

Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission
255 North Fourth Street
P. O. Box 5200
Grand Forks, ND 58206

Minutes
April 21st, 2026

Commissioners present: Chuck Flemmer, Doug Munski, Gordon Iseminger, Judy Swisher, Nicole Derenne, Brian Carlson, Curt Hanson, Jacey Johnston, Paul Conlon

Guest: Sierra Johnson

Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm.

1. Approval of minutes from March 10th meeting.
 - a. Moved Swisher, second Munski.
 - i. Motion carries
2. Section 106 Reviews:
 - a. Spectra Health Building – Sierra Johnson
 - i. Environmental review looking to award \$400,000 of CDBG funds to allow for the rehab of the first floor – see section 2 on the map (page 3). The timeline depends on budget – perhaps next year.
 - ii. Brian asked whether it is all interior and whether it is contributing to the historic district.
 - iii. Motion: No Adverse Effect. Moved Munski, second Derenne. Motion carries.
3. Chair Report: Chuck Flemmer
 - a. Newman House visit
 - i. Smoking room – social area changed into the chapel. Deltas in the fireplace and elsewhere. The old part of the building is in good shape.
 - ii. The building will be put for sale at the end of the school year – appraised at approx. \$400k.
 - iii. Flemmer spoke with Ryan Brooks in Planning who noted the parking area is a limitation to what could be done there if it were to be changed.

- iv. Iseminger asked about the capacity – the building accommodates 38 girls, but there have been fewer in recent years. The issue has been an aging building.
 - b. Many of the older Greek houses are at risk.
- 4. Coordinator Report: Susan Caraher
 - a. Griggs Award nominations and bios
 - i. Two nominations have been made previously (Bobbi Hepper Olson & Grand Forks County). Are there any other nominations for this year's award?
 - ii. The coordinator is seeking assistance with information on the historic buildings that the Hepper Olson firm has worked on in Grand Forks. The GFH article from 2024 noted that she worked on store fronts on 3rd Street following the flood.
 - iii. Flemmer noted that there are other opportunities to recognize smaller projects for a neighborhood pride.
 - iv. Coca- Cola ghost sign
 - b. Sertoma Club
 - i. The coordinator presented to the Sertoma Club on March 17th at Kings Walk Golf Course. There were approximately 20 members in attendance.
 - c. Engineering records, photos and maps:
 - i. The City's Engineering Department has a table full of maps, plans, photos and documents and we are wondering whether these materials should go to Special Collections, the GF Public Library or be scanned and kept at City Hall. Storage is an ongoing concern.
 - ii. We will include something in the Preservation Plan and a future grant to find money to pay for someone to assist.
 - d. GFH stories - GFHPC & GFCHS, Lost neighborhood
 - i. The coordinator did an interview and photo with the GFH and the County Historical Society to try to help explain the differences between the two organizations.
 - ii. The GFH is also interested in doing a story and photo when the Lost Neighborhood panels are installed. We will also invite Ken Dawes to join us. For that interview and photo opp.
 - e. Historic Preservation Survey for the public

- i. The coordinator circulated a link to the draft public survey and is looking for feedback from the Commission. The survey will be put out in May during Preservation Month, for a period of two weeks.
- f. Babcock mitigation:
 - i. The coordinator reached out again to UND to learn of the plan for post-demolition. She was informed that the President's office is responsible for the post-demo plan and Chief of Staff, Judy Solberg, is the contact. She also learned that Darin Buri has been collecting bricks, mortar and other pieces of architectural features from razed buildings. He has also taken hundreds of photos of those buildings both before and after demolition. The coordinator asked to meet sometime in the summer to look at what he has collected.
 - ii. The coordinator also asked about the possibility of salvaging bricks and the railings and balustrades and was informed it is not likely to happen but will be given consideration by Facilities Management. The issue is the growing graveyard of architecture without unlimited space.
- g. Gorden Chorney photographs
 - i. A Manitoba photographer reached out to offer some aerial photos of the '97 flood as well as some other photos he took on trips to North Dakota. The coordinator offered to take the photos to review any that are relevant to the our office, and perhaps scan them before offering them to Special Collections, GF Public, the GF County Historical Society or the State Historical Society depending on relevance.
- h. Brian Samson – book on GF Police Department
 - i. Corporal Brian Samson has written a book on the history of the GFPD using lots of primary sources that were stored in their basement. He has since moved many of the documents to Special Collections. The coordinator will try to purchase one for our library.
- i. Central High School – limestone cleaning
 - i. GFPS is changing how they do maintenance on the schools with a rotating budget to allow for larger projects to be accomplished. This year is Central. Principal Strandell received bid proposals from some of the contacts the coordinator sent to him, but it includes project management of the subcontractor. Principal Strandell is hoping to find a contractor they can employ directly to save on the budget.

- j. Flood gear off to Bismarck
 - i. The ND State Museum Collections Committee approved our donation of flood gear and it will be sent to Bismarck this week (unless anyone is heading out there soon and is willing to transport!).
- k. Drawdowns for FY24 Q6 and FY25 Q2.
 - i. Both drawdowns will be ready to send to SHPO this week. The coordinator reminded Commissioners to check their donated labor forms for accuracy and sign so the Q2 drawdown can be finalized.
- l. Preservation month FB plan
 - i. The coordinator is mapping out a month-long social media campaign for May. Commissioners are asked to send any requests or suggestions for topics.
- 5. Other business: Swisher noted the old Eddy's bakery. Iseminger asked about the flood plaque.
- 6. Call to adjourn: Moved Munski, second Derenne. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Upcoming meetings: **Tuesday, May 12th, 2026 at 6:00pm**