

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

**September 18, 2019– 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 Haladay, Noonan and O’Loughlin were present. Commissioner Wicks was excused.

Staff present: City Manager Ana Cortez; Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Opitz; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Deputy City Attorney Iryna O’Conner; Interim Police Chief Steve Hagen; Assistant Fire Chief Mike Chambers; Interim Public Works Director Ryan Leland; Transportation Systems Director David Knoepke; Parks, Recreation and Open Lands Director Kristi Ponozzo; Human Resources Director Yolanda Franco; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Community Facilities Superintendent Troy Sampson; Public Information Officer Rebecca Connors and Interim City Clerk Dannai Clayborn.

Others in attendance included an HCC Representative

2. September 4, 2019 Summary – The September 4, 2019 administrative summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

A. Board Appointments: ADA Compliance Committee, City-County Parks Board, City-County Planning Board, Zoning Commission

Mayor Collins recommended the following board appointments:

ADA Compliance Committee

Appointment of Gina Lytle, representative of the disabled community, to a first term on the ADA Compliance Committee. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on September 1, 2022.

City-County Parks Board

Reappointment of Steve Baiamonte to a second term on the City-County Parks Board. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on September 30, 2022.

City-County Planning Board

Appointment of Morgan Anderson to a first term on the City-County Planning Board. First term will begin upon appointment and expire on September 1, 2022.

City Zoning Commission

Reappointment of Michael McCabe, Rebecca Harbage and Mark Ophus (Alternate Member) to second terms on the Zoning Commission. Terms will begin upon appointment and expire September 30, 2022.

4. City Manager's Report

City Manager Cortez introduced Human Resources Director Yolanda Franco. Manager Cortez stated an offer was made to the first-choice candidate for the Chief Financial Officer Position of the Finance Department. This offer was not accepted, but another candidate was qualified and had re-submitted the supplemental questions to the Human Resources department as part of the hiring process and would be considered for hire, as well. City Manager Cortez and CAO Baltz have agreed on the management of the Housing Coordinator for the City and County. The Manager gave an update on the OpenGov software program and felt it was an agreeable compromise for the City's needs at this time.

5. Department Requests – No items on the agenda.

6. Department Presentations

Public Works

Monthly Engineering Project Update – Interim Public Works Director Leland

Staff will be providing ongoing monthly project updates from Engineering Department on Major Capital Improvement Projects for the City and with an in-depth look at the Rodney Street Project and the 5-Point Intersection Study. In addition staff will be presenting the 5-year CIP for the Major Capital Project for the City. The 5-year plan gives context of where the City is going with capital projects and provide a big picture view of the projects.

Interim Public Works Director Ryan Leland updated the Commission on the Front Street Project by the current state of the construction itself and the current finances of the project. Interim Director Leland stated the sidewalk construction would begin for Albertson's on Fee Street would be completed next week after negotiating with Albertson's, the store opted to voluntarily participate in the Sidewalk installation program. The City is working with Days on the east Side of Fee Street on the construction of their sidewalk due to contractor issues. Interim Director gave brief updates on the of the Red Mountain Flume, Chessman Reservoir Project, and the Knight Street Safe Passage project.

Commissioner Noonan asked if the sidewalk program would include the no interest loan to the homeowners as part of the Knight Street Project. Interim Director Leland confirmed this would be the same 10-year no interest loan, which has been offered as part of other projects to homeowners and businesses alike.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she was aware the safe passage program had much support but did not want concerns about who bears of the financial responsibility for the construction of the sidewalk to once again hinder the progress on Knight Street to move forward. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated the City should remain open to further discussion on the finances in order to ensure the project maintained its support. City Manager Cortez stated City Staff could prepare multiple financial projections for the Commission to review, to be best informed on how to move forward, but ultimately this would be a policy decision the Commission would have to make.

Commissioner Noonan stated he had concerns about those individuals on a fixed income, would be able to afford the installation costs. City Manager Cortez confirmed with the Commission the City Staff would bring multiple figure projections for the Commission to review prior to any decision being made on the adjacent block requirements for the sidewalk installations.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the School was involved in the public meeting. Interim Director Leland stated while they were not in attendance, the City was in constant contact with the school on the status of the project.

Commissioner Haladay asked this item to be added to the Non-Motorized meeting agenda for an update.

Interim Director gave a synopsis of the current state of the Rodney Street project and stated overall the community was in strong support of the project, including street-scaping, design and parking. Commissioner Haladay asked if there would be additional public meetings prior to the Phase II of the Rodney Street project beginning. Interim Director Leland confirmed there would be public meetings, taking lessons from the Phase I process when implementing the Phase II process.

Regarding the timeline for the 5-Point Intersection application for the BUILD Grant application, Commissioner O'Loughlin asked for a due date for the application. Interim Director Leland stated it would be July 1, 2021.

