

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
November 5, 2014 – 4:00 p.m.
Room 326, City-County Building

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Commissioners Ellison, Elsaesser, Haladay and Haque-Hausrath were present. Staff present was: City Manager Alles; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Executive Assistant Sarah Elkins; Police Chief Troy McGee; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Public Works Director Randall Camp; Assistant Public Works Director Phil Hauck; Solid Waste Superintendent Pete Anderson; Administrative Assistant Jacob Larson; Administrative Services Director Tim Magee; Administrative Assistant Carrie Hahn; Fire Chief Sean Logan; Human Resources Director James Fehr; HCC Coordinator Judy Garrity and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included: Terry Ray, IR Reporter Al Knauber, Lewis & Clark Solid Waste Manager Sherrel Rhys, John Hilton, Dave Duffy and Allyson Batch..

2. October 15, 2014 Administrative Meeting Summary – The October 15, 2014 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Board Appointments – Mayor Smith is recommending the following appointments.

Tenmile/South Helena Forest Restoration Collaborative Committee	Gary Marks – Commercial Use Organization Representative
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Doug Powell – Citizen at Large

Zoning Commission

Allison Mouch to a first term on the Helena Zoning Commission. Term will begin upon appointment and expire September 30, 2017.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked for a follow-up on the email between the school district and the city commission regarding an upcoming meeting. City Manager Alles stated he received an invitation to attend the building committee's meeting to answer any specific questions. The meeting is scheduled on Monday, November 10th; he will confirm date/time with the commission.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she believes there will be issues discussed that the commission could provide policy information to the school district and even partner with the school district. She would like the commission to meet with the school district to discuss policy. Manager Alles noted staff will give the school district the current policies and procedures.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she has personally been approached by citizens who would like the commission to provide policy guidance to the school district. It would be helpful to have a higher level policy discussion.

Mayor Smith asked if this invitation came in writing. Manager Alles stated the invitation was an email from Dr. Kultgen, listing the staff that would be asked to answer specific questions. Manager Alles will forward the email to the commission and noted that he and Community Development Director Haugen plan on attending the meeting.

Commissioner Haladay stated the school district is having a workshop on November 14th on a wide range of topics including the bond issue. Commissioner Haladay stated he is concerned that the commission is not willing to address these issues. He plans on attending the meeting as an individual; however, he wants to make sure the policy decisions are being discussed.

Mayor Smith stated there is not a lack of interest of having these discussions; there is a respect of the different governance roles and until the city is invited, the commission should respect the school district's governance.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked if city staff thought they now had authority/commission direction to attend the meeting. Manager Alles stated yes.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she proposed that the school board invite the city commission to attend a meeting on policy. She is interested in meeting with the school district representatives. Mayor Smith suggested the school district/board could be invited to attend the December joint work session.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked for confirmation that the city was not advocating expending urban funds for Airport Road at the TCC. City Manager concurred.

Commissioner Ellison stated he will be out of town December 3 through December 14 and will miss one city commission and one administrative meeting.

4. City Manager's Report –

Manager Alles reported staff has identified the need to install sidewalks at the Sixth Ward Park prior to building the fence and he is in concurrence with the recommendation. The cost of the curbside sidewalk is \$30,000 and the commission approved the variance to install curbside sidewalk.

Commissioner Ellison asked if any contingency funds have been used for FY15. Manager Alles stated no. Commissioner Ellison stated he would support using contingency funds in the amount of \$30,000. There was commission concurrence to use contingency funds.

Manager Alles stated he plans on using golf course reserve funds to purchase a golf course simulator in the amount of \$54,000. He gave a short history on the recommendation to purchase the new simulator in order to expand revenue during the winter season.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked if this is a decision that can be made today at the administrative meeting. Manager Alles noted the commission needs to give concurrence. The current simulator is not commercial grade and the recommended one is. There was commission concurrence to expend the \$54,000.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the plan is to list the revenue for the simulator that will be transferred over to cash reserves to pay back the cost of the simulator. Manager Alles further explained the golf course budget.

