



## Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force Membership Meeting Minutes March 20, 2024 ~ 7:00 PM Mayflower Church

Howard Evans, Chair called the meeting to order, welcoming members, guests & public officials.

### Public officials present included:

- Vice-Mayor Mike Boyett (city council ward 5)
- Ed Gulick (city council ward 1)
- Sergeant Stovall, Billings Police Department
- State Representative Denise Baum (RNTF resident)
- Tony Rahlf, FBI Special Agent (RNTF resident)

22 members were in attendance; a voting quorum was established; 3 of 4 board members were present - Kevin Moser unable to attend. A total of 11 guests (including non-member presenters) from outside the task force were also present. Howard explained we are rearranging the agenda order to accommodate Sergeant Stovall's schedule.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT UPDATE: Sergeant Stovall, Billings Police Dept (BPD):**

Police Staffing: Sergeant Stovall gave a brief overview of current BPD staffing, including new hires entering the law enforcement academy, and potential retirements.

Pink Fentanyl: Sergeant Stovall called our attention to a new kind of fentanyl. The new variety are pink tablets. It's not showing up here yet, but BPD & the US Attorney want to get ahead of it. Link to press release from US Attorney Jesse Laslovich:

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-mt/pr/us-attorney-jesse-laslovich-billings-police-department-issue-warning-about-pink-fentanyl>

Recent Homicide: The sergeant discussed the child who was reported missing, then found deceased. It's being investigated as a homicide. There have been questions about why an Amber Alert wasn't issued. BPD requested an Amber Alert through the state, but the request was denied as there were issues around the custodial situation. Stovall referenced an interview that Lieutenant Lennick did with Q2: [Family of murdered 12-year-old say they're frustrated by slow response \(ktvq.com\)](#)

### Q&A topics included:

- Reports of cyber attack on municipal water systems. Sergeant Stovall hadn't seen the alert about this, as he was out on the range today. (**NOTE: FBI Agent Rahlf is aware of the alert**)
- Questions about gangs: kids of various ages, both boys & girls as young as 11, some from California or from resettled Hurricane Katrina families, some local. Most gang violence is between gangs, not against the public. The only known exception is the Rocky Mountain College student who was caught in crossfire. The sergeant discussed the gang validation process. The gang numbers are growing.

**GUEST SPEAKER: Special Agent Tony Rahlf, FBI; [trahlf@fbi.gov](mailto:trahlf@fbi.gov)** Howard introduced Agent Rahlf who works with a cyber crime team, and lives in the Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force area.

Agent Rahlf spoke about common threats, including what to do, what not to do, and how to deal with problems if you've become a cyber crime victim. Key points included:

- Verify info on your own, don't click links
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the dynamics of crime. Microsoft's AI program only needs 3 seconds of a voice recording to "fake" that voice.
- Lock down your social media so BOTS can't get your voice from videos (Change your settings to only allow access to people you are connected with)
- Establish a "family password" that you and your kids can use to signify it's really them.
- Romance scams - if you're engaging with someone online for friendship or romance, do NOT move the conversation out of text messages and into encrypted apps such as "Whats App" - doing so makes it harder for law enforcement to track down perpetrators
- Teens are targeted with photos of girls or boys which are AI-generated fakes. Once hooked they're black-mailed.
- Use multi-factor authentication
- Never leave a new device with a default password. Establish a new password

- If you're scammed - don't call 911. Call the bank or credit card. Then report to IC3.gov Preserve all your communication. Tell your bank that you want them to work with the FBI.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Feb 21, 2024 RNTF meeting minutes approved as distributed by email.

**BOARD VACANCY:** Howard Evans opened nominations for Vice-Chair. None received; nominations will remain open til position is filled. If nominations are received at, or prior to, the May 15 meeting, we will vote then. If interested in serving as Vice-Chair -reach out to the Board at [rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com](mailto:rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com)

**HELP A NEIGHBOR:** agenda item postponed as Kevin Moser was unable to attend.

**COMMENTS FROM HOWARD:**

- All-task-force meeting with SD2 Superintendent Erwin Garcia, Apr 23, 5:30pm Billings Library
- RNTF Board will meet with City Engineer Mac Fogelsong in April re Rimrock Rd safety issues.
- Contact Howard if you want to provide a drawing prize, or if you know a business who does.
- Social media will be used to relay communications and information. The RNTF board will maintain a neutral position on issues shared, unless membership approves advocacy.

**LAASF - & FOI Request:**

- The Tuss family, RNTF residents, has requested that RNTF support a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain a document referenced in the LAASF Environmental Study.
- Howard asked for a motion from the floor, which was offered from RNTF member Lyle Gabrian:

***"I move that the Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force represented by Howard Evans, Chair, file a Freedom of Information Request for a copy of the agreement between Air Traffic Control, Billings Flying Service, and the Montana Army National Guard referenced in Appendix D of the Limited Army Aviation Support Facility's Environmental Assessment Study.***

- Alice Lahren, RNTF Member seconded the motion, and members voted unanimously to support the request

**SAFE SCHOOLS: Kiely Lammers, RNTF Member, SD2 Parent Safety Advisory Committee:** Kiely shared how SD2 hired a safety audit of school district buildings. The mil levy addresses issues identified by the audit. Kiely explained the "perpetual" nature of the levy (1 Pg overview of mil levy distributed) There will be a Transparency Committee to ensure that mil levy funds will be spent only on safety measures.

**WEST END PLAN: Tom Yampradit, RNTF Board Member.** Tom attended an open house at Ben Steele School, hosted by Sanderson Stewart (firm retained by City for the West Billings growth plan) Tom encouraged us to go on-line, review the plan and provide public comment. [Homepage - West Billings Plan \(sandersonstewart.com\)](http://sandersonstewart.com)

Key take-away re traffic - the plan includes widening Grand Avenue between Shiloh and Ben Steele School. The soonest this project could break ground is summer of 2026.

**REVIEW OF CITY/COUNTY CHARTERS: Mike Boyett, City Council.** Mike shared how our state constitution requires a vote every 10 yrs for the public to authorize review of city and county charters, to consider revision. This will be on the June 4th ballot. Citizens can apply to serve on the evaluation committee.

**CITY COUNCIL: Ed Gulick, Ward 1.** Ed gave an update on council business. He discussed the budgeting process for the fiscal year starting in July. Our voices are being heard by the City re traffic safety. There will be a transportation master plan. He asked members to consider if they'd be willing to entertain a smaller parks funding levy as Council is wrestling with this. Ed was asked about the pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks proposed for downtown. The City is still waiting for an answer on the federal grant. Elise Monet recommended as a possible contact for questions. Concerns were expressed re safety of Zimmerman with the increased amount of 18-wheel trucks using the roadway.

**Howard asked everyone to send the board ideas for future meeting topics.** [rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com](mailto:rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com)

**DRAWING:** As a thank you for staying through the meeting, a drawing was held for 2 gift baskets. Congrats to the winners. Thank you to Moser Construction for donating the prizes.

**Meeting adjourned at 9pm. Next meeting: Wednesday, May 15, 2024, 7pm, Mayflower Church.**  
Respectfully submitted, Leslie Cooke, RNTF Board Secretary