

Great Falls Citizens' Council
Council of Councils Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2018

Shyla Patera, Neighborhood Council #2, opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Gibson Room in the Civic Center with the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Delegates present: Shyla Patera, Neighborhood Council #2; Tim Austin, Neighborhood Council #3; Sandra Guynn, Neighborhood Council #4; Eric Ray, Neighborhood Council #5; Julie Parker, Council #6; Lisa Meyer, Council #7; Karen Grove, Neighborhood Council #8; Barney Danishefsky, Neighborhood Council #9; Commissioner Mary Moe; and Commissioner Owen Robinson.

Visitors present: Mayor Bob Kelly, Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson, Park and Recreation Director Steve Herrig, GFFR Chief Steve Hester, GFFR Fire Marshall Dirk Johnson, Donna Williams, et al.

Delegates and Commissioners not present: Neighborhood Council #1 delegate was not present.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Minutes** from the May 23, 2017 meeting were presented. Sandra Guynn made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Karen Grove seconded. The vote to accept as corrected was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **GFFR update** –GFFR Chief Hester and Fire Marshall Dirk Johnson provided information on the GFFR Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 (handouts and PowerPoint presentation provided and attached). There were 8000 calls to GFFR in 2017. Dirk has been diligent in prevention efforts through compliance checks and actions in regards to fire prevention systems in businesses. Dave Nordel, who has moved to Billings, moved the department forward in disaster preparedness efforts. The department has 16 paramedics currently but has a goal to have 24 trained paramedics in the future. Arsonists in Great Falls know they will get caught.
2. **Park Maintenance District** – Park and Recreation Director Steve Herrig presented information on the Park Maintenance District proposal, which will have a public hearing on February 6. If approved by the City Commissioners, it will be on the May 8 ballot for citizen approval and will cost a taxpayer with a \$100,000-valued home \$22.92 per year. Steve noted the general fund cannot handle the \$12.6 million dollars needed to address deferred maintenance. The proposal to the citizens will cover mostly projects, with minimal dollars proposed for capital improvements, and will address only 1/3 of deferred maintenance. If the proposal does not pass, park services will be greatly reduced.
3. **GF Transportation Plan update**— Transportation Planner Andrew Finch announced the Long Range Transportation Plan is due for an update. It will be a minor update to check progress and direction. Monies for transportation issues, which include vehicles, buses, bikes, pedestrians and ADA issues, come to Great Falls through the Federal government from gas taxes. Generally, projects selected to receive the funds take 6 – 7 years to complete. There will be a public open house on Feb. 7 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. in

the Gibson Room at the Civic Center for the purpose of communication with citizens. Several delegates and public members had questions on local buses and traffic concerns around the new Giant Springs School.

4. **Community Development Block Grant process changes** – Planning/Community Development Director Tom Micuda provided information on the a new process being devised by the City to disburse upcoming Community Development Block Grant funds in Great Falls. In the past, agencies have applied for the funds to move their missions. The new process will include more citizen engagement through public meetings and a survey. The funds must go to serve people who are very low or low to moderate income individuals and can do so through direct agencies who serve them or through targeting geographical areas where they reside. Areas of disbursement include affordable housing, rehabilitation of old housing stock, companies who employ low income individuals, transitional housing, ADA upgrades within the city, single projects, or investment in areas where low-income individuals reside. This year the CDBG monies available for services, etc. will be \$1.4 million dollars, which is nearly double a typical year due to some agency money coming back to the funds. Tom distributed the survey to those in attendance and noted the data from these and all other surveys would be compiled in March and recommendations from the survey data would go the City Commission in late March or early April.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Individual Council Sharing (by Council)**
 2. Shyla Patera reported Councils 2 and 3 had been involved in an Emergency Preparedness event last fall which attracted some 30 attendees.
 3. Tim Austin reported Community Policing Officer Donny Gerhart had shared Council 3 area statistics on crime, arrests, traffic and shoplifting. Council 3 had tried implementing Neighborhood Watch but has decided social media efforts have taken its place. Council 3 sent letters to the City and State road departments, thanking them for the hard work they provide to keep snow-covered routes open. Council #3 had elections for officers.
 4. Sandra Guynn reported their Community Policing Officer had attended in January and the Council #4 area was 2nd lowest in crime overall. But all areas had seen a rise in crime due to increased meth activity throughout the city. Council #4 had recently had a discussion on traffic problems around Lewis and Clark School. Council #4 members invited the City Commissioners to attend their meeting.
 5. Eric Ray reported Council 5 had had building project presentations at several of the meetings. He mentioned he had been reelected Chairperson.
 6. Julie Parker reported Council 6 had formally recognized four outstanding members. Council 6 had two new members. The Council had elected officers in January and Officer Gerhart had attended their meeting in January also, reporting that cell phone enforcement was important to PD and Municipal Judge Bolstad. The Council 6 Neighborhood Watch effort was stagnant.
 7. Lisa reported Council 7 was the highest crime area with alcohol being the primary cause of problems downtown. M& D Construction had asked for a Conditional Use Permit from the City but it had been turned down by the City Commission. Residents had recently complained about increased truck traffic on Park Drive and the Council was researching solutions. The Council had held election of officers.

8. Karen Grove reported Council 8 had a large number of abandoned vehicles in their area. The Council had 2 new members and had held election of officers in January, along with a visit from the Community Policing Officer. They had a successful Ice Cream Social in August, and they had lots of students at the January meeting. The flower garden in Memorial Park has finally recovered after years of hard work.
9. Barney Danishefsky reported Council 9 had two new members. The Council had participated in a complaint of speeding near Lincoln School and had facilitated a new speeding sign (purchased by a PTA member) being installed on 26th Street South. Additionally, the Council had participated in the sale of a portion of Lion's Park to an insurance agency for an elevator. Upcoming issues included GFHS renovation plans and parking issues, and a trade of a portion of Kranz Park to GFPS for parking that may foster the purchase of play equipment in the park.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Patera asked for Resident Concerns. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Future Council of Council meetings:

May 22, 2018

October 23, 2018

January 29, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood Council Coordinator