

# GREAT FALLS CITIZENS COUNCIL - Council of Councils Meeting – MINUTES

## Tuesday, January 23, 2024, Gibson Room – Civic Center – 7:00 p.m.

Chair Sandra Guynn opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Roll Call:**

Neighborhood Council representatives in attendance: NC1 Mike Parcel, NC2 Frank Speidel, NC3 Kathleen Gessaman, NC4 Sandra Guynn, NC5 Eric Ray, NC6 Rick Cornellier, NC7 Lisa Meyers, NC8 Travis Grove, NC9 Alicia Hamilton. Representing the Great Falls City Commission: Mayor Cory Reeves and Commissioner Joe McKenney.

### **Old Business:**

Eric R. moved to accept the October 23, 2023 minutes as presented. Frank S. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.

### **New Business:**

#### **1. Chief Jeff Newton, GFPD:**

- The dept. is down four sworn officers. Seven command staff are eligible for retirement.
- Captain Shafer is retiring as of March 1, 2024 after more than 34 years of service. Captain Otto will move to patrol.
- The Patrol division is young and inexperienced with the average age being 26 years old.
- It continues to be a problem to hire dispatchers due to the nature of the position. The department is down eight dispatchers.
- Hiring challenges are not unique to Great Falls. Chief Newton continues to enforce quality over expediency to ensure that selection of officers is integrity based. In response to a question, MAFB is not a consistent candidacy pool from which to draw applicants.
- A budget readjustment will be needed after the public safety levy failed.
- A special City Commission works session will be held on Monday, February 12 to talk more about public safety.

#### **2. Brock Cherry, Director Planning and Community Development:**

Spoke about the city's growth policy, and said that it is the People's Plan. It is not a regulatory document, but a strategic road map based upon objectives that must be measurable, realistic, and provide tangible results. He encouraged Neighborhood Council members to be involved by identifying our neighborhood's specific needs. He is looking forward to attending NC meetings to discuss the process further. He also explained the rough timeline leading to the adoption of the growth plan tentatively scheduled for Nov. 2025.

### **Election of 2024-2025 Officers:**

- **Chair:** Eric R. nominated Sandra Guynn. Kathleen G. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.
- **Vice Chair:** Eric R. nominated Lisa Meyers. Frank S. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.
- **Secretary:** Mike P. nominated Alicia Hamilton. Frank S. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.
- **Official Delegate:** Kathleen G. nominated Eric Ray. Alicia H. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.

### **Council Sharing:**

- **NC1-** Mike P. reported that they have new members.

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- **NC2-** Frank S. reported on the Bayview Apartments rezoning.
- **NC3-** Kathleen G. reported that an expansion at Calumet was recently completed, and this allowed for about 100 people to be hired. The council is fundraising to install pavilions at Skyline and Valley View parks.
- **NC4-** Sandra G. reported that Public Works conducted a traffic study on 36<sup>th</sup> street last summer, and that the council will be receiving an update on the results at their Jan. 25 meeting.
- **NC5-** Eric R. reported that his council is now fully staffed. They would like to have traffic evaluated near Super1, and also near 10<sup>th</sup> Ave S and 38<sup>th</sup> St. He will contact Andrew Finch, City Transportation Planner, to request an expedited speed limit study. The council would like consideration given to decreasing the speed limit from 45 mph to 35 mph in that area.
- **NC6-** Rick C. reported that Eric Boyd, the director of Public Works, was approached regarding a previous traffic issue that has been ongoing.
- **NC7-** Lisa M. reported that the downtown Alluvion construction crane that was hanging over traffic was swiveled back toward the sidewalk. Construction at the site is hopefully set to resume. The library has removed the band shell in their park. She also reported that NC7 has 1/3 of the crime in Great Falls. A permanent downtown potholes ‘fix’ will be coming in the spring.
- **NC8-** Travis G. reported that they approved their bylaws and elected officers.
- **NC9-** Alicia H. asked who is in charge of the Neighborhood Watch organization. Lanni Klasner, (NC liaison), reported that it is run by a block captain and that there is some help from the police department.
- **Commissioner McKenney-** Reported future focus is on economic development and public safety.
- **Mayor Reeves-** GFDA (Great Falls Development Alliance) is getting aggressive in bringing in new business to Great Falls.

**Next meeting: May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**

The agenda to date: Andrew Finch will discuss the long range transportation plan. Send agenda suggestion to Sandra and Lanni.

**Petitions and Communications:**

None

Eric R. moved to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. Rick C. seconded. Motion passed 11-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Hamilton, secretary with Sandra Guynn, chair.