



Item: Resolution 9861 to Levy and Assess the Cost of Removal and Disposal of Nuisance Weeds in the City of Great Falls, Montana from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

From: Martha Capps, Operations Supervisor

Initiated By: Annual Assessment Process

Presented By: Coleen Balzarini, Fiscal Services Director

Action Requested: City Commission adopt Resolution 9861

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (adopt /deny) Resolution 9861.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, inquiries from the public, and calls for the vote.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the City Commission adopt Resolution 9861.

Background: From May through October of each year, nuisance weed violations are reported to the Public Works Department, either by phone or through e-mail on the City Website. The complaints include uncared for weeds and grasses in alleys, boulevards, vacant lots, yards, etc within the City limits. The Nuisance Weed Program involves investigation and notification of verified weed and grass violations. The investigation process involves an on-site inspection followed by the determination of the legal ownership of the properties. Once ownership of the properties has been established, notification letters of nuisance weed violations are prepared and mailed.

In accordance with the City of Great Falls Municipal Code 8.44.040, owners are given seven business days from the date of the notification letter to comply with the weed ordinance. After the allotted time has expired, properties are once again inspected. Properties found not in compliance are documented and scheduled for cutting by the City crew. Photographs are taken before cutting to verify violations and again when the work is done.

In May 2008 thru November 2008, 2,645 notices of weed violations were mailed to individual property owners, with 91 property owners being billed for the weed cutting charges. Exhibit “A” of the Resolution lists 37 remaining property owners to be assessed for non-payment after monthly billings, in the amount of \$11,100.

Section 7-22-4101, MCA, authorizes the City Commission to levy the cost of removing nuisance weeds against the properties if payment is not made.

Concurrences: Public Works staff is responsible for the operational expenses for the Nuisance Weed Program. Fiscal Services staff is responsible for assessing and collecting the revenues necessary to carry out the operations.

Fiscal Impact: Owners whose properties are cut by the City crews are billed for actual time spent cutting at the rate of \$200.00 per hour (minimum of one hour.) Adoption of Resolution 9861 will allow the City to reimburse the cost of work each year in the Nuisance Weed Program.

Alternatives: The City Commission could choose to deny the adoption of Resolution 9861; however, the reduction in services to the community could be harmful and render land unfit for agriculture, forestry, wildlife, native plant communities and the general public.

Attachments/Exhibits: Resolution 9861