

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

October 28, 2015

4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Room 326

AGENDA

1. **Call to order, introductions, opening comments**
2. **October 14, 2015 Administrative Meeting summary**
3. **Commission comments, questions**
 - Upcoming appointments
4. **City Manager's Report**
5. **Department discussions**
 - Administrative Services**
 - a) Utility Bill Inserts
 - **Consensus Direction to Manager:**
 - Community Development**
 - b) Westside Q & A
 - **Consensus Direction to Manager:**
 - Public Works**
 - c) Project Management & Communication (*additional information to follow*)
 - **Consensus Direction to Manager:**
6. **Committee discussions**
 - a) Audit Committee, City-County Board of Health, Civic Center Board, L&C County Mental Health Advisory Committee, Montana League of Cities & Towns
– Mayor Jim Smith
 - b) Audit Committee, Board of Adjustment, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee
– Commissioner Dan Ellison
 - c) Non-motorized Travel Advisory Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee
– Commissioner Matt Elsaesser
 - d) ADA Compliance Committee, Business Improvement District/Helena Parking Commission, City-County Parks Board, Montana Business Assistance Connection
– Commissioner Andres Haladay
 - e) Audit Committee, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Public Art Committee
– Commissioner Haque-Hausrath
 - f) Helena Citizens Council
7. **Review of agenda for November 2, 2015 Commission meeting**
8. **Public comment**
9. **Commission discussion and direction to City Manager**
10. **Adjourn**

City of Helena, Montana

ADA NOTICE

The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The City will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the City's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Elroy Golemon, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following:

(406) 447- 8490

TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711

citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov

316 North Park, Avenue, Room 440, Helena, MT 59623

City of Helena, Montana

Date: October 21, 2015
To: Ron Alles, City Manager
From: Glenn Jorgenson, Administrative Services Director
Re: 2016 Water Bill Insert Requests



We have prepared the 2016 Utility Bill Insert List for the City Commission approval. At the October 28th Administrative Meeting, the City Commission will be asked which utility bill insert requests they would like to consider for final approval. Then the Commission will be asked to approve the final list of inserts at their November 23rd regular Commission meeting.

Staff has followed the guidelines set forth in **Resolution #19491** to establish the priority level of the inserts as follows:

1. City of Helena and its departments;
2. Helena Citizen's Council, City advisory boards and commissions (e.g. Zoning Commission, City-County Planning Board and City-County Board of Health), quasi-city government agencies (e.g. County Library), and non-profit entities with 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) contracted with by the City to provide government-type services (e.g. Humane Society);
3. Other government entities and agencies (e.g. County, State and Federal), quasi-governmental agencies, and non-profit entities with 501(c)(3) IRC status that privately provide government-type services (e.g. Prickly Pear Land Trust and Growing Friends of Helena); and
4. Non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) IRC status and that have a Helena-based headquarters and serve as a partnership for federated giving programs for other eligible entities with 501(c)(3) IRC status (e.g. Montana Shares and the United Way of Lewis and Clark County).

The attached list shows all the requests for each month and which requests we would be unable to accommodate if the resolution is followed. A sample of each insert is on file for Commission review if requested.

Attachment: 2016 Calendar
November 30th Utility Bill Insert

City of Helena, Montana

Priority Level		1	2	3	4							
Name	City	Quasi-City	Other govt & quasi govt	Other Non-Profit	Mailed First Week of:	Year	Description	Contact Person				
City of Helena - Street/Sidewalks	X			X	January	2016	snow removal	Ben Sautter, Laurie Miller, Greta Dige				
Montana Legal Services - New				X	January	2016	general information	Alison Paul				
City of Helena - Bus	X				February	2016	general bus information	Steve Larson				
City of Helena - Helena Citizens Council	X	X			February	2016	general information	Judy Garrity, Debbie Havens				
City of Helena - Fire Department	X				March	2016	wild land fires	Sean Logan				
City of Helena - Kay McKenna Youth		X			March	2016	Kay's Kids programs	Amy Teegarden				
City of Helena - TBID		X			March	2016	trail survey	Heidi O'brien			has been in for 2 yrs	
City of Helena - Transfer Station	X				April	2016	spring clean up	Jake Larson, Pete Anderson				
City of Helena - Animal Control	X				April	2016	animal control	Steve Hagen				
Prickly Pear Land Trust			X		April	2016	April or May - Don't Fence Me In	Lanie White			has been in forever	
City of Helena - Community Development	X				May	2016	National Bldg. Month	Jon Pallister				
City of Helena - Parks & Rec./summer	X				May	2016	summer recreation programs	Amy Teegarden				
Area IV Agency on Aging - New				X	May	2016	Older Americans Month	John Hofland				
City of Helena - Water	X				June	2016	annual water report-no others.	Lynora Rogstad				
City of Helena - Weed Control	X				July	2016	Weed-joint with county	Greta Dige				
GrandStreet Theatre			X		July	2016	announce new season's shows	Kal Poole			2015 was 1st yr	
City of Helena - Utility Customer Service	X				August	2016	water/ww rates & charges	Darla Flansaas				
Growing Friends			X		August	2016	info and donations	James Driggers				in for yrs-missed 2015
City of Helena - Civic Center	X				September	2016	upcoming Civic Center events	Diane Stavnes				
Holter Museum - New				X	September	2016	general information	Seth Roby				
City of Helena - Storm water	X				October	2016	storm water information	Janice Long, Kevin Hart				
Helena BID - New		X			October	2016	downtown fall activities	Haley Miller				
Montana Shares				X	October	2016	donations	Kristi Paulson			has been in forever	
City of Helena - Street/Sidewalks	X				November	2016	street/sidewalk info	Ben Sautter, Laurie Miller, Greta Dige				
Crime stoppers - New			X		November	2016	"Major Case Fund" donation pamphlet	Kyle Whitney				
Montana Foundation for Animals				X	November	2016	donations	Marilyn Evans			has been in for yrs	
City of Helena - Parks & Rec./winter	X				December	2016	winter recreation programs	Amy Teegarden				
City of Helena - Admin Services-Accounting	X				December	2016	license renewals-renewable energy???	Elaine Myles, Glenn Jorgenson				
In 2014 the Commission suggested that some of the inserts be rotated to give others an opportunity. I allowed 4 new inserts and bumped 4 for this year. That only left one insert that we were unable to accommodate.												

