

Minutes Neighborhood Council 3 (NC3)
June 1, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
Riverview Elementary School - Music Room

CALL TO ORDER: at 6:32 p.m. by Kathleen Gessaman, Chair.

Council members present: Kathleen Gessaman, Garri Mauch, Eric Peterson, Sue Steichen.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Minutes from the May 4 regular meeting** - Garri Mauch made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Sue Steichen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Minutes from the May 17 special meeting** - Garri Mauch made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Sue Steichen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports - Eric Peterson reported on the Council of Council meeting held on May 23. He said Capt. Doug Otto provided the Great Falls Police Department update. The department is currently short three officers and six dispatch positions. Capital improvement projects include working on installing new carpeting in the building and they are also moving forward with a new evidence building expansion. With animal control, he said enforcement has become the norm. There were 209 citations written during the past year, and to date there have been 132 citations written. There are only three animal control officers that are kept extremely busy. Great Falls Fire Rescue Chief Jeremy Jones said the Wendt Agency was hired by the city to help educate voters on the upcoming public safety levy. GFPD Chief Jeff Newton said that everything added to the police department will have a direct impact to the prosecutor's office and judges. He said if the levy were to pass they would add two additional school resource officers to the four that are currently working in the public schools. The Long Range Transportation Study was discussed. Consultant Project Manager Scott Randal said the last major update was completed in 2014. There is a federal requirement to have this study done every five years for the city to receive federal funding. Scott Randal said they are currently at the front end of the study inventorying the existing transportation system and forecasting future population growth and traffic conditions. The EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revision was also discussed. Mark Juras from the Great Falls Public Works Department said they are doing a lead service line inventory. The program may require a homeowner to replace their lead service lines. Council of Councils Chair Sandra Guynn discussed the Good Neighbor Day Proclamation proposed for September 28. Garri Mauch said there is an online interactive map available to point out traffic issues. The link for the interactive map is: <https://wikimapping.com/2023-Great-Falls-LRTP.html>.

- **Calumet Updates** - There was no Calumet update for the month.
- **Vision and Goal Setting** - Vision and goal setting will be held for a future meeting.
- **NC3 Facebook Page Update** - Eric Peterson provided the Facebook page update for the month of May. He said the Facebook page currently has 530 likes and 624 followers. During the past 28 days the Facebook posts have reached 1,138 people. There were 20 posts made during the month with a post engagement of 638. The top post of the month was of an antelope standing on Hill 57 above the painted rocks. That post reached 530 people and had 234 post engagements, 42 reactions, and four comments. Our May Facebook Live broadcast reached 224 people.
- **Crimemapping report for May 1-31:** There was one robbery, six burglaries, 40 theft/larcenies, three vandalisms, one DUI, one disturbing the peace report, nine assaults, one fraud, no motor vehicle thefts, and no drug/alcohol violations.
- **Fundraising for Skyline-Optimist and Valley View Parks:** The Great Falls Park and Recreation board meeting will be held on June 12 at 4 p.m. Members of NC3 will attend to share the Skyline-Optimist and Valley View Park pavilions fundraising plan. Eric Peterson shared an email from Chad Simonson of the Peoples Park and Recreation Foundation. He said the our project was approved by the board and any checks written as donations to the project must be written out to the Peoples Park and Recreation Foundation. He also said we are invited to attend any of their monthly meetings held at 4 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month at Independence Bank located at 905 River Drive North. Sue Steichen said that we will need to designate on the check which park and project the donation is intended for. The next meeting of the Peoples Park and Recreation Foundation will be at 4 p.m. on June 20.

NEW BUSINESS

Weed and Mosquito Control: Joshua Blystone from the Cascade County Public Works Weed and Mosquito Division discussed trapping and testing of mosquitoes for West Nile Virus. He said they have no seasonal employees available for mosquito control and there are only two full-time employees working with a part-time employee who drives the fogging truck. There are six seasonal employees employed for spraying weeds. Garri Mauch asked about the tumbleweed problem, with weeds blowing in from the county to our neighborhoods. Joshua Blystone said there really isn't enforcement of the tumbleweed problem. He said his office contacted the property owner, who said they would spray the weeds. Garri Mauch asked who would control flying ret ants located in city parks. Joshua Blystone suggested contacting the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department for information. Kathleen Gessaman asked why weeds have gone to seed in ditches before they get sprayed. Joshua Blystone said that with the lack of employees it is tough to see the weeds before they flower. Kathleen Gessaman asked how to control dandelions. Joshua Blystone suggested using a broadcast spray before they emerge. He said a large number of citizen complaints are received on mosquitoes, but his office is aware of where the mosquito problem is located. He said Debbie Kimball is the point of contact with the city of Great Falls for weed control. Sue Steichen asked if the county would spray the field next to Walmart. Joshua Blystone said that area is county zoned and they have sent notices to the property owner, but it is hard trying to enforce them to do anything about the weeds. He said they try to work with the property owner and offer them options on how to get things done. Eric Peterson asked if the county posted the mosquito spraying schedule online. Joshua Blystone said that due to the changing weather conditions the schedule is variable. He would like to have a county Facebook page where he could update the schedule as conditions change.

