

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL L#7
MARCH 8 MEETING
GIBSON ROOM, CIVIC CENTER
7:00 p.m.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Lisa Meyers, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Council members Troy Lane, Lisa Meyers, Trevor Mikkelsen, and Sandy Rice; City Liaison Lanni Krasner; Guests Susie McIntyre from the Great Falls Public Library, Char Bunker and Dean Jardee from Whittier School, and student observer Chloe Mahkuk, 321 Riverview Drive West, Great Falls.

The minutes of the February 2 meeting were approved as corrected.

In the absence of Andy Blewett, Sandy reported on the Downtown Development Partnership and Brownfield Committees. Sandy attended the last two meetings of the DDP and it was expressed to her a concern that Andy had been unable to attend the DDP meetings for almost a year. As the NC7 council representative on the DDP is a member of the Board with voting rights, the DDP would like to have an NC7 representative at the meetings. This will be further discussed when Andy returns to Great Falls in the spring. In the meantime, Sandy will attend the DDP meetings as well as the Downtown Safety Committee meetings. The Brownfield Committee is starting new programs to redevelop downtown properties. Alluvion has applied for Brownfield funds to help with the Rocky Mountain Building repair and renovation. The Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) will undergo a name change, although the purpose will remain the same. Tax Increment Funding (TIF) is not available for crime prevention, but is available for urban renewal grants. The TIF funding being proposed is for outside cameras and other urban improvements. The new downtown meters are being installed and will be active April 2, with kiosks and an app for payment options.

Downtown Safety Alliance is in the process of rewriting the 2013 Downtown Safety Plan to update the action items to reflect current conditions. Neighborhood and Business Watch programs will be included in the revised Plan.

Tom Figarella, Executive Director of the C.M.Russell Museum was unavailable and his presentation of the Campus Expansion Plans will be presented at a future NC7 meeting.

Char Bunker, Intervention Specialist, and Dean Jardee, Librarian, presented the scope of the Whittier School efforts to help students and families with reading skills. The Radio Readers and Story Readers programs are making a measurable difference in the reading levels of the students. Whittier School Library had a flood caused by frozen pipes and the new Library, under Dean, has flourished linking the programs to Google Classroom. The School is looking for about \$5,000 in funding to buy new books for the Library. The school is also linking with Zoo Montana in Billings for the "Wild About Learning" program.

Susie McIntyre presented the new Little Library program to replace the Little Libraries in the nine parks. These Little Libraries are maintained by the nine council districts. Parks & Rec will install the new Little Libraries as time permits. The replaced libraries, if in good condition, will be placed elsewhere throughout the City. The new BookMobile will be delivered by the end of March and a welcome program is being prepared; maybe a ribbon cutting and a virtual tour. The Great Falls Library has won the Library Program of the Year from the Montana Library Association for the bi-lingual storytime offered through the Library. The Library also hopes to expand hours soon, as the COVID pandemic slows down. Masks are still required. *Make Way for Ducklings* will be the story walk at Gibson Park on the day that Parks & Rec releases the Pond ducks.

There were no other suggested questions for the Police Chief interviews; Lisa has a question she will forward to Lanni.

Sandy distributed Declarations of Intent to Run to current Council members. The forms must be completed and delivered to the Election Office not earlier than April 22 and later than June 21.

Adjournment at 8:10 p.m. Submitted, Sandy Rice, Secretary