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

BUSINESS & DOG LICENSES

The City of Helena has mailed courtesy notices for your annual license renewal, and you may renew your licenses at any time. Please be sure to read the notices carefully for instruction to help you in the renewal process. For dogs the rabies expiration date is printed on your notice so just be sure that date is current. If it isn't we will need a copy of your dog's new rabies certificate from your veterinarian.



Remember we will waive all penalty & interest if you renew before March 1, 2016.

If you no longer need your license, or you have any questions, just give us a call at 447-8450

Monday-Friday: 8:00 – 5:00

For licensing information go to:

www.helenmt.gov (forms)

or email - citywater@helenamt.gov

**Renewals are now being done at Room 150,
1st Floor, City/Co. Bldg.**

Interest Free Loan Programs

The City of Helena is offering **two** 10 year interest free loan programs for property owners. The loans will be paid through your tax bill.

- **Sidewalk installation and replacement.** For more information: call Tyson Lesmeister, Engineering Technician at 447-8095 or email: TLesmeister@helenamt.gov
- **Renewable energy loans.** Loans can be made up to \$12,000 for energy efficiency upgrades. Examples are: solar photovoltaic systems, wind turbines, geothermal & groundwater source heating systems, greywater systems, and solar heating systems. Call Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director at 447-8445 or email: SHaugen@helenamt.gov

Both programs are offered on a first come, first served basis. There's limited construction availability and funding so take advantage of these programs early.



City of Helena

Questions from Westside Working Group

1. What will happen if residents cannot afford to hook up water and/or sewer at the time the City requires? There may be the potential for a 20 year repayment plan on the water bill. If at the time of connection in 20 years some people cannot afford to connect it would be the commission at that time to make changes to the project and its requirements.
2. Twenty years after annexation, if undeveloped lots have not been developed, will the City pass remaining infrastructure costs along to existing homeowners? No the costs would be paid by the existing rate payers citywide.
3. Will the City install a curb stop for water and sewer for each current house or lot when putting in the infrastructure (therefore reducing future costs to homeowners)? The city will install curb boxes to the property line for all existing homes and can work with the property owner on location of curb boxes for vacant properties to accommodate future development.
4. Will the City-required improvements be limited to sewer and water, or will they also require street paving, curbs and sidewalks, street lighting, etc.? Street paving is part of the current proposal, the city commission may order in curbs and sidewalks for any property in the city at any time, and street lighting is not a requirement in the city and if someone wants to establish a lighting district it is through an election process.
5. Is there any way to get a legally-binding guarantee from the City that a future City Commission will not change the cost resolution in the future? Contracts will be in place for those that connect to services, and both parties will be legally bound by those terms. Future commissions may choose to adjust any resolution or ordinance as needed in the future and cannot be bound by a current city commission.
6. During the last effort to establish a sewer district on the Westside, there was a lot of misinformation distributed. How do we prevent or counter that for this effort? **The city and/or the county cannot control the distribution of information in the area. We could create a website strictly for the Westside where factual information gets posted. During the creation process, information regarding procedures should be obtained from County planning staff.**
7. Is there a tax advantage to going with a RSID (where assessments are made though County property taxes) compared to a Sewer and/or Water District (where assessments are made through user fees)? Are the user fees tax deductible? **The Water and/or Sewer District would have to hire a bookkeeper and pay for all costs associated with billing. They would also have to pay for an audit. With an RSID the county takes care of all the administrative work and the money is collected on the property tax bill.**
8. If we go the route of either a RSID or water/Sewer District, the city will eventually take over ownership of the installed infrastructure. Will the City then assess fees, and if so what fees and how much? Will homeowners that are hooked up to the infrastructure be assessed by both the County (and Sewer/Water District) and the city? **The city will own the infrastructure as soon as**

the lines are built and connected to city services (with the exception of the individual service lines to houses or businesses). Monthly service fees will be charged for the use of the service. These monthly bills do not pay down any debt associated with the construction of the infrastructure. If the long term debt is through an RSID you will be paying this off through your property tax bills.

