

RESOLUTION NO. 9834

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A MAIL-IN ELECTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO EXCEED THE MILL LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED BY 15-10-420, MCA, TO EXPAND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

WHEREAS, the City of Great Falls is authorized, pursuant to 15-10-425, MCA, to exceed the mill levy limit provided for in 15-10-420, MCA, by conducting an election; and

WHEREAS, the last time the City requested a special tax increase to improve Fire Department operations was over 40 years ago; and

WHEREAS, the current firefighter staffing levels are substantially below national firefighting fire ground standards as promulgated by the National Fire Protection Agency and Occupational Safety and Health Administration and as adopted by the Department of Homeland Security; and

WHEREAS, insufficient fire ground staffing has been determined to be a leading cause of firefighter deaths and injuries; and

WHEREAS, adequate fire ground staffing has been proven to have a direct impact on firefighters ability to save lives and reduce property loss; and

WHEREAS, the City of Great Falls has been awarded a Department of Homeland Security, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant; and

WHEREAS, this grant is intended to provide financial assistance to help fire departments increase their cadre of frontline firefighters in order to safely and effectively respond to fires and emergencies whenever they occur; and

WHEREAS, this grant will provide \$1,734,080 over the five year term of the grant to help defray the City’s cost of 16 new firefighters; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Department will need to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the 16 new firefighters which will be funded from the additional mills in year one, and

WHEREAS, the City’s current general fund revenues are inadequate to sustain the City’s contribution during the term of the grant and for the years thereafter without permanently increasing the number of mills; and

WHEREAS, the following table identifies the number of additional mills needed during the term of the SAFER grant and the associated increase in property tax for each year of the grant and for the years thereafter; and

| SAFER GRANT | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Additional Mills added to current taxes gradual increases over 5 years | 5.73 | 6.36 | 9.82 | 13.87 | 17.42 |
| Increase for a home with a <u>Taxable Market Value</u> of \$100,000 per year | \$17.25 | \$19.14 | \$29.56 | \$41.75 | \$52.43 |
| Home with a <u>Taxable Market Value</u> of \$200,000 per year | \$34.50 | \$38.28 | \$59.12 | \$83.50 | \$104.86 |

WHEREAS, the City Commission desires that this election be conducted by a mail-in ballot election by the registered voters of the City of Great Falls, for the purpose of voting on the question of whether to levy an additional 5.73 mills in taxable year 2009; 6.36 mills in taxable year 2010; 9.82 mills in taxable year 2011; 13.87 mills in taxable year 2012; 17.42 mills in taxable year 2013; and, 17.42 mills annually thereafter, on a permanent basis, for improving

customer service and to improve firefighter safety by hiring and maintaining 16 additional firefighters; and

WHEREAS, the specific number of additional mills needed annually in taxable year 2013 and each year thereafter is 17.42 mills and the approximate amount of money to be raised is \$1,253,809.00 (one million, two hundred and fifty three thousand, eight hundred and nine dollars) based on the 2008 Citywide Taxable Market Valuation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA:

Section 1. The City Commission hereby authorizes a mail-in election for the purpose of permanently exceeding the mill levy limit provided in 15-10-420, MCA, by levying 5.73 mills raising approximately \$412,736 in taxable year 2009; 6.36 mills raising approximately \$457,606 in taxable year 2010; 9.82 mills raising approximately \$706,562 in taxable year 2011; 13.87 mills raising approximately \$998,383 in taxable year 2012; 17.42 mills raising approximately 1,253,809 in taxable year 2013; and, 17.42 mills each year thereafter, on a permanent basis.

Section 2. All qualified electors of the City of Great Falls are entitled to vote on this issue on August 4th, 2009 by mail-in ballot. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to give notice of the call and details of this mail-in ballot election to the Cascade County Election Administrator. The Election Administrator is requested to give notice of the call and holding of the mail-in ballot election to be published at least once a week for three successive weeks before the mail-in election in the Great Falls Tribune, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Cascade Montana.

