

Minutes Neighborhood Council 3 (NC3)
October 7, 2021, 7 p.m.
Riverview Elementary School - Music Room

CALL TO ORDER: at 7 p.m. by Sue Dickenson, Chair.

Council members present: Sue Dickenson, Kathleen Gessaman, Eric Peterson, Joanne Thompson

OLD BUSINESS

- **Minutes from the September meetings** - Kathleen Gessaman made the motion to accept the September 2 regular meeting minutes as written. Joanne Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Joanne Thompson made the motion to accept the minutes as written of the special meeting held September 16. Kathleen Gessaman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Committee Reports - Council of Councils** - Kathleen Gessaman attended the Council of Councils meeting held September 28. Council of Council members discussed the homeless persons gathering outside of the Methodist Church on 2nd Avenue North. She said city attorneys have asked people to report problems occurring in the area to the police department or ask that they request assistance from the neighborhood council members to report problems. NeighborWorks Great Falls representative Carol Bronson said that there are services available for people here in the community through the Continuum of Care program but people must want to receive help. City of Great Falls Communications Specialist Lanni Klasner said that Pastor Wakely does not allow drug and alcohol use at his church and will vacate individuals using these substances. Kathy Gessaman said that during the meeting a resident stated that he had his tires slashed. Residents were encouraged to keep log books of illegal activities and to share the information with the neighborhood council. Lanni Klasner said a focus of the meeting was on getting nuisance properties reported and tracked at the city attorney's office to find repeat offenders. The next Council of Councils meeting is scheduled for October 26.
- **NC3 Facebook Page Update** - Eric Peterson said the NC3 Facebook page reach was up 329.2 percent to 2,193. The most popular content included a post on Wednesday, September 15. The photographs of the new aquatics center reached 1.1K people. On Wednesday, September 22, a 1960s aerial photograph of Valley View and Riverview reached 1.1K people. Our weekly Crimemapping posts reached between 114 and 161 people. We currently have 343 page likes, with women comprising 71.7 percent and men 28.3 percent. Our largest group on the page is aged between 35 and 44 years old. The represented cities on our Facebook page are Great Falls with 78.4 percent and Billings and Missoula with .9 percent. We also have page likes from people living in Spokane, Wash. and Houston, Texas. The top countries represented on our page are people living in the United States with 99.4 percent and Nigeria with .3 percent.
- **Little Shell Tribal Health Clinic Grand Opening and NC3 Social** - Sue Dickenson suggested that we serve both hot chocolate and hot cider during the social event. Members of the clinic may have advice on packaging and serving cookies. Joanne Thompson asked if there was a COVID issue with serving home-cooked cookies. Sue suggested purchasing brownies from Sam's Club and said we should have the beverages ready to go to serve from large coffee pots. Sue said she would be in charge of the beverages using powdered hot chocolate, real cider with cinnamon sticks and distributing the drinks in four dispensers. She said we should figure serving for 75 people and suggested ordering seven dozen bars for the event. Eric will bring the NC3 banner and display it at our serving table. Sue said she would also bring the napkins. Eric Peterson said we should have the promotional materials ready to go two weeks prior to the event.

- **GFFR Questions** - Eric Peterson read the following answers to Great Falls Fire Chief Jeremy Jones' questions to NC3 representatives. **What is the Commission's and communities' expectations of GFFR?**

To protect the life and property of city residents using the firefighting and lifesaving expertise of department personnel and its specialized equipment, to educate residents on fire prevention issues and techniques and to remain current on training and up to date on new codes and standards developed by national and state fire organizations.

Is the department meeting the community needs satisfactorily?

As a former news photographer, I have always been impressed with the dedication that the Great Falls Fire Rescue personnel show to their jobs and the quality of work they perform. They are true professionals and I've seen them save the lives of city residents and their homes many times. The department can only do so much with current funding and will need additional resources to keep up the demands from the growing city.

What can GFFR do to further assist the City Commission and Community with understanding our needs and concerns with regard to community services?

GFFR competes with other city departments for funding. The safety and protection of our residents should take priority over any other city request. The department is in need of additional firefighters, firefighting equipment, and stations to protect neighborhoods growing in the northern and southern sections of the city. The department should consider developing an education campaign to inform residents of the need for a special public safety levy. News stories, public service announcements, billboards, social media, and speeches given to service organizations may help spread the word. A 12-minute response to arrive in the Eagles Crossing neighborhood is just too long when a 4-minute response is required.

Would the Commission and community rather hear from GFFR department professionals/experts or retain an outside perspective to assist with long range planning needs?

No one knows more of the need for additional firefighters, equipment, and stations than the personnel serving in the administration of Great Falls Fire Rescue. Many city residents will push back at paying for an outside study to tell the department what it already knows. The department can easily use response statistics, historic department data, and city maps to demonstrate its need.

Sue Dickenson said the neighborhood councils could be a key group to help promote a public safety levy. She suggested having two to three representatives serving on a committee. Lanni Klasner said the GFFR new employee Katie Brewer has been trying to increase a social media presence with the department. Sue Dickenson said the time following Fire Prevention Week may be a good time to work on this issue. She asked that Eric Peterson email the answers to Chief Jones and explain that the council shares his concerns and ask what we as a neighborhood council can do to provide support his department. Sue Dickenson said this issue impacts all of our community. Eric Peterson added that it may impact our neighborhood more so than others due to the distance from the fire station to the Eagles Crossing neighborhood.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Skyline Park Little Free Library** - Lanni Klasner said a resident contacted Great Falls Public Library Director Susie McIntyre to see if a new Little Free Library could be installed in Skyline Park. \$515.00 would need to be raised to purchase the library. The resident will be attending the November NC3 meeting to discuss this issue with members of the council.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

- Eric Peterson suggested using a Facebook post to help educate the public on the importance of maintaining and fixing sidewalks in need of repair. There are many heaving sidewalks in his neighborhood that pose a tripping hazard and homeowners may not know that it is their responsibility to fix them. He said he would photograph examples of heaving sidewalks in his neighborhood and develop an informational message to be posted to the NC3 Facebook page

ADJOURN

Kathleen Gessaman made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Joanne Thompson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by Sue Dickenson at 8:13 p.m.

The next regular NC3 meeting will be held Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Eric Peterson, secretary.