



City Manager's Office

Memorandum

To: Mayor Winters and Commissioners
From: Gregory T. Doyon – City Manager
Re: Mr. Doyon Goes to Washington – Trip Summary
Date: March 18, 2010

On Monday, March 8, 2010 a delegation of Great Falls representatives left for meetings in Washington D.C.

The delegation included:

Joe Briggs – Cascade County Commissioner
Tom Figarelle – MSU-COT Development Officer
Steve Malicott – Chamber of Commerce Executive Director
Dave Weissman – Central Montana Defense Alliance Chair
Dave Bertelson – Central Montana Defense Alliance Vice-Chair
Brett Doney – Great Falls Development President
Kim Thiel-Schaaf - Community Assets Director

Congressional Delegation Meeting Summaries

Senator Baucus (w/Will Sehestedt, Associate Legislative Assistant)

The team had a quick meeting with Senator Baucus during a vote in a crowded room off of the Senate Chamber. The presentation was a quick overview the City's appropriation requests. I had to pare down the list (in part because of its size and dollar amount) to the emergency generator, snorkel truck, and water treatment plant improvements.

I also met with Deputy Chief of Staff, Catherine Ransom, about the levy certification challenges at a *Montana Welcome Coffee* reception hosted by the senators. She is working to assist communities with addressing certification needs and flood mapping issues. Specifically, she has called for bi-weekly meetings with Great Falls representatives and for the County/City to determine the cost for certification of its levy system. She is working to see if the Army Corps of Engineers could possibility certify the levees.

Later in the day, other representatives met with Senator Baucus later to review military affairs – I

had another meeting and could not attend.

Senator Tester (w/Daniel Stein Legislative Aid; Tammy Kost, Legislative Fellow; Nathan Taylor; Legislative Assistant)

All the Great Falls delegation met with staff in Senator Tester's Office. Appropriation requests from the City were presented. There appeared to be interest in finding funding for the emergency generator at the police station. Again, there was some comment about the magnitude of the requests (which we joked that we were making up for the County's lack of requests). We spoke at length about the levee situation in Great Falls, and I was directed to speak further to Nathan Taylor who is handling the matter.

As you may see, Senator Tester held a meeting the day after we returned with communities affected by the levee situation. The Weekly Review will have a copy of the legislation introduced by Congressman Denny Rehberg

Defense Department/Pentagon Visits

Patrick O'Brian – Director of the Office of Economic Adjustment (w/Dave Larson, Deputy Director; Gary Gontz, Project Manager)

The visiting group, including Brett Doney, Commissioner Briggs, and Kim Thiel-Schaaf, discussed the Joint Land Use Study for Malmstrom Air Force Base in detail. Director O'Brien indicated specific interest in the study – it is the first JLUS for a missile installation. During the meeting, he directed Mr. Gontz to attend a meeting with us and Jim Holland, Deputy for Installation Policy, at the Pentagon the following day.

I'll note that Task Force 21 from Minot AFB, stays clear of the OEA. It is their position that if OEA is involved, it typically is not a good sign of things to come for the base. It is hard to assess the OEA Director's special interest – it may simply be because it's a unique JLUS, and/or that he is acutely aware of the impact on the region from the prior missile wing's deactivation, and anticipates more. While I don't want to read too much into it, the community should remain vigilant.

Director O'Brien talked about federal changes with OEA in terms of funding, and hinted that its ability to grant appropriations for future projects will be reduced. He said that a line has been drawn on implementation of JLUS recommendations because of the department's budget shortfall. There was some discussion about energy projects in the Air Force. Bases with strong energy projects will be more sustainable, however, energy projects (towers, wind turbines, etc.) that impede current missions may negatively impact the mission. Talking points for the meeting are attached.

Mr. James Holland – Deputy for Installation Policy (w/Gary Gontz, Project Manager; Lynn Engelman, Encroachment Management)

Range of topics included everything from Air Force perspective on base assets, to DoD long-

term planning needs, and housing. General comments included:

- Be careful that wind farms do not impede helicopter response to the field operations from MAFB.
- Zoning appropriately around military installations is important for communities. The DoD tries to plan for future needs and technology changes which may require appropriate buffers.
- There is some concern over encroachment of missile launch/alert facilities in the field.
- Air Force is seeking energy use reductions, but is willing to partner with Enhanced Use Leases to increase energy efficiency and technology. However, they are concerned about impact on military operations.

Colonel Edward Chupein - Chief of Air Force Ranges and Airspace

Colonel Chupein prepared a briefing on military air space in Montana for the delegation (attached). A few keys points from the meeting include:

- Montana has valuable air space. It could be more valuable if air operations could be conducted below 18,000 (air to ground runs). The Montana air space could be modified to perform those types of training with lasers, not real bombs.
- The F-22 needs large and vast air space (up to 60,000 feet) – currently trains over water.
- Western Governors Association is promoting the region’s “best wind in the world”. Wind farms are causing conflict – specifically electromagnetic, flight obstruction, lighting/reflection, frequency spectrum interference and back scatter for radar.
- Completion of the Powder River MOA would complement the air space north of Great Falls.
- Unmanned aerial vehicles require special air corridors or escorts when in operation.

Mr. Rich Rico – Chief of Staff Air National Guard

The delegation met Mr. Rico for the first time. He indicated he has a “special interest” in Great Falls and two other ANG bases (Springfield, Illinois and Puerto Rico). Thinking this interest was a good thing, we asked why - to which he responded that it was because “they are losing their jets too”.

We expressed our desire to be considered for other flying missions, and he indicated they are looking for other viable missions. There is not a lot of cargo/transport aircraft available for relocation. One interesting item he mentioned was that if the MANG could support regional FEMA operations in some way, the DoD would view that favorably.

Major General Donald Alston – Assistant Chief of Staff Strategic Deterrence & Nuclear Integration

The group participated in a broad policy discussion about the nation’s nuclear forces and the outlook of those forces in light of ongoing arms reduction talks.

Summary

I think visiting our congressional delegation as a community group was effective. We were able to hit some very specific concerns, such as the levees and military affairs, with key government officials. Appropriation requests will need to be reduced next time around. Hopefully, our efforts will benefit the community through legislative action or by helping our public safety and/or infrastructure needs.