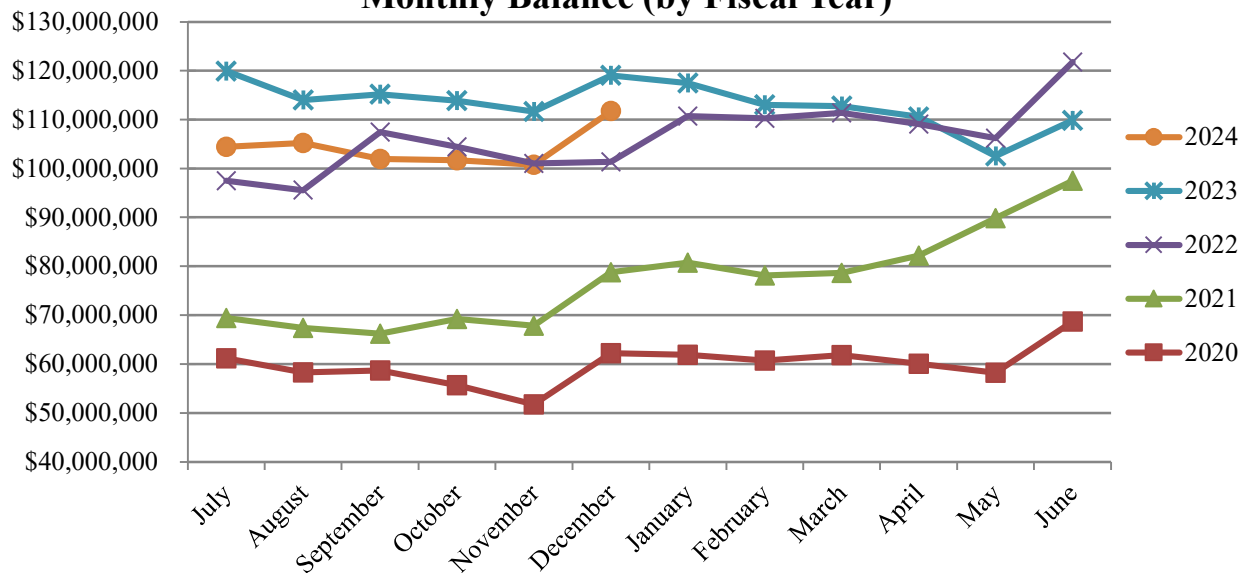
Issuer category	Minimum %	Maximum %	City's Investments % as of December 31, 2023
Master, savings, and ICS accounts	20% combined	100%	100%
Montana Board of Investments STIP		100%	
Money Market/Repurchase Agreements		100%	
Direct Obligations of the U.S. which includes Treasury Notes and Bills	0%	80%	0%
Obligations of agencies of the U.S.	0%	30%	0%

City of Great Falls
Total Cash & Investment Summary
December 31, 2023

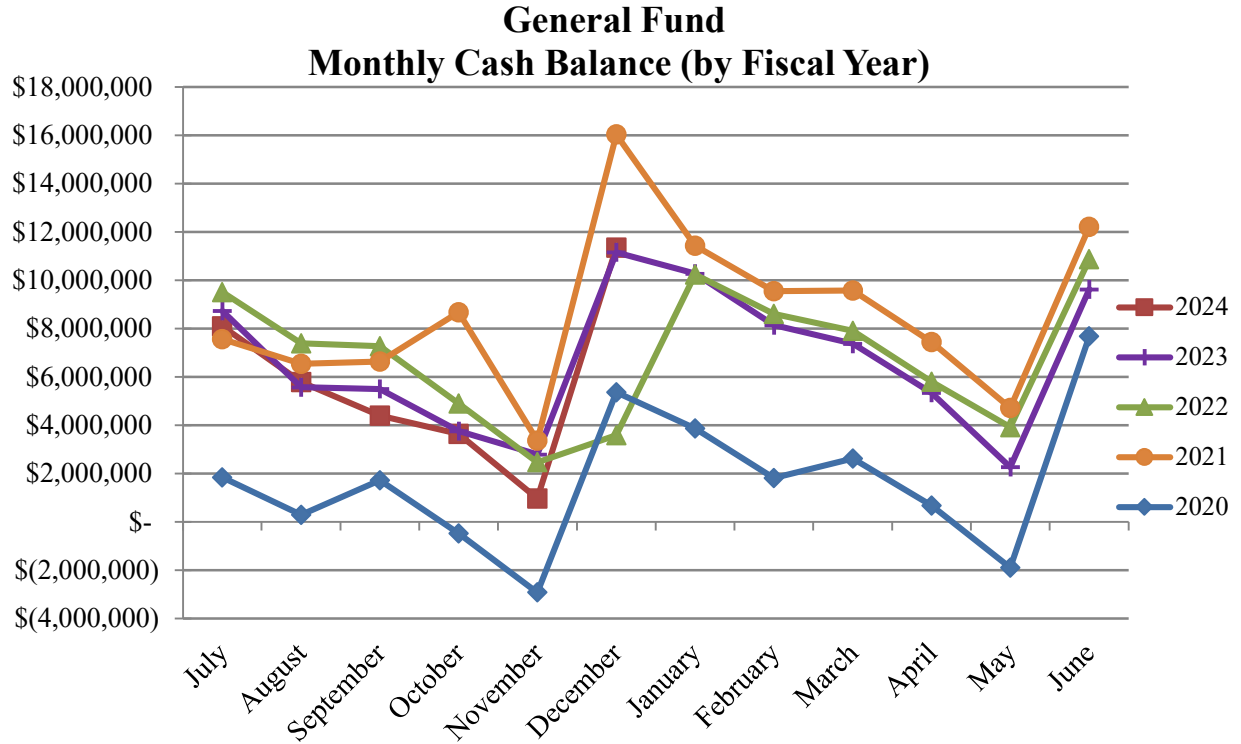
Description	Rate	Due Date	Principal Cost	Market Value
US Bank Investments				
Insured Cash Sweep	4.450%		51,128,324.04	51,128,324.04
Total US Bank Investments			51,128,324.04	51,128,324.04
State of Montana Short Term Investment Pool (STIP)	5.439%		46,977,072.51	46,977,072.51
Total Investments			98,105,396.55	98,105,396.55
Cash on Hand, Deposits in Bank			13,642,468.04	13,642,468.04
Total Cash and Investments			<u>\$111,747,864.59</u>	<u>\$111,747,864.59</u>

Compared to 2020 and 2021, total cash and investments are still at a higher level (see graph below). The higher levels can be attributed to receipt of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding and bond funding from the Park Maintenance District and Downtown Tax Increment District. These monies originally accounted for over \$35 million included in our total cash and investments. The funds received from bonds issued for the Civic Center façade project and new recreation center have been spent at this time. The ARPA funding is being spent down as it is allocated on a project-by-project basis.

Total Cash & Investments
Monthly Balance (by Fiscal Year)



The General Fund monthly cash balances generally show a cyclical pattern largely dependent on the receipt of tax revenue usually in December and June each year (see graph below). The cash balance currently includes a CARES Act balance of \$2,381,766.



If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (406) 455-8423 or kwavra@greatfallsmt.net.