The notice of election as published shall read substantially as follows:

NOTICE OF MAIL-IN BALLOT ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Great Falls City Commission that on August 4th, 2009, pursuant to a resolution duly adopted by the Great Falls City Commission on May 5th, 2009, a mail-in ballot election by the registered voters will be held in and for the City of Great Falls, for the purposes of voting on the question of whether to hire and equip 16 new firefighters. The City Commission is authorized to levy an increase by 5.73 mills, raising approximately \$412,736 in taxable year 2009; 6.36 mills, raising approximately \$457,606 in taxable year 2010; 9.82 mills, raising approximately \$706,562 in taxable year 2011; 13.87 mills raising approximately \$998,383 in taxable year 2012; 17.42 mills raising approximately \$1,253,809 in taxable year 2013; and, 17.42 mills annually thereafter, on a permanent basis.

The property tax increase on a home with a taxable market value of \$100,000 in 2009 is \$17.25; in 2010 the increase is \$19.14; in 2011 the increase is \$29.56; in 2012 the increase is \$41.75; and, in 2013 the increase is \$52.43.

The property tax increase on a home with a taxable market value of \$200,000 in 2009 is \$34.50; in 2010 the increase is \$38.28; in 2011 the increase is \$59.12; in 2012 the increase is \$83.50; and, in 2013 the increase is \$104.86.

FORM OF MAIL BALLOT: The Election Administrator is hereby requested to prepare suitable mail-in ballots for use at the mail-in ballot election and to distribute the same, in substantially the following form:

**OFFICIAL MAIL-IN BALLOT
CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA**

BALLOT STATEMENT

That the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana be authorized to exceed the statutory mill levy provided for in Section 15-10-420, M.C.A., by permanently and annually levying additional mills to improve public service and firefighter safety by hiring and equipping 16 additional front- line firefighters. The City Commission is authorized to levy an increase of 5.73 mills in taxable year 2009 to raise approximately \$412,736; 6.36 mills in taxable year 2010 to raise approximately \$457,606; 9.82 mills in taxable year 2011 to raise approximately \$706,562; 13.87 mills in taxable year 2012 to raise approximately \$998,383; and, 17.42 mills in fiscal year 2013 to raise approximately \$1,253,809; and 17.42 mills each year thereafter on a permanent basis.

The additional property tax increase on a home with a taxable market value of \$100,000 is \$17.25 in taxable year 2009; \$19.14 in taxable year 2010; \$29.56 in taxable year 2011, \$41.75 in taxable year 2012; and \$52.43 in taxable year 2013.

The additional property tax increase on a home with a taxable market value of \$200,000 is \$34.50 in taxable year 2009; \$38.28 in taxable year 2010; \$59.12 in taxable year 2011; \$83.50 in taxable year 2012; and \$104.86 in taxable year 2013.

FOR

Authorizing the City Commission of the City of Great Falls to exceed the statutory mill levy provided for in Section 15-10-420, M.C.A. by levying 5.73 mills in taxable year 2009 to raise approximately \$412,736; 6.36 mills in taxable year 2010 to raise approximately \$457,606; 9.82 mills in taxable year 2011 to raise approximately \$706,562; 13.87 mills in taxable year 2012 to raise approximately \$998,383; and, 17.42 mills in taxable year 2013 to raise approximately \$1,253,809; and 17.42 mills each year thereafter on a permanent basis.

AGAINST

Authorizing the City Commission of the City of Great Falls to exceed the statutory mill levy provided for in Section 15-10-420, M.C.A. by levying 5.73 mills in taxable year 2009 to raise approximately \$412,736; 6.36 mills in taxable year 2010 to raise approximately \$457,606; 9.82 mills in taxable year 2011 to raise approximately \$706,562; 13.87 mills in taxable year 2012 to raise approximately \$998,383; and, 17.42 mills in taxable year 2013 to raise approximately \$1,253,809; and 17.42 mills each year thereafter on a permanent basis.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana, May 5, 2009.

Dona R. Stebbins, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

APPROVED FOR LEGAL CONTENT:

David V. Gliko, City Attorney