Manager Alles reported he hopes to call the first meeting of the Tenmile Collaborative Committee to begin to review the scoping document. Commissioner Elsaesser asked if the goal of the Tenmile project is different than what was originally recommended (landscape treatment) to the extent that not all fires would need to be suppressed. . Manager Alles noted the scope will be broader than the first collaborative committee.

Manager Alles updated the commission on the following items:

1. Building Permits – A meeting between city staff and the building community representatives is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18th. The Local Government Center from Bozeman will facilitate the meeting.
2. Residential Snow Removal – In September there was commission concurrence to come up with a new sidewalk snow removal plan. With the timing of an ordinance taking effect and the city attorney's office being short staff, there is not a draft ordinance prepared. Staff will bring forward a recommendation for the 2015-2016 winter season.
3. Extraterritorial Zoning – A meeting is scheduled for November 20th at St. Andrews School for the neighborhood to discuss Phase I of the Westside Annexation proposal. Manager Alles reported he has met with the realtors and they are in support of moving forward. He has filtered phone calls from people wanting to annex; however, there are concerns also.
4. Fire District – No information from the Governor's office to allocate funding to pay for fire protection for state buildings. Manager Alles reported he has not been in contact with representatives at Fort Harrison and the VA Center. At this time, the VA is looking to be self sustaining. As far as moving forward with a Fire District, the commission will need to give direction.
5. Residential Parking – The public hearings on the resolutions for the residential parking districts are on the November 10th city commission meeting agenda.
6. Criminal Justice Legislation – SB53 – City Manager Alles reported City Attorney Hindoi did testify in opposition to the bill. There were no resolutions presented at the 2014 League conference regarding this issue.

Commissioner Haladay thanked Manager Alles for the information. He commented the city has done our part in reducing jail population. SB53 would have removed jail time for some offenses, not including DUI's and Domestic Violence. He further explained what authority the commission has regarding jail time for misdemeanors. Mayor Smith recommended Manager Alles keep the commission updated on any draft bills.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath concurred it is important to keep the commission informed. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would support formulating a process on when the city is either supporting or opposing legislature and not just answering technical questions. Mayor Smith asked staff to put this into place prior to the session. Manager Alles noted city staff does not lobby on a regular basis. He will notify the commission if staff is going to lobby on any specific piece of legislation.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he would like the commission to be informed on any lobbying efforts, either state or federal legislation. He then asked if the November 18th meeting is the only meeting scheduled with the Westside. Manager Alles stated yes at this time and it is a four hour meeting. Commissioner Elsaesser stated he thought there was going to be a more extensive process and not limited to building permits. Manager Alles stated this meeting will address many of the issues identified by the commission.

Mayor Smith stated at this time, the creation of a Fire District and Fort Harrison is the least of his worries. If we are going to have the conversation, what will the impact be on the tax exempt and non-profits in Helena.

Commissioner Haladay stated one of the reasons for asking for an update on the creation of a Fire District is the state of Montana is not going to be happy and there will be push back from other entities, specifically non-profits. He then asked if there is interest from the commission to embark on this question. Commissioner Haladay stated he believes this is a good proposal; however, if there is not commission support, then he believes it is wasted staff time.

Mayor Smith stated maybe there isn't a lot of additional information needed before the commission makes a decision on moving forward or not. He asked Manager Alles to place this on a December administrative meeting agenda. Manager Alles stated he does not believe staff has any additional information to provide to the commission.

Commissioner Haladay stated he does not need more information and would like to hear from the commission. Commissioner Ellison asked that staff re-circulate the memo from former City Attorney Hindoien and he will be ready to offer comments.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he would not support moving forward with the creation of the fire district ahead of the jail bond.