9. Is the City willing to wait for the 10-20 years for this to play out? Will the City put some kind of time limit after which they will restart annexation?

All decisions are fact & case specific. The city does not place a time limit on annexation cases.

10. What is the ultimate plan re: annexation? If a WSD or RSID successfully created the services, would the City still plan to annex the areas? If so, it is important for homeowners to know that.

Any connection to city infrastructure (ie. water & sewer) requires annexation into the city.

11. Under the RSID option, is the County willing to commit to a long term process of creating a series of RSIDs over a 10-20 year period? Is it possible to have County actually pass some kind of resolution to that effect? **Seems reasonable**

12. It is interesting that some of us have concerns about the degree of authority and responsibility homeowners have in a WSD but in the RSID option it seems like the County really calls all the shots. I wonder if the County would agree to some kind of Westside Homeowners Advisory Group to work with them in the RSID option helping identify priority areas, etc. **Yes, the county collects the revenue to pay off the debt through property tax bills but the people within the RSID control what gets done. Details of improvements and maintenance are established and altered by County resolution, and these resolutions may be able to specify an advisory group. But if sewer infrastructure is build, the county cannot change the fact that the debt needs to be paid.**

13. Are there ways available to get longer term financing to help reduce homeowner costs? Could the County, for example, set up a 50 year repayment plan? **No**

14. Assume a WSD was set up and someone in the district but outside area being currently worked on had a septic system failure. Would the WSD be responsible for helping the homeowner find a solution? If the homeowner wanted at that point to hook up with the City, would the City be directly involved or would the WSD be responsible? This raises the question of homeowners' ability to opt out of a WSD or RSID. If a homeowner decides for whatever reason (septic failure, wanting to get the process behind them, cost considerations) that he/she wants to be annexed, will the City allow that? Will the WSD allow that? Will the RSID allow that?
RIDs and WSDs allow property owners to be included within the boundaries, at the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners. If a property owner wishes to be removed, this action is also at the discretion of the County Commissioners.

15. Under either scenario, we would ultimately be hooking up to City of Helena services. I assume that means the City would have to approve any plans? In that process it is going to be important to be able to separate costs of providing the water/sewer service from costs that the City should

pay to upgrade their systems and/or anticipate further development. Under a WSD we would, I'm sure, be hiring our own engineers (and attorneys). Under a RSID can we get a commitment from the County to protect homeowners from the City passing inappropriate costs on to us? Is there a statute covering this? Can we get the City to acknowledge its responsibility to follow the law as projects proceed? **The infrastructure (water or sewer) will be connected to city services and will have to meet city specs for design and construction. This would be the same if a private developer built a new subdivision and connected to city services. Once hooked into city services you are under the same rules and pay the same monthly rates (vary depending on household usage) as the rest of those living in the city. The only thing that may specifically impact new users is a change in the hookup fee. The county cannot control decisions made by the city commission.**

The city does require annexation with a connection to the infrastructure. The city also follows all laws for all of the processes we administer.

16. As phases of the WSD are completed, homeowners would be connected to City water/sewer and liable for the fees. Would they pay directly to City or pay to WSD which would pay City? If water/sewer fees are paid directly to City, would homeowner still have to pay the WSD fee? Does that change depending on whether property is annexed? **Once connected to city services you pay the monthly service fee. Debt for the improvements will still need to be paid to the WSD as it is established by resolution.**

There would be a two part bill, one to the district as described, and one to the city for the monthly usage.

17. Not really a question, but before there is a discussion with larger homeowner group I think the whole issue of WSD membership fees needs to be fleshed out. There has been discussion of \$5 per month but if grant writers, engineers, attorneys, and clerical/administrative personnel are needed, I think it will be a lot more. People need to understand that this fee will be assessed when the WSD starts until, I guess, the work of the District is completed, a period of 10-20 years. So, for example, people will be paying the fee long before, and/or long after work on their property is completed. **Additionally, they will be paying the cost to hire a bookkeeper to do all the billing and keep the records.**

18. What do the City and the County think about developing sewer services, but not water, initially? Clearly the septic is more urgent and important from an environmental point of view. The City might have bought a lot of good will a couple of months ago if it had backed away from the water issue and thereby cut the cost in half. Maybe work to get sewers in under WSD or RSID and leave water question to next generation of homeowners. **The county does not have an opinion on this except to agree that wastewater is the issue of concern.**

Water and Sewer would be required as a comprehensive project and once complete annexation would occur. A comprehensive project would take advantage of one time mobilization of equipment and construction/disturbance to the neighborhood.