

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
June 24, 2015 – 4:00 p.m.
Room 326, City-County Building

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Commissioner Ellison called the meeting to order. Commissioners Haque-Hausrath and Haladay were present. Commissioner Elsaesser was excused and Mayor Smith joined the meeting later. Staff present was: City Manager Ron Alles; Executive Assistant Sarah Elkins; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Community Facilities Director Gery Carpenter; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Fire Chief Sean Logan; Parks & Recreation Director Amy Teegarden; Police Chief Troy McGee; Administrative Services Director Tim Magee; Budget Manager Robert Ricker; City Controller Glenn Jorgenson; Human Resources Director James Fehr; HCC Coordinator Judy Garrity and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included: HCC Representative Dick Sloan and NMTAC Chair Ryan Kettel.

2. June 10, 2015 - The June 10, 2015 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions – Upcoming Appointments – Mayor Smith is recommending the following appointments:

Civic Center Board	Appointment of Kendall Stewart to the Civic Center Board. Term will begin upon appointment and expire March 1, 2016.
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Commission Comments – Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked for an update on the negotiating meetings for the curb-side recycling program. Manager Alles stated both Public Works Director Camp and Assistant Public Works Director Hauck are out of town; however, when they return they will set up a meeting with Helena Recycling.

Manager Alles asked Commissioner Haque-Hausrath if her interest is participating in the negotiations or to get insight from the meetings. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she would like to hear the discussions on issues yet to be resolved; i.e. alley use and issuing a four plex one bin and not four individual bins.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath spoke on the recent incidents in South Carolina and the discussions of taking down the Confederate flag. She asked if there is interest from the commission to consider renaming the Confederate Fountain. The city could hold a “fountain” naming contest that would encourage youth participation. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath suggested the Parks Board would also need to consider this recommendation.

Commissioner Haladay concurred with Commissioner Haque-Hausrath’s comments on the national discussions and concurred to send it to the Parks Board for consideration. This should be a simple request.

Commissioner Ellison suggested the renaming of the Confederate Fountain be put on the next administrative meeting for discussion when all five members are present. Commissioners Haque-Hausrath and Haladay concurred.

City Manager’s Report – City Manager Alles reported in response to MILP’s request, the city of Helena will provide bus service for the ADA 25th Anniversary Event on July 3rd. An employee has volunteered to work on July 3rd for this event. There will be one bus and one driver and the hours of operation will be from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

City staff will take calls on July 2nd; however, the day of the event, MILP will be responsible for scheduling rides. Manager Alles emphasized the service will be for the event only and not any other service.

Commissioner Ellison thanked staff for volunteering to work.

Manager Alles asked if there is anything the commission wants him to communicate to the School District Superintendent or School Board. What role, as the School District moves forward, should the city be involved in.

Commissioner Haladay noted Mayor Smith had mentioned if the school bond failed, the

commission should work with the school district for further discussion. Commissioner Haladay stated he would hope the School District would approach the city. Commissioner Haladay stated the bond failed due to the city residents voting no; which they typically vote yes for education. The School District representatives should be invited to attend the joint work sessions on a regular basis. The two government entities should work together.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath concurred with Commissioner Haladay's comments. It is important for the commission to assist the school board to understand why the bond failed. The commission has an interest on the greater impact of the city with the failure of the bond. She too would like to meet with the district.

Commissioner Haladay stated the school board will meet on July 14th to discuss moving forward with another bond. Commissioner Haladay stated it is important for the School District to present another bond to the voters. If there is consensus, he would suggest the commission make a formal statement and encourage the School District to do so. He also recommended inviting the School District representatives to the table to discuss the future of Helena's schools.

Commissioner Ellison asked that this be put on the July 8th administrative meeting. Manager Alles will schedule it and visit with the Superintendent prior to the meeting and invite them to attend.

Department Discussions

Public Works

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Projects – City Engineer Leland referred the commission to the projects listed on the City of Helena Funding Matrix All Amounts as of June 3, 2015. He noted the MAP21 Transportation Alternative grant applications need to be submitted sooner than later. Consultant Melissa Lewis, who submitted the last application, could not be at the meeting today. However, she has reviewed the project list and indicated the three projects recommended by NMTAC all meet the criteria; specifically the Benton Avenue path would be very competitive.

NMTAC Chair Ryan Kettel reported NMTAC selected the following three projects to recommend for the application:

- Improvements to South Cruse Avenue and the intersection at Cutler Street
- Improvements to the Benton Avenue shared use path
- The Blaine Street to Highway 12 portion of Centennial Trail.

City Manager Alles commented all three of the projects are designed and ready to go. Engineer Leland concurred and noted the three projects could be put together fairly quickly. There are conceptual designs for South Cruse and Blaine Street; the Benton Avenue was submitted last time. There are many projects on the list that do not have conceptual designs completed.

Manager Alles again stated the three projects recommended by NMTAC are good projects and staff is ready to submit all three for TA funding.