5. Department Discussions

Administrative Services

Utility Bill Inserts – Administrative Services Director reported staff has compiled a list of all utility bill insert requests that have been received for calendar 2015. City policy requires all inserts to be included in the monthly utility bill mailings be approved by the city commission. Due to postage costs, mailing weights are restricted and only 1 or 2 inserts can be sent with each monthly utility bill. Insert requests exceed the available mailing capacity.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked if the organizations that are out have been notified. Director Magee noted staff will notify all organizations, once the commission approves it. Commissioner Elsaesser stated he has concerns with Growing Friends being out. Administrative Assistant Hahn stated she visited with Growing Friends and March is the only month they wanted and the TBID also wanted to keep March.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked if staff could track the non-profits and next year new ones would get an opportunity.

Consensus direction to the City Manager – No action needed.

Public Works

Solid Waste / Recycling Efficiency Study Discussion – City Manager Alles introduced the study and recommended working on the last three pages of the document. Director Camp noted staff is excited with the report and are anxious to receive policy decisions from the commission. It is great to have items identified by policy change versus operational change.

Solid Waste Superintendent Pete Anderson stated he is looking forward to discussing the report in depth and getting direction on the policy decisions.

Mayor Smith stated his intention is to discuss each section in Appendix G separately and at the end of each, he will ask for public comment.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath noted the implementation for recycling is at the very end of Appendix G and she wants to make sure it is discussed.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked if the commission is being asked to make final decisions or is this a basic review. Manager Alles stated staff wants to get the feeling of the commission and noted some decisions will need to be joint decisions with the county.

Public Works Director Camp stated what staff is looking for is commission concurrence that the items listed in Appendix G are in the correct column; either policy change or operational change.

Appendix G –

M1 – Merge City and County Solid Waste Services Into a Single Entity – City Manager Alles recommended working with the county to combine some operations to find efficiencies that would save both the city and county. If this were to happen, it would require an inter-local agreement outlining the specifics.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated it is not clear on how extensive these savings would actually be and he is concerned with adding tonnage to the landfill which is the number one priority of the study. He does not see how this recommendation is any different than what is currently being done; which is a long standing inter-governmental agreement. In the past, there were monthly meetings to discuss the joint operations. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated it is worth exploring with the county for joint operations and services provided by both. She referenced how the joint IT&S Department operates. However, the city and county commissions would provide policy decisions when appropriate. This should not be seen as holding up the implementation of other cost savings proposals.

County Landfill Supervisor Sherrel Rhys stated another advantage would be one entity handling solid waste for both the city and county, specific customer service.

Commissioner Haladay stated these discussions should happen and he would be interested with the county appointing an advisory committee. These discussions are going to take some time; the commission and staff would continue to implement items to improve customer service and efficiencies for city services.

Mayor Smith stated he would support this recommendation if it would provide better customer service and lessen the tonnage that is landfilled.

Public Works Director Camp recommended the commission accept the document and identify the items in the Implementation Plan as either policy or operational. There are a lot of items that can be implemented without waiting to see the benefits for both city and county residents. Manager Alles concurred that implementing M1 would not put other recommendations on hold.

Commissioner Elsaesser commented one idea that was mentioned was to combine the permit process. He believes this recommendation should be broken out from the single recommendation. There should be a simple arrangement without restructuring the entire system.

Commission concurrence to move forward with recommendation

M2 – Implement a Household Hazardous Waste Collections Program – Policy

Manager Alles reported two solid waste employees will be attending Household Hazardous Waste training in Bozeman.

M3 – Combine Shop Operations – Commissioner Ellison asked City Manager Alles to comment on how big of challenge it would be to combine the shop operations; would it take a long time to implement.

Manager Alles stated the recommendation to combine shops may not be in conjunction with merging the two operations and it does not have to be a long process.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated both M2 and M3 make sense and she would like staff to move forward with both and come back to the commission if it doesn't make sense. Commissioner Elsaesser stated he would support M2 and would like to consider a different rate structure other than tonnage based.

Public Comment – Mayor Smith asked for public comment regarding M1 through 3. None was received.

L1 through L11 - Landfill – No city decision needed; only if the two systems are merged.

T1 through T12 – Transfer Station

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would support staff moving forward with all the recommendations with the exception for the future discussion on compost and direct haul to the landfill.