Countryside Village Neighborhood Watch: Eric Peterson shared information on the Neighborhood Watch program with residents interested in starting a program in their area. He said individuals interested in starting a new Neighborhood Watch would want to first recruit and organize as many neighbors possible. They would next need to discuss the neighborhood concerns and develop an action plan. The plan would need to address the top three concerns of the neighbors. Next, they would need to create a communication plan that might include a private social media page. He said the online Neighborhood Watch toolkit has training topics and meeting ideas that may be useful. He said Neighborhood Watch signs would need to be placed where they are visible, as the sign serves as a deterrent. There is a Security Camera Registry and Mapping (SCRAM) program through the Great Falls Police Department where you can register security cameras and provide footage if a crime is recorded. Crime prevention tips include keeping control of vehicle keys, always lock your home and garage, do not leave valuables in your car, and be a good witness to criminal activity in your neighborhood. He also discussed the online Crimemapping program that tracks local crime.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **2nd Annual Summer Celebration:** The Summer Celebration is scheduled for August 19, 2023 from 1-3 p.m. at the Jaycee Park pavilion. Garri Mauch said the May 17 meeting was very productive. She said NeighborWorks Great Falls may be able to donate \$250 for the event. Frosty's has confirmed they will be there with ice cream. Samantha the Face Painter and Joe Ryan have confirmed they will attend. She said we need to secure funding for the rest of the activities. She said Strobel's Rentals requires a down payment for the bouncy house. Great Falls Communications Specialist Lanni Klasner said she has reserved Jaycee Park for NC3 use for the day. We will need to contact the Park and Recreation Department to mark the components of the sprinkler system in the area the bouncy house will be set up. Garri Mauch said the face painter will be arriving to the event by 1:30 p.m. and will be charging us only for one hour of her time. She also said Joe Ryan is excited to return this year. Due to insurance and liability she said we should rent generators from Strobel's Rentals. Sue Steichen asked what Strobel's Rentals charged. Garri Mauch said last year she thought the charge was \$250 or \$275 for the bouncy house and generator. Eric Peterson said he thought we should schedule a special meeting each month to work on the Summer Celebration. The council selected 4 p.m. on June 14 to hold the next special meeting to discuss the Summer Celebration and park fundraising. Kathleen Gessaman said we should be able to meet at the Corpus Christi Church.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

- Garri Mauch shared a concern of a neighbor with a handicapped child who is unable to sit to eat in local restaurants. Lanni Klasner suggested she get in contact with Shyla Patera who serves on Neighborhood Council 2 for resource information.
- Eric Peterson shared information from Alliance for Youth that noted there are used syringes being found throughout public places in the community. Individuals should be aware of the potential hazards of coming into contact with used syringes and contact the Great Falls Police Department using their non-emergency number 406-455-8599 to report what is found. They can advise you on how to safely remove the material from the location.
- A resident was concerned about fireworks in the city. Kathleen Gessaman suggested that she contact Mayor Bob Kelly for information on the fireworks issue.
- Garri Mauch said during the Council of Councils meeting it was discussed that the Neighborhood Council 3 area will not be getting a new fire station. Eric Peterson said the new station will be built in the southern portion of the city due to the larger call volume and the multipurpose density of housing in that area.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

- **Filing date closing for city elections:** Lanni Klasner said the close of the filing date for running for Neighborhood Council 3 is June 19.
- **September agenda items:** Garri Mauch said a representative from the Sheriff's Office will attend the September meeting.

ADJOURN

Garri Mauch made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Sue Steichen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by Kathleen Gessaman at 8:10 p.m.

The next regular NC3 meeting will be held Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Eric Peterson, secretary.