

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
July 11, 2018– 4:00 p.m.
Room 326, City-County Building
316 N. Park Avenue

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Collins called the meeting to order. Commissioners Farris-Olsen; Haladay, Noonan and O’Loughlin were present. Staff present was: City Manager Dennis Taylor; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Police Chief Troy McGee; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Senior Planner Dustin Ramoie; Parks & Recreation Director Amy Teegarden; Public Works Director Randall Camp; Community Facilities Superintendent Troy Sampson; Civic Center Manager Byron Dike; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Budget Manager Libbi Lovshin; Parking Director Dave Hewitt; Parking Maintenance Supervisor Tim Nickerson and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included: NorthWestern Energy representatives Howard Skjervem and Steve Schmitt; BID/Parking Commission members Rex Seeley and Mark Roylance; and representatives from CNN’s Great Big Story.

2. June 20, 2018 Administrative Summary – The June 20, 2018 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions – Upcoming Appointments – There are no board appointments on the July 16th city commission meeting agenda.

4. City Manager’s Report – Manager Taylor reported the following three items will be on the July 25th administrative meeting agenda: Kindrick Legion Field; end of year numbers and the discussion on a COLA; and the apprenticeship resolution.

Manager Taylor reminded the commission of the Joint Work Session on Thursday, July 12th at 4:00 p.m. in Room 326 and

5. Department Discussions
Administrative Services

Northwestern Energy Streetlight Update - Howard Skjervem congratulated the commission on selecting Dennis Taylor as Interim Manager. He also thanked the city staff who was involved with the 4th of July celebration at Centennial Park.

Mr. Skjervem and Steve Schmitz with NWE gave an update on the use of LED lights and the energy conservation opportunities the city has taken advantage of. Mr. Skjervem recognized the work of Administrative Services Director Jorgenson for his work. Northwestern Energy has taken on the task of changing out the light fixtures and replacing them with LED lights. With NWE doing the project it will not require the residents of the district to vote on the upgrades. Helena and Billings will be the two first cities to have the lights changed out. An important component of the project is public communication and education.

Mr. Schmitt gave an overview of the process that will be used when replacing the high pressure sodium bulbs with LED bulbs. He noted the LED bulbs will save energy overall.

Parks and Recreation

Parks Needs Assessment Update – Director Teegarden spoke on the Parks Needs Assessment and introduced consultant Dylan Packebush with GreenPlay LLC who gave a PowerPoint presentation on Phase One of the Parks Needs Assessment for Helena and Lewis and Clark County. Specific topics discussed from the findings summary included the following: Demographics, Trends, and Inventory.

Focus Groups/Public Meeting outcomes of strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats, programs to be added, facility improvements, additional amenities, key partners, underserved population, and identified priorities.

The next step in the process is to complete a deeper analysis and identification of gaps; prepare written findings; and develop a work plan.

Parking Commission

Parking Kiosk Roll-Out Plan – Parking Director Hewitt reported in the past few months, the Helena Parking Commission Board has suggested delaying implementation of a smart meter project in consideration of implementing the kiosk project first.

The City Commission adopted the Business Improvement District Downtown Master plan. The plan recommends pay-to-park parking in front of retail shops and restaurants, these areas of prime parking, where it is currently free parking.

The need for a pay-to-park system in the downtown area has been discussed among staff and the board for the past few years, however due to budget constraints, the need for parking garage equipment replacement and major structural maintenance on properties have taken priority. Though recent staff reductions and the re-evaluation of major property repairs have helped to create positive cash flow over the past fiscal year, balancing the Helena Parking Commission budget continues to be a challenge.

Our community overall is resistant to paying for parking, and more resistant to increases in parking fees, while the HPC's budget challenges include maintenance of older facilities, upgrades to provide more efficient and improved service to customers, and normal increases to staff salaries and benefits.

Without the yearly price increase burden to our monthly permit holders, a pay to park system in the core area of downtown is the last source of untapped revenue for the HPC.

Long and short term plans to upgrade thirty year old pay-to-park equipment both on streets and in parking lots is our top priority. Staff has done extensive research and has made solid recommendations. I hesitate to seek financing for this project; however I do feel a pay to park system in the downtown business area can be successful and with a relatively quick pay off.

The project will require extensive planning and public support, and the only way for overall success is to collaborate with Downtown Helena Inc. and Business Improvement Boards. We must get the downtown business and the general public on board and agree a pay to park system is best for the future of Downtown Helena.

Director Hewitt reviewed the Parking Kiosk and Smart Meter Project information.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the annual fees will include credit card processing. Parking Director Hewitt stated yes. Commissioner O'Loughlin referred to the map showing the current 1-2 hour free parking; the proposed location of a kiosk and smart meter and the current locations of parking meters and asked if the proposed location of smart meters is where the meters are currently located. Director Hewitt stated it is a mixture of placing the smart meters where meters are currently located and areas where there currently are no meters. Discussion was held on the proposed location of the smart meters and kiosks. Parking Maintenance Supervisor Tim Nickerson explained staff created the original map with advice from the kiosk company. There are common /best practices on how far the kiosk should be located and factors that were considered when the locations were determined, safety and pedestrian travel were taken into consideration.

Commissioner Noonan thanked staff for the presentation; he then referred to the revenue projections and asked how much of that would be new money. Parking Director Hewitt stated there are two existing areas, Jackson Street and Fuller Avenue; the other areas would generate new money.