She also recognized the minimum charge (T2) would also be a policy decision.

Mayor Smith asked if the recommendation is to implement a minimum charge of \$7.00 per visit to the transfer station. Manager Alles concurred that is the recommendation; currently if a person has either a city or county permit, they are charged against their permit for tonnage taken to the transfer station. For those who do not have a permit, they pay per visit. The reason behind the recommendation is the overhead costs and the fee would encourage residents to be more efficient with their trips to the transfer station. Mayor Smith asked would the \$7 apply to city residents. Manager Alles stated yes and charged toward their residential permit.

Commissioner Ellison referred to Page 14 of the report where it lists what other cities charge. He would support the recommendation to implement some minimum charge, which would encourage people to be more efficient with their trips to the transfer station and not be financially difficult for anyone.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he is open to some minimum charge. However, if the transfer station is staffed at the same level regardless of the number of visits, how could this be an accurate savings estimate. The community has paid money to have this facility and should have access to it. He asked would the renter's recycling permit still be used or is there a recommendation to change that. Manager Alles stated he is not aware of any recommendation to change the renter's recycling permit.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she appreciates that other cities have minimum charges and it is fiscally responsible to do so. Manager Alles stated many of these recommendations taken as a whole will feather themselves out and will become more efficient as other recommendations are implemented.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he is concerned with the other cities being compared, as many of those have recycling services in their communities outside of the facilities listed. He then stated that recommendations T7 & T9 should be policy decisions.

Solid Waste Superintendent Pete Anderson explained the city provides tramp truck service and the cost is \$10 per use, which is deducted from the residential permit. The minimum fee for the transfer station would be handled the same. The consultant has indicated the transfer station is too convenient at this time. There is a trickle effect from one recommendation to the other.

Manager Alles noted one recommendation is to close the transfer station for two days a week. There are two days that receive less tonnage and it would be more efficient with costs savings if the transfer station was closed for two days.

Commissioner Ellison stated he would be open to discuss closing the transfer station, beginning with one day per week to see how this affects the rest of the days and the impact on the public. He would like this to be done in conjunction with the implementation of a minimum transfer station fee. In the future, he would be open to discuss an additional day to close the transfer station.

Commissioner Haladay asked once the commission agrees that the recommendations are either policy or operational, when would the policy discussions be scheduled. Manager Alles stated he would anticipate staff bringing forward a package of recommendations, with the justification, at an upcoming administrative meeting.

Commissioner Haladay stated he would support moving forward with in-depth policy discussions at a later date and in a package recommendation from staff. He would support moving T7 and T9 to the policy change column.

Mayor Smith stated staff could begin implementing the operational recommendations and bring back the policy changes for commission discussion and direction.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he would support having some review before moving forward on some of the operational recommendations; specifically the removal of the composting program and related "operations" decisions based on removing the compost program. He would also support reducing hours during the winter months; however, the citizens are paying an assessment where the transfer station is open seven days a week.

Mayor Smith asked for clarification on T10 to install remote camera in waste green area. Manager Alles explained the idea is to be able to see the amount of green waste that is accumulated and not having to take the loader out once an hour.

Public Comment – Mayor Smith asked for public comment. Dave Duffy with Tri-County Solid Waste stated he has not seen the report and would like the opportunity to review the content and then be allowed to comment. Mayor Smith stated no decisions have been made today and there will be ample time for public comment.

Commissioner Elsaesser asked where the cost effectiveness of baling is addressed in the report

(which was in the PowerPoint presentation summer 2014). Manager Alles stated it is in the recycling portion of the report.

Commissioner Haladay asked that recommendation SG1 be moved to the policy change column.

Recycling

R1 – Independent funding and budget for recycling

Manager Alles stated he is aware there is no interest from the commission to create a recycling district. Recommendation R1 is not creating a district; it is creating independent funding and budget for recycling. The recommendation would also apply to the county.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he has no interest in creating a recycling fund separate from the current assessment, the current tipping fee covers recycling. Manager Alles stated the recommendation is to dedicate a portion of the solid waste assessment to recycling.

