

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

February 5, 2020 – 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 Logan, Haladay, O’Loughlin and Dean were present.

Staff present: Acting City Manager Steve Hagen; Transportation Systems David Knoepke; Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Opitz; Deputy City Attorney Erik Coate; Fire Chief Ken Wood; Interim Public Works Director Eric Urban, City Engineer Ryan Leland; Parks, Recreation and Open Lands Director Kristi Ponzozzo; Human Resources Director Yolanda Franco; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Community Facilities Superintendent Troy Sampson; Public Information Officer Rebecca Connors; Sustainability Coordinator Patrick Judge; Budget Analysts Chris Couey and Sara Sikorski; Wastewater Superintendent Trent Schuer and Interim City Clerk Dannai Clayborn.

Others in attendance included Teresa Ortega of Good Samaritan, HCC Rep Dylan Klapmeier, Brian Fadie, Sue Kronenberger, Michelle Thompson, Herb Kulow of Our Redeemer’s Church, Dr. Gregory Thomas and Nolan Lister of the Helena Independent Record.

2. Administrative Meeting Summary – January 22, 2020.

**3. Commission comments, questions –
Board Appointments:**

Mayor Collins recommended appointments for Helena Public Arts Committee, Golf Advisory Board, TIF / URD Advisory Board. Direction was given to move forward with the Civic Center Steering Committee appointments and organization.

4. City Manager’s Report

Acting City Manager Hagen stated he would be approving a change order for Anderson Zurmuehlen and Associates for the previous years audit, unless there was concern from the Commission. There was no objection. The Manager priority list was determined to be the City Manager’s Evaluation List, due to its discussion at an open meeting, with public commentary. If additional direction was need on the list for staff this could be addressed by the Acting City Manager. A request was made by Commissioner Dean to place the priority list on the City’s webpage. Acting City Manager Hagen stated staff was seeking direction on the upcoming budget year. Due to the timeline of producing the new biennial budget and other complications, there would need to be extensive amendments to the budget for FY21, because of the amount of amendments necessary, staff recommended creating and adopting a revised budget. Commissioner O’Loughlin stated this was the City’s first attempt at a biennial budget and it was always known there would need to be revisions made to the budget. Commissioner Dean asked if the City was on a timeline currently to ensure the budget and CAFR would be on time for the upcoming budget year. Commissioner Logan asked Interim Finance Director Hirst what the staffing situation was in the Finance Department to ensure the budget and audit process went smoothly. Ms. Hirst stated with the recent hire of the CFO, the Finance Department was almost fully staffed. Budget Analyst Couey stated

staff could be ready to present the revised budget in approximately 6-8 weeks. Acting City Manager Hagen gave a brief update on the status of the Charter/Spectrum HDTV upgrade and asked Transportation Systems Superintendent Elroy Goleman to update the Commission on the Capital Transit Advisory Committee, and the current status of the grant funding for the Capital Transit System. Teresa Ortega from Good Samaritan gave a summary of the involvement of Good Samaritan in the pursuit of MDT funding. A discussion was held involving the recommended rankings for the available MDT funds, it was recommended the current rankings be accepted by the Commission.

5. Litigation Strategy – No report given.

6. Department Presentations
Sustainability Coordinator –

a. Resolution establishing a goal of 100% clean, renewable electricity for the Helena community by 2030.

Sustainability Coordinator Patrick Judge updated the Commission on the resolution establishing a goal of 100% clean, renewable electricity for the Helena Community by 2030. The City Attorney prepared an initial draft of the resolution. The attached version incorporates feedback from Citizen Conservation Board members and others. The changes (which should be visible on track changes) include:

1) Moving from "carbon-free electricity" to "clean, renewable electricity" as the goal.

In addition to being generally more descriptive and understandable, it also more accurately reflects what we would likely see in Montana. For example, "carbon-free" includes nuclear, which is not really an option in Montana (due to a pair of citizens initiatives that passed long ago). At the same time, we want to be clear that renewable resources would NOT include dirty power plants. While a well-run, well-sited biomass plant that has good air pollution controls, timber harvesting standards, etc. would qualify, others might not.

2) Moving from "commitment" to "goal", due to some jurisdictional issues. Some members of the Citizen Conservation Board have expressed discomfort having the City "commit" to a standard that lies outside of its direct control. Specifically, Helena does not have direct authority over NorthWestern Energy's resource portfolio. But as a major customer, Helena certainly does have influence with NorthWestern, the PSC, etc., especially when working in concert with other communities. As such, a goal that is formally adopted by resolution could be a worthwhile lever indeed, for all the reasons cited in the draft.

3) General edits and updates. For example, the "Ready for 100" website now lists additional jurisdictions that have established such goals, adding to the October count. Other communities in Montana have adopted similar resolutions or proclamations. Local non-profit organizations have held public meetings on the idea and are advocating adoption of the resolution.