Parking Maintenance Supervisor Tim Nickerson reviewed the master plan timeline for implementation of the project.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the customers will receive notifications through the software when time is running out and would the parking commission also receive notification. Parking Maintenance Supervisor Tim Nickerson stated there is an application on smartphones that will notify customers on the smart meter. He did not have an answer regarding a notification on the kiosks and will provide an answer to the commission.

Commissioner Noonan noted the commission originally budgeted \$140,000 for the project. Budget Manager Lovshin stated the final number in the budget is \$340,000, which was part of the amendments adopted by the commission. The city will borrow the money to complete the project.

BID Board member Mark Roylance thanked Parking Director Dave Hewitt and Parking Maintenance Supervisor Tim Nickerson for the work they have completed; the goal is to fix the parking on Last Chance Gulch.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated the benefits of kiosks are you can move your car downtown and it allows for flexibility. The downtown area needs to have continuity and there is value in completing this project. Commissioner O'Loughlin thanked staff for the work that has been completed.

BID Board member Rex Seeley commented that the proposal is to charge \$1.00 to \$1.50 per hour on Last Chance Gulch; he has spoken to in excess of 100 people and once he explained the reasoning for the prime parking, there was overall support of moving forward.

Manager Taylor confirmed there is commission concurrence to move forward with the smart meters/kiosk project, including the financing as discussed.

Community Development

Annexation Plan for West Side Phases 2 & 3 – Director Haugen reported annexation of the wholly surrounded area of the Westside located east of Granite Avenue requires that a plan for the extension of services be in place. MCA 7-2-4732 requires the development of a long range plan that must show anticipated development a minimum of 5 years into the future and addresses the extension of all types of City services. A draft of the required plan is attached for Commission review and discussion on the direction moving forward to implement the plan.

A portion of the area east of Granite Avenue will be included in the upcoming TSEP project for the installation of wastewater mains. The city has contracted with WWC Engineering to design the water and wastewater project with an anticipated start of construction in Spring 2019.

As the City has installed other smaller infrastructure projects in the area the residents have expressed interest in making connection to water and wastewater mains once they are installed. A requirement of receiving city services is that the property be annexed. Rather than having property owners petition to annex on an individual basis, annexation of the area as a whole makes for a more efficient and orderly pattern of growth at a neighborhood scale. There are currently seven pending individual applications for annexation in the wholly surrounded area with more property owners interested in connection to water and wastewater services that have been waiting for a decision on the annexation of the wholly surrounded area. Pre-zoning for the entire area was recently approved with the adoption of Ordinance No. 3420.

Senior Planner Ramoie referred the commission to the Annexation Plan for Extension of Services and the vicinity map.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked for clarification on the solid waste collections; do the residents currently have a permit. Senior Planner Ramoie explained the county residents receive a permit for the transfer station; however, once the property is annexed and they choose to stay with the private company, they would not receive a permit for the transfer station.

Commissioner Haladay noted the plan does not speak to a rebate resolution under water and wastewater. Senior Planner Ramoie stated a rebate resolution is an option the commission can choose to offer the residents. He would not recommend adding the language to the Annexation Plan. Commissioner Haladay concurred the rebate resolution should not be included in the annexation plan. It is important to keep the language clear in the annexation plan and the city can offer a rebate resolution.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the area being annexed includes the location of the medical marijuana dispensary. Senior Planner Ramoie stated the dispensary is in the Phase II area which is anticipated to be annexed next spring.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked that we look at amending the ordinance regarding having the medical marijuana dispensaries in the city. Attorney Jodoin recommended the commission have a discussion on where they would be allowed; at this time there is no general zoning regulations for the business. Attorney Jodoin also noted if the city were to move forward with amending the ordinance, he would hold off on the enforcement of that property.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the Fire Service contract is between city and county. Attorney Jodoin stated yes and explained once the property is annexed, those property owners would no longer pay into the fire service; however the fire district would still exist.

Commissioner Haladay asked what the timeframe to bring the resolution of annexation forward is. Senior Planner Ramoie stated staff is prepared to bring the resolution of intention to annex the fully surrounded area and properties that have petitioned to annex within the next couple of months.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if there has been resistance from property owners. Senior Planner Ramoie stated he has had a lot of contact with the citizens and there is not resistance from those who have petitioned to annex; however, there may be some resistance when the wholly surrounded area is annexed.

Manager Taylor stated it is staff's intention to bring this forward before the next tax year begins. He also reminded the commission the annexation plan will be discussed at the joint work session along with an update on the Law and Justice Building.

6. Committee discussions

- a) Audit Committee, City-County Board of Health, L&C County Mental Health Advisory Committee, Montana League of Cities & Towns -- Mayor Wilmot Collins – No report given.
- b) Mayor Pro-Tem, Audit Committee, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Public Art Committee - – Commissioner Andres Haladay – No report given.
- c) Board of Adjustment, Civic Center Board, Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee – Commissioner Rob Farris-Olsen – No report given.
- d) ADA Compliance Committee, Business Improvement District/Helena Parking Commission, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Montana Business Assistance Connection – Commissioner Ed Noonan – No report given.
- e) Audit Committee, City-County Parks Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee - Commissioner Heather O’Loughlin – No report given.
- f) Helena Citizens Council – No report

7. Review of agenda for July 16, 2018 Commission meeting – No discussion held.

8. Public comment – No public comment received.

9. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager – No discussion held.

10. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.