

**Minutes Neighborhood Council 3 (NC3)**  
**February 6, 2025, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Riverview Elementary School – Music/Art Room #100**

**CALL TO ORDER:** at 6:30 p.m. by Kathleen Gessaman, Chair.

Council members present: Kathleen Gessaman, Aron Krischel, Garri Mauch, Eric Peterson

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Minutes from the December 5, 2024 meeting:** Aron Krischel made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Garri Mauch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Committee Reports** - Garri Mauch and Eric Peterson attended the Council of Councils meeting on January 28, 2025. The council conducted their election of officers. Sandra Guynn was elected chair, Alison Tangen Vice chair, Alicia Hamilton secretary, and Sandra Guynn official delegate.
- Great Falls Police Department Chief Jeff Newton said the department is down four sworn officers. He said it takes six months from hiring to fully train a new officer. The department is working “hot spot” resourcing, putting resources where the problems are located. There is a need for more staff and resources. He said if the Great Falls City Commission decides to pursue a levy they will need the support of the councils.
- Assistant Fire Chief Mike McIntosh said during 2024 the department saw just under 7,000 calls for service. He said their workload is increasing as they are transporting patients to the hospital when the ambulance company runs out of ambulances. There are more fires seen due to people not properly disposing of their cigarettes. He said there is staff burnout due to firefighters being recalled to work, and Malmstrom and MTANG Fire Departments are being called in to backfill when GFFR works a fire. He said with new planned developments coming the department needs 16 personnel, one fire prevention officer, and two stations. The Fire Training Facility is condemned and cannot provide live fire or high rescue training.
- Great Falls Municipal Judge Mark Dunn said the court is currently down one staff member. The new courtrooms in the Civic Center are scheduled to be open and in use at the end of April. He said challenges include the homeless and individuals with mental health issues. He said jail is not where someone with mental health issues should be placed, but releasing them puts them or the public at risk. There are 12 to 15 sentenced from Municipal Court in the jail at any given time. He said most sentences that he hands down last less than 30 days or less.
- **Calumet Updates** - There were no Calumet updates provided during this meeting.
- **Vision and Goal Setting** - Vision and goal setting will be held for a future meeting.
- **NC3 Facebook Page Update** - Eric Peterson provided the NC3 Facebook page update for the month of January. He said there were 13 new page likes for a total of 629 likes. There were also 25 new page followers for a total of 778 followers. He said there were 45 posts made on the page since the last council meeting. There were 10,043 post views, a post reach of 2,096 and 154 content interactions. He said the number one post for the month was the post made on January 24 sharing the Calumet media release announcing “all clear” following the closure of Smelter Avenue due to an incident occurring at the refinery.
- **NC3 Crimemapping Report** - Eric Peterson said during the last 28 days in the NC3 area there have been 15 theft/larceny reports; one report of a motor vehicle theft; six drug/alcohol violation reports; four burglary reports; three vandalism reports; six disturbing the peace reports; no fraud reports; nine assault reports; two DUI reports; no vehicle break-in reports; and no arson reports.
- **Quiet Zone proposal** - Neighborhood Council 2 resident Damien Conn presented information on a proposed “quiet zone” to reduce the sound of train horns at railroad crossings in Great Falls. This issue will be brought before the next Council of Council meeting with BNSF and Calumet representatives invited to speak.

- **Fundraising for Skyline Park and Valley View Park** – There was nothing significant reported on pavilion fundraising.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Mountain View Lutheran Church Expansion Project** – Great Falls Planning and Development Planner Tracy Martello and Planning and Community Development Deputy Director Lonnie Hill attended the meeting to solicit feedback from the council on a conditional use permit for Mountain View Lutheran Evangelical Church located at 800 Sacajawea Drive. The applicants would like a building permit to expand the church, but the worship facility and is zoned as a commercial use in a residential neighborhood. Martello said they are going through the conditional use process with the expansion project. The conditional use permit is approved by the city Zoning Commission. She said the building meets setback requirements of the neighborhood and meets the visibility requirements of the code. She said February 18th will be the first reading for the Great Falls City Commission, and the public hearing will occur on March 18th. Aron Krischel made a motion to approve the plans as they were presented. Eric Peterson seconded the motion. The motion to approve the plans passed unanimously.
- **Great Falls Growth Policy** - Great Falls Planning and Community Development Deputy Director Lonnie Hill discussed Great Falls Growth Policy Update. He said the Growth Policy Update is a long-range document that helps guide the city with future decision making. Environmental concerns can be listed in this long-range document. He said the document allows them to focus on what the community values. He said they are now soliciting input from the community to see what they would like to see for the future. Residents can fill out a growth policy survey that will be available online until the end of March.
- **Election of NC3 Officers** – Aron Krischel nominated Garri Mauch for the position of official delegate. Kathleen Gessaman seconded the nomination. The council voted unanimously for Garri Mauch as official delegate. Garri Mauch nominated Kathleen Gessaman for the position of council chair. Eric Peterson seconded the nomination. The council voted unanimously for Kathleen Gessaman as council chair. Kathleen Gessaman nominated Eric Peterson for secretary. Aron Krischel seconded the nomination. The council voted unanimously for Eric Peterson as secretary. Garri Mauch nominated Sue Dickenson for council vice-chair. Aron Krischel seconded the nomination. The council voted unanimously for Sue Dickenson as vice-chair.
- **NC3 Bylaw Review** – Garri Mauch made a motion to accept the February 6, 2025, Neighborhood Council 3 Bylaws as written. Aron Krischel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- **Neighborhood Concerns** – Kathleen Gessaman said Montana Free Press Reporter Matt Hudson would like to visit the council. He said his news organization is interested in expanding their news coverage and would like to hear our story ideas.
- **Agenda suggestions:** Neighborhood Council Liaison Rob Moccasin said the Planning and Community Development Office would like to provide an update on the Great Falls Growth Policy. Eric Peterson said he would contact the Little Shell Tribe to see if a representative could be available to discuss their planned event center.

## **ADJOURN**

Garri Mauch made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Aron Krischel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned by Kathleen Gessaman at 7:10 p.m.

The next regular NC3 meeting will be held Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Eric Peterson, secretary.