

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

May 4, 2016 – 3:30 p.m.

Room 326, City-County Building

316 N. Park Avenue, Helena

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Commissioners Ellison, Haladay and Noonan were present. Commissioner Farris-Olsen was excused. Staff present was: Acting City Manager Troy McGee; Executive Assistant Sarah Elkins; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Fire Chief Mark Emert; Public Works Director Randall Camp; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Engineer David Knoepke; Parks & Recreation Director Amy Teegarden; Community Facilities Director Gery Carpenter; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Human Resource Director James Fehr; Parking Director Dave Hewitt and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included HCC Representative Dick Sloan, IR Reporter Al Knauber, Joe and Doreen Filson; Cliff Christian, John Cowie, Moffie Funk, Greg Wirth and Loren Frazier.

2. April 20, 2016 Meeting Summary – The April 20, 2016 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Board Appointments – Mayor Smith is recommending the following appointments:

Civil Service Board Reappointment of Ken Morrison to the Civil Service Board. Term will begin upon appointment and expire May 1, 2019.

Lewis & Clark City/County Appointment of Ron Waterman to an unexpired term on the
Library Board Board. Term will begin upon appointment and expire January 2,
2018.

Commission Comments – No comments were offered.

4. City Manager's Report – Acting City Manager McGee reminded the commission of the Vigilante Parade on May 6 and invited them to the potluck at the Fire Station after the parade.

Commissioner Haladay asked if Judge Tucker has released his opinion on the city's water rights case. Public Works Director Camp stated the city just received the opinion and it was favorable for the city. Staff will get a copy of the opinion and update the commission at a later date.

5. Department Discussions:

Public Works

Engineering Projects Updates – City Engineer Leland introduced the following agenda items and gave an update on each:

Front Street Stormwater/Streetscape Improvements - City Engineer Leland introduced Loren Frazier with WGM Group, who gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Front Street Project. After completing the Preliminary Engineering Report and holding two public meetings and meeting individually with the property owners, it is the recommendation to move forward with the existing plus recommendation.

Engineer Frazier reviewed the proposed budget for the project.

Commissioner Ellison asked if the stormwater enterprise fund has enough reserves to move forward with the project. Director Camp reviewed the budget, which showed approximately \$1.1 million short in the reserve funds. However, the recommendation is to delay the following projects: Bill Roberts/Safe Route, Cruse/Cutler Intersection Improvements and Quiet Zone, which add up to \$1.3 million.

Engineer Leland noted another option for the commission to consider would be to order in sidewalks, curbs and gutters to the adjacent property owners, the project costs could be reduced by \$450,000.

Director Camp reiterated the need for this project; the current stormwater runs under existing buildings.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the previous gas tax funds that have been appropriated to other locations, was put toward the four way intersection of Joslyn/Country Club project. Engineer Leland concurred.

Commissioner Noonan asked if staff is looking for a decision today, or is this more informational and further discussion will occur during the budget work sessions. Engineer Leland stated staff is not looking for a decision today and will discuss it during the budget process.

Commissioner Haladay