

Great Falls Citizens' Council
Council of Councils Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2014

The meeting was opened by Neil DuBois, Neighborhood Council #1, at 7:00 p.m. in the Missouri Room in the Civic Center.

Delegates present: Neal DuBois, Neighborhood Council #1; Sue Ann Strickland, Neighborhood Council #2, Kathy Gessaman, Neighborhood Council #3; Sandra Guynn, Neighborhood Council #4; Eric Ray, Neighborhood Council #5; Trevor Mikkelsen, Neighborhood Council #7; Karen Grove, Neighborhood Council #8; Scott Miranti, Neighborhood Council #9; and Commissioner Bill Bronson.

Councils not represented: Neighborhood Council #6.

Guests: Linda Mettam and JoViviane Jones for the Crisis Nursery; Craig Raymond, Planning/Community Development Director; Carol Bronson for Neighborhood Watch; Michael McCoy; Mary Jolley; Jim Larson; Ron Gessaman; Patty Cadwell; and other unidentified citizens.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Minutes** from the 5-27, 2014 meeting were presented and the vote to accept the minutes as presented was unanimous to approve.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Proposed Crisis Nursery**

Linda Mettam and JoViviane Jones spoke on a proposal to create a "crisis nursery" in Great Falls that would offer free child care refuge for low income parents to utilize in crisis situations. Children served would be 6 years-of-age and under and the length of stay could be up to 72 hours. The "center" would be modeled against a similar successful nursery in Spokane, WA. , and would be run using non-governmental funding. Sandra Guynn offered to have a Neighborhood Council "town hall" meeting to get the word out. Ms. Jones suggested it might take place after more details had been worked out.

2. **Building Blight and Solutions**

Craig Raymond, Planning/Community Development Director, talked about "public nuisances" of significant impact and how Neighborhood Councils can help deal with them. He cited municipal code 8.50.010 – 8.50.030 for definition and enforcement of "nuisances" and suggested Council members collect/inspire written verification (letters, petitions, etc.) from citizens that specific nuisance properties affected their "comfortable enjoyment of life or property" as designated in the code. Sue Ann Strickland and Michael McCoy of Neighborhood Council #2 spoke specifically about the Holman building located just west of Central West bridge.

3. **Neighborhood Watch Update**

Eric Ray, Neighborhood Council 5 Chairman, updated the Council delegates on his Council's efforts to establish an active Neighborhood Watch in the Council 5 area. He suggested other Councils take similar efforts, especially those that include partnership with public schools, their officials and PTA members.

Mr. Ray has participated in other Councils' efforts and will continue to do so. Carol Bronson, Community Engagement Specialist at NeighborWorks, described the suggested organizational structure of "Watches" in Great Falls, Black Eagle and Cascade, MT., and distributed brochure packets. Ms. Bronson offered to attend Neighborhood Council meetings to explain the nature of the Neighborhood Watch program, including signage.

OTHER BUSINESS

Individual Council Sharing

1. Neal DuBois reported his Council had been fairly quiet.
2. Sue Ann Strickland reported her Council had received crime information from Community Policing Officer Stevens that included the entire Westside and had hosted a candidate forum
3. Kathy Gessaman reported her Council had been checking the Little Free Library, had several building projects in the area, was currently involved in the Bootlegger Trail regrade, had 2 special meetings regarding a proposed land swap of the Valley View Park and regarding an undisclosed group home in the Riverview area.
4. Sandra Guynn reported her Council had been involved with the East Retail Development and a future town hall meeting for citizens to suggest retail stores for the development, and she disclosed Council #4's intention to cancel Council meetings in November and December due to the holidays..
5. Eric Ray reported his Council now meets throughout the year, has seen completion of the walking path in Russell Park and the installation of GFPS donated bike racks, and has two major building projects in their area: the 214-unit apartment complex and the new Clinic hospital.
- 7 Trevor Mikkelsen reported his Council has two vacancies, has had discussion with citizens about group homes in the area and the proposed changes in the parking codes and enforcement in his area.
- 8 Karen Grove reported on their Little Free Library (no issues), had received crime reports/statistics from GFPD, and that the Ice Cream Social in August had been well-attended.
- 9 Scott Miranti reported his Council had heard from neighbors and city department officials on the opening of 20th Street South from 2nd to 4th Avenue South, and his Council also has two vacancies.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Neighborhood Concerns:** Ron Gessaman offered his concerns regarding the sale of city parks and the code regarding the establishment of group homes in residential areas.

The next Council of Councils meeting will be held Tuesday, January 27, 2015.

A motion and second were made to close the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Cadwell
Neighborhood Council Coordinator