Manager Alles stated the recycling budget would need to cover the costs of some of the recommendations for recycling and remove it from the transfer station budget. Commissioner Elsaesser commented the system currently does that. Manager Alles stated the recycling is paid out of the transfer station budget, it is not a separate budget; however, the recommendation is to set up a separate budget for recycling.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would like the city to issue an RFP for curb-side recycling that would be paid for out of the residential solid waste assessment. She would like to see the draft RFP within a month or two for commission review and then issuing it. Included in the discussion would be what changes would need to be made at the transfer station to support recycling.

Commissioner Ellison asked Commissioner Haque-Hausrath how she would feel about discontinuing the blue-bag program, if we are moving forward with an RFP. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated her proposal would include the elimination of the blue bag program. The RFP would include a full curb-side service and would include plastics and glass.

Commissioner Haladay would be interested in Commissioner Haque-Hausrath's proposal and he would like to see this sooner than the package of recommendations. The consultant suggested doing away with plastics, which would be unpopular. He would like to figure out if a curb side program would work for Helena and what the response of participation will be. The city already has a mechanism to assess and collect the costs from the users and would essentially pay the provider for the service. He would like to see recycling priced out as a component of the entire solid waste system.

Mayor Smith commented that R1 and R5 have the same funding mechanism, \$17 from the residential solid waste permit would be allocated toward recycling. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would not recommend having the residential solid waste and recycling be separated on the tax bill. However, the two would be broke out for internal budgeting. She then stated there is approximately \$140,000 set aside within the residential solid waste budget for recycling, which could be used to implement the curb-side program for the first year.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated the \$140,000 is the annual recycling budget; however, he believes there are also some reserves.

Mayor Smith stated he would be more comfortable with the recommendation than what has been previously implemented. Commissioner Elsaesser addressed the dedicated funds for recycling and noted the funds should pay for standard recycling.

Mayor Smith asked does an RFP have to be issued for the service. Manager Alles stated the amount of service would require a RFP. He then stated there are policy questions that need to be answered prior to the drafting of the RFP, such as if the program will be mandatory or voluntary and what commodities will be accepted.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated the RFP would go out as an optional service for all residential solid waste users. The RFP should include several options the commission could decide on. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would also support holding off on R2 until the curb side question has been resolved.

Commissioner Ellison stated he would support issuing the RFP as the city competes with private businesses and for transparency, the RFP process is the way to proceed. Commissioner Elsaesser stated his day job requires him to work with many of the stakeholders and transparency is vital and will get the necessary/accurate answers/costs.

Solid Waste Superintendent Anderson commented both city and county residents pay for recycling. If it is the decision of the commission to offer curb-side recycling, the county residents would continue to have the need for the drop-off recycling bins.

Mayor Smith stated let's move forward and asked that staff prepare a decision tree the commission can consider when reviewing the draft RPF.

Manager Alles commented a decision will need to be made on the types of plastics that will be accepted; the bulk of the current cost is separating the plastics. The commission may want to consider accepting all types of plastics and eliminate the need to separate.

Commissioner Elsaesser stated he has submitted additional documents regarding opportunities at the transfer station and asked they also be considered moving forward even if not addressed in the study.

Mr. Ray, resident of the Sixth Ward, presented a petition to the commission to keep truck traffic off of Boulder and East Lyndale Avenues.

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 – No report given.
- b) Audit Committee, Board of Adjustment, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee — No report given.
- c) Intergovernmental Transit Committee, Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee – No report given.
- d) ADA Compliance Committee, Business Improvement District/Helena Parking Commission, City-County Parks Board, Montana Business Assistance Connection – No report given.
- e) Audit Committee, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Public Art Committee – No report given.
- f) Helena Citizens Council – No report given.

7. Review of agenda for November 10, 2014 City Commission meeting – No discussion held.

8. Public Comment – No public comment received.

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

10. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.