

Great Falls Citizens' Council  
Council of Councils Meeting Minutes  
May 30, 2012

The meeting was opened by Phyllis Hemstad, Neighborhood Council #2, at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Delegates present:** Lynda Sowell, Neighborhood Council #1; Phyllis Hemstad, Neighborhood Council #2; Sandra Guynn, Neighborhood Council #4; Eric Ray, Neighborhood Council #5; Nick Bourdeau, Neighborhood Council #6; Mike Vohs, Neighborhood Council #7; Karen Grove, Neighborhood Council #8; Peggy Scheschy, Neighborhood Council #9; Fred Burow, City Commissioner; and Bill Bronson, City Commissioner.

**Delegates absent:** Johnathon Kenneway, Neighborhood Council #3.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Minutes** from the January 25, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.
2. **Large Vehicle Parking Ordinance Progress Update:** Commissioners Bronson and Burow related that two of the City Commission members were not interested in moving the proposed ordinance forward. The remainder of the members want to know what the Council of Council members wish to do in moving it forward, or not. The Commissioners question whether it still an issue. Commissioner Burow has concerns about enforcement. He said people he has talked to are against banning the large vehicles on the street unless they pose as a safety issue. He also suggested the City might help by easing restrictions against parking RVs on private property.

Chairperson Hemstad asked if the City might be interested in creating an area for RV/large vehicle parking. Commissioner Burow said probably not--that would create substantial liability for the City.

Sandra Guynn said she had talked to PD Chief Bowen who said only cars and trucks can be parked on the street.

Lynda Sowell asked Commissioner Bronson is the Commissioners wanted to the delegates to go back to their Councils for direction. Commissioner Bronson responded it was strictly up to the Councils. The Commission is not seeking input from anyone else, but will leave further input up to the Councils.

Sandra Guynn stated she was not in favor of creating another ordinance, but suggested the ordinances in existence be enforced.

City Attorney Jim Santoro stated there were ordinances on the books that would address any safety issues potentially created by the large vehicles. He agreed existing ordinances could be used or amended for future enforcement.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. **Proposed Cell Phone Ordinance:** City Attorney James Santoro gave a presentation (attached) on the proposed cell phone ordinance (attached). He stated a new ordinance would not allow texting, dialing or using hands on a cell phone, PDA, Blackberry, smart phone, laptop, GPS, etc. for anyone except persons reporting emergencies, fire agencies, ambulance services, law enforcement agencies, and /or emergency responders. An offense would be a primary offense. As yet, penalties have not been determined. A first reading of this ordinance is tentatively set for June 19 with a public hearing July 17. If passed, the ordinance would become effective 30 days later to allow citizens time to become Bluetooth ready.
2. **Update from GF Fire Rescue:** Fire Rescue Chief Randy McCamley informed the Council delegates about the staffing problems at Fire Rescue. A grant that will help cover the costs of hiring 8 additional firefighters has been submitted. Although the increase of 8 firefighters would help, it will not guarantee a lower insurance (ISO) rating. If a more attractive insurance rating is desired by the citizens of Great Falls, staffing will have to be increased. If staffing is not increased, the insurance rating for Great Falls will continue to go down. To get the best rating, our Department would have to have 34 firefighters on duty at any given time. Great Falls now has 14. Though we will probably never get to 34, there is definitely room for improvement. Fire stations, which are now going on 40 years old, are also under-numbered.
3. **Neighborhood Watch Collaboration:** Neighborhood Council #5 Chair Eric Ray addressed the delegates with an encouragement to get involved with recruitment and collaboration with area Neighborhood Watches. With recent changes in the RSVP budget, the Neighborhood Watch program is in need of collaborative efforts. He suggested that each Council facilitate a once-a-year recruitment meeting and follow up with monthly reports from the Watch members during a designated section of each month's agenda.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Individual Council Sharing

1. Lynda Sowell reported her Council has heard the Complete Streets presentation, the political candidates, and from the Community Policing Officer. It also has had animal problems including aggressive turkeys and urban deer. Council #1 will not meet during the summer unless needed.
2. Phyllis Hemstad reported one exciting meeting that concerned a zoning issue. The Council is also hearing a dog kennel problem. Other zoning issues have cropped up.
3. Absent.
4. Sandra Guynn reported substantial progress on the problem property located at 4727 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, although some of the problems had moved across the road to the Home Place. The County does not feel anything needs to be done about the abandoned trailer on the Home Place. Council #4 will meet during the summer.
5. Eric Ray reported his Council will not meet during the summer unless issues present themselves. The Council now has 5 members. Council #5 will have a summer outing with Neighborhood Watch—date to be announced, and everyone is welcome.

6. Nick Bourdeau reported most meetings were being taken up by Upper Lower River Road drainage problems. The Eight Ball Inn issue is subsiding. The Complete Streets presentation went smoothly— Council 5 members and residents thought it was a good idea.
7. Michael Vohs reported a new member had been appointed, political presentations had been heard, and the Council will continue to meet throughout the summer .
8. Karen Grove reported they had also had the political presentations, but the Complete Streets presentation went smoothly. They will hold their annual Ice Cream Social in July—the date has not yet been determined. The Council members are also working on Memorial Park.
9. Peggy Scheschy reported her Council had had all the political people introduce themselves and the Council had heard the Complete Streets presentation. She said several people in attendance were not happy with the proposition.

**Other**

Nick Bourdeau asked about funding for park equipment—is it an issue for the Council of Councils? Chairperson Hemstad gave him instructions on what to do about fundraising.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Neighborhood Concerns:** Chairperson Hemstad said she had asked for resident concerns and had heard none.

The next Council of Councils meeting will be held Wednesday, October 30, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patty Cadwell  
Neighborhood Council Coordinator