Brian Fadie, Helena Citizen Conservation Board member, spoke in support of the resolution stating there was community support, and very little downside due to the resolution being aspirational (without penalties). Mr. Fadie cited several other communities as models for the adoption of this type of resolution, in Utah, Idaho, and Washington. Several community members spoke in favor of the Resolution. Commissioner Logan spoke in favor of the resolution and urged more coverage in the

media of the efforts being made by the City and several stakeholders to promote this resolution and other efforts towards sustainability. Commissioner Haladay spoke in favor of the resolution and offered the City should adopt more specific short and long term goals in order to promote efforts related to this resolution, such as offering more funding in the budget towards the interest-free solar panel loan program and installing solar panels on City facilities. Commissioner Dean stated perhaps it should be considered to broaden the language in on page 3 of the resolution to not just include the Sierra Club, but other conservation groups, and also if more specific performance metrics or benchmarks should be included in the resolution to assess the City's efforts towards the resolution goals. Commissioner O'Loughlin asked what the level of involvement was of MLCT and NorthWestern Energy in efforts related to this resolution at the legislative level. Mr. Judge gave a summary of the origins and discussions being had at meetings held with NorthWestern, local elected officials and sustainability coordinators from several Montana Cities. At the request of the Commission, Mr. Judge stated he would work with Community Facilities to bring back to the Commission a dollar amount for solar panel installation on City facilities at a later meeting. Mr. Judge stated he would also work with Finance to find an appropriate dollar amount to move to additional funding of the solar panel installation loan program.

Finance—

Overview of the CIP portion of the CCIP for Restricted Funds

Budget Analyst Chris Couey updated the Commission on January 8th, 2020 the General Fund section of the CCIP was presented to the Commission. This next presentation will provide an overview of the requests for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for Restricted Funds, which includes Enterprise and Special Revenue funds. The third and final presentation of Capital Assets and Major Maintenance for Restricted Funds will follow, ending in the culmination of the FY21 CCIP Document.

Mr. Couey stated he would be able bring the Commission further information on the additional funding to the Sustainability Initiatives at the February 19th Administrative meeting, and the presentation of the final document was expected for the March 9th Regular Commission Meeting. Commissioner Haladay asked for a summary of the how funding was sourced and split within several departments within the budget. City Engineer Ryan Leland stated the goal was to not overtax one funding source, so it was deemed by the former City Manager the funding for the project should be split from the three sources, Parks/Open Lands; Streets Maintenance; and General Fund. Commissioner Dean asked for clarification on the stormwater project which was also in the Beattie Street area. Mr. Leland stated this was an entirely different project from the trailhead improvements. Commissioner Dean also asked if the HCC Beattie St project alternative proposal was vetted by City Staff. Mr. Leland stated Staff had vetted the project proposal and for multiple reasons, including easements and emergency turnarounds, it was deemed not a viable option. Dylan Klapmeier, HCC Chair, introduced Meg Bishop as the HCC rep from the Beattie Street area to speak more broadly on the project. Ms. Bishop stated concerns over the price of the project, the public outreach for the project prior to approval, and the vetting of alternatives. Ms. Bishop cited anecdotal usage of the current parking for the trailhead as it currently exists and questioned whether the cost was necessary given the areas usage. Commissioner Logan stated concerns over the amount of public outreach,

asking to the level which the project was vetted, and the cost. Mr. Leland stated the cost did reflect improvements to one block of the street and was not just for the parking lot alone, and a robust public process was used to vet the project in the area. Mr. Leland stated the project was going to bid this weekend, following prior Commission direction. Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Opitz gave a synopsis of the public process model used in the history of the project. Commission Haladay stated he had spent a large portion of his time on the Commission discussing and vetting the project since 2011. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated a large portion of the revisions made to the project were due to the commentary received as part of the public process model used, and if the Commission was interested in changing the direction regarding the project it should not be done in this setting, and not without a full public notice of the discussion prior to it occurring. Commissioner Dean asked if City Staff could provide her with the public commentary received by City Staff in the lead up to the project and any other relevant materials to the project, prior to making a decision on Monday night.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked what the timeline was on the Law & Justice Center update within the CIP update. Mr. Leland stated it would be approximately 4 weeks to gather all the necessary entities input for both the County and City Commission.

Commissioner Dean asked for additional information on the \$1.4 million dollars for funding the Warm Storage building construction at the Transfer Station. Mr. Leland stated there was an existing facility being used for Warm Storage, but for various reasons the storage was insufficient, and it was determined a more efficient use of funds for equipment maintenance, fuel costs and staff usage to build the additional facility.

8. Committee discussions – None received.

9. Review of agenda for January 27, 2020 Commission meeting –

10. Public comment –

Herb Kulow of Our Redeemer's Church gave an update to the Commission on his discussion with the City Attorney and the Church's options going forward.

Meg Bishop spoke in opposition to the Beattie Street project and stated concerns over the public process for the project.

11. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager – direction previously given.

Acting City Manager Hagen stated he would direct City Staff to utilize the City Manager Cortez evaluation list as the Staff priority list; Finance Department would begin work on a Revised City Budget for Commission approval; Sustainability Coordinator would bring forward to the Commission the resolution to the February 24th meeting for approval and Mr. Judger would bring to an upcoming Administrative meeting updates on the amount of funding to add to the Solar panel loan program along with cost estimates for adding solar panels to some City facilities.

12. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.