Discussion was had to clarify the rates raised for the 5 Year CIP Capital Project and how the money would be utilized.

Parks, Recreation and Open Lands

Helena Open Lands Recreation Management Plan Update

Parks, Recreation and Open Lands Director Ponozzo reported over the past month we have been working with our consultants to determine the next steps in the open lands recreation update process. We have brought on Deb Halliday, a Helena-based professional facilitator, who will be facilitating three workshops to develop the updated plan. The workshops are thematic and will focus on the issues identified during the assessment phase.

The workshops are scheduled for:

- Recreation Plan Vision & Goals and Trail Use, Growth, and Maintenance -- **Tuesday, Sept. 17, from 5:30 - 7:30 pm**
- Partnerships, Coordinated Management, and Special Events -- **Tuesday, Oct. 15, from 5:30 - 7:30 pm**
- Recreation Plan Draft Goals, Policies, and Next Steps -- **Tuesday, Oct. 29, from 5:30 - 7:30 pm**

The attached work plan expands on the schedule and expected outcomes. Additionally, we have reconvened the Regional Trails Steering Committee to help provide regional guidance and support for our process. For background, the Helena-Area Regional Trail System/Steering Committee was established by commission resolution in 2018 and is comprised of City of Helena, USFS, BLM, Lewis and Clark and Jefferson County, and a land conservation trust representative (PPLT).

Trails in the Helena region are in multiple jurisdictions of private, city, county, state and federal lands that provide a mix of recreational experiences and opportunities. Trail development has evolved from individual trail activities and experiences into an informal interconnected trail “system”. Some of the existing and emerging challenges and issues include an inconsistent, fragmented approach to trail development and management as well as evolving and increasing demands and expectations of the trail system.

To promote wise and sustainable use of lands and provide for quality recreation experiences, an effective balance between open space and trail system development requires an integrated management approach. A regional trail steering committee will provide a collective vision and strategic management direction. An integrated regional approach will result in high-level, cross-jurisdictional planning and management of an interconnected trail system. Integrated planning and implementation of collective regional goals and objectives will result in a connected and sustainable regional trails system that strives to meet demands and expectations across jurisdictional boundaries and management as well as evolving and increasing demands and expectations of the trail system.

Beattie Street Trailhead Update

Director Ponozzo reported the Open Lands, Park and Recreation Department (OPR) is working with the WGM Group on the design and cost estimate for the Beattie Street Trailhead construction and street improvements project. City staff and consultant held an open house with high attendance in August and received feedback on different design aspects. Staff and consultant are working now on reviewing and responding to all that feedback and incorporating feasible elements into the design in preparation for the next (2nd of 3) public meeting. The City's goal is to finalize design and cost estimates this Fall and enter into a construction contract in early spring. The new trailhead will open in Spring of 2020. Staff and consultants have been invited to two private events. The first private event took place on September 9 at the home closest to the construction site. The second event took place on September 11 at another home on Beattie Street. Staff also presented on August 28 to the HCC.

The Beattie Street Trailhead and traffic calming project exemplifies values important to the City. Specifically, the Beattie Street Trailhead and traffic calming is important because it address inequities of open lands use; the project will increase Accessibility for people with mobility challenges through designated parking and restrooms. The project also addresses the demand on this particular trail which is second most used trailhead in the Open Lands system. Third, the project is part of a larger strategy to consolidate trail activity to specific locations and discourage random social trails and reduce ecological impact. Fourth, the project provides better access for emergency and maintenance vehicles. Finally, the project improves the functionality of this particular trail system.

Commissioner Noonan stated at the previous ADA Committee meeting several members stated they were planning on attending the next HCC meeting to discuss the ADA options for the trailhead with the HCC members and attendees.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked for the current options being discussed for the traffic-calming installations for the area. Interim Public Works Director Leland stated all options were being discussed at this time. Commissioner O'Loughlin thanked Director Ponzoso and Parks, Recreation and Open Lands staff for all their work on the trailhead, stating there was a long history and strong feelings associated with this project.

City Manager Cortez stated the City was reviewing the project history and had not found issues in the processes followed by the City in the planning of the Beattie Street Trailhead, and the City would continue to do its due diligence in this and all matters.

- 7. Committee discussions**
Helena Citizens Council – No report.
- 8. Review of agenda for September 23, 2019 Commission meeting** – No discussion.
- 9. Public comment** – No discussion.
- 10. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager** – City Manager Cortez stated she understood the direction to Staff to provide an update at the next Non-Motorized Committee meeting on the Knight Street project and Staff should prepare multiple options for costs and boundaries for the safe passage zone for the Knight Street project for the Commission to review.
- 11. Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.