Commissioner Haladay stated he supports submitting both the South Cruse and Benton Avenue projects. He then asked if the Blaine Street project is a stand-alone project or is it considered part of the entire trail. Engineer Leland stated since Blaine Street project connects two of the major trails, it would be a benefit to the entire trail and considered a stand along project.

Commissioner Haladay stated not included in the long range plan is Boulder Avenue, including truck traffic and pedestrian safety. He asked if it too late to do a conceptual design prior to the grant deadline.

Manager Alles stated he does not believe this project is designed close enough to submit for grant funding. Engineer Leland concurred and stated there is issues on Boulder Avenue that need to be addressed prior to submitting a grant application.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the commission would support a painted bike lane on Boulder Avenue, is this something that could be implemented without a large project. If so, the larger project could be designed and funded at a later date. Engineer Leland stated he would have to look at the width of Boulder, however, as of today, he cannot answer the question. Engineer Leland noted by the July 8th administrative meeting, he could have an answer for the commission.

There was commission concurrence to have Engineer Leland look at what can be done on Boulder Avenue. Manager Alles stated this would be similar to the bike lane that was installed on Helena

Avenue and staff will report back.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked if the National Avenue to California Street portion of Centennial Trail would go down Boulder Avenue. Engineer Leland stated the majority is down Lyndale Avenue, a small portion will be on Boulder Avenue.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked if a shared use path could be installed on Boulder Avenue. Engineer Leland stated the initial discussion was for a shared use path; however, it is designed for bike lanes and sidewalks. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked if the cost for that portion is \$606,950.00. Engineer Leland stated yes.

Commissioner Haladay stated bike lanes on Boulder would be great; however, maybe look at a separated path. Engineer Leland stated he will look at the widths, parking, and possible tree removal and report back to the commission. Manager Alles clarified the commission is not looking at Boulder Avenue as a TA grant submittal. Commission concurred.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath suggested looking at incorporating the larger cross walks for traffic calming on Boulder Avenue. Another project important for bikes is Lyndale/National Avenues and asked if this intersection could be designed and considered at a later date. Engineer Leland stated this is a MDT and Federal Highways intersection. In order to design this intersection, staff would have to work with both MDT and Federal Highways to make a recommendation for this intersection.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath asked what would be the forum for the commission to make the recommendation. Engineer Leland stated the recommendation could be included with the comments when adopting the Transportation Plan on Monday, June 29th.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated she supports NMTAC's recommendation. Engineer Leland stated staff's recommendation mirrors NMTAC's recommendation.

NMTAC Chair Kettel stated there are not a lot of questions on the Blaine Street and Benton Avenue projects. The other projects on the list are large projects and have issues attached to them. Another option is to look at improving the trail on the westside of Benton Avenue. He asked if the beacon project being proposed could be included with the Benton Avenue project.

Public comment was called for – none was received.

Commissioner Ellison summarized that NMTAC's recommendations have commission concurrence to move forward with and submit TA grants. There was consensus to move forward and in that order. He asked if the rapid flashing beacons will be incorporated into the Benton Avenue project. Engineer Leland stated the rapid flash beacons will included in staff's proposal.

Commissioner Elsaesser submitted the following written statement: **MAP-21 Projects-**

I support the list of recommendations provided by Helena Non-Motorized Transit Advisory Council (NMTAC). I was at their meeting last Tuesday and was very impressed with the thorough discussion by members of NMTAC and the City's non-motorized engineer.

The South Cruse and Cutler project designed by Mr. Knoepke is a model project that very effectively utilizes existing right-of-way and infrastructure to address a long standing safety concern brought forth by many residents over the past few years. It is also a very aesthetic plan that will complement accessible non-motorized conductivity and beautify the entrance to South Helena.

I would defer to staff to use their judgment working with the consultant in prioritizing the three projects when applying for the MAP 21 funds. This might include focusing on enhancing the existing path on Benton in conjunction with other investments, such as the quiet zone and a safe crossing for Centennial Trail, rather than a new separate path that would have grade issues and would present new maintenance costs.

Consensus Direction to Manager – There is commission concurrence to support NMTAC's recommendations and move forward and in the order being recommended.

Greening America Capitals and State Wide Low Impact Development (LID) Manual

Manager Alles noted the commission will consider, at the June 29th city commission meeting, an MOU among six MS4 communities to cost-share consultant services for review of MPDES storm water permitting.

City Engineer Leland reported the City of Helena received a grant from EPA to complete a Greening Americans Capital study in 2013. The report was a conceptual plan for the Last Chance Gulch

Downtown Area. The report provided several concepts that should be looked at or studied further with any project in the Downtown area. One of the main areas the report looked at was storm water opportunities, again some concepts were provided by not thoroughly evaluated. As the next step to the storm water portion of the plan, for not only the downtown area, but all of Helena, staff is working with DEQ and the 7 other major MS4 cities to develop a Low Impact Development (LID) Manual. This manual will provide specific guidelines for affective use and sizing of storm water BMP's that can be looked at for LID in the City of Helena.

The Greening Last Chance Gulch Report was presented to the city commission but was never adopted or accepted by the commission. Staff is looking for direction on the report.

Engineer Leland handed out hard copies of the conceptual Greening America's report. Staff is working with the seven major cities to discuss the low impact development. He also handed out requirements for bio-swells. No city in Montana has a design for a bio swell due to the weather in Montana.

The city of Seattle has a plan; however, it does not work in other areas of Washington due to the different weather. Engineer Leland again stated, the seven major cities are working to develop low impact development standards. There is nothing to give to the commission at this time.

Engineer Leland asked the commission to review the information he handed out and submit their ideas to staff for submittal and consideration.

Engineer Leland stated the Front Street project is in the Greening America's conceptual plan; staff is in the public input timeline for the project. He noted the BID is using the same consultant to do the Downtown Master Plan.

There are four different concepts for the Front Street Project that have been mailed to all property owners. The consultant has met with all but one property owner and their main concern is parking.

Commissioner Haque-Hausrath stated during the recent EPA tour there was discussion of pursuing a grant to do a pilot project on low impact developments. There are grants available.

Manager Alles noted he has received some feedback and noted there are challenges with each of the designs. He has asked staff to video the run-off into Nature Park during the next rain storm. Engineer Leland stated staff will study all options. He noted the stakeholder meetings may generate additional ideas for commission discussion.

Commissioner Elsaesser submitted the following written statement: **Low Impact Infrastructure, Cost Saving and Greening America's Capitals Report:**

I support policy to ensure that the City of Helena explores the low impact or green infrastructure concepts presented in the Greening Americas Capital's report as part of operations, major capital projects, and city planning projects. In many cases, these concepts save operating and capital costs, help meet regulatory requirements, and realize community goals outlined in Helena's growth policy and other planning documents.

With limited resources to fund Helena's Comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CCIP) and operations, it is critical to prioritize expenditures and reduce cost. This makes the exploration of green and low impact investments more important than ever. Many of Helena's major infrastructure projects have ended up costing far more than anticipated. As major projects depend on funding from multiple sources including water utilities, streets, and funds such as gas tax, the additional costs impact much of the city budget.

Front Street and West Main, for example, are storm water projects that will require gas tax and funds from most city utilities. Green or low impact storm water projects can reduce cost in all of these utilities and allow some of these funds to support other critical infrastructure projects. Both of these projects should include the involvement of the property owners maintain the boulevards and have a vested interest in the streets in front of and near their property. Some of the concepts outlined would allow shared investment that could compliment the projects and benefit both the public and adjoining properties.

Anything the City of Helena can do to reduce the cost of our infrastructure while meeting community needs is likely to be a good investment—whether this is narrower streets that direct storm water to irrigate the boulevard landscape and trees, rain gardens that can provide green space and reduce larger storm pipes that require rebuilding the surface of functional streets, or the many other innovative concepts that were compiled in the Green Capitals report. It should be noted that Helena is

already implementing many of these practices and that the report built upon existing plans and community input.

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 Smith reported his trip to USS Helena Change of Command went very well, as did his meetings with Senators Daines and Tester. The Montana League of Cities and Towns Board held a planning session and Manager Alles attended on his behalf. The Mental Health Advisory Board has taken in interest in the design of the new jail and is working closely with the committee.

Mayor Smith recognized and thanked Commissioner Haladay for attending the School District meeting. He then recommended the commission contact the school board and have a joint discussion on the failure of the bond. Commissioner Ellison noted there was commission concurrence for the commission to develop a formal process where the city and School District can work together to bring forward another bond.

- b) Audit Committee, Board of Adjustment, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee – Commissioner Ellison reported the Board of Adjustment continues to review variance requests ; the TCC has been very busy with the Transportation Plan.
- 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 – Commissioner Haladay stated Boulder Avenue is a continuing point of discussion at the MBAC meetings; he suggested the commission should be more aggressive with MDT on the plans for Boulder Avenue. Manager Alles noted there is a draft proposal and staff will meet with MDT next week. Commissioner Haque-Hausrath emphasized there has to be other access to the area if the left turn is closed on Boulder Avenue.
- e) Audit Committee, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Public Art Committee – Commissioner Haque-Hausrath reported the Public Art’s Chalk Up Helena is scheduled for July 18th, the same day as Symphony Under the Stars. The members of the PAC are in support the 1% assessment for public art.
- f) Helena Citizens Council – HCC Representative Dick Sloan stated the HCC’s monthly meeting is scheduled for this evening. The HCC continues to work on comments on the transportation plan and putting together comments on the budget. Jim Wilbur with the Water Quality District will be speaking at the meeting.

7. Review of agenda for May 18, 2015 City Commission meeting – No discussion held.

8. Public Comment – Manager Alles stated for the record, the city of Helena has not had any discussions on issuing any type of bonds.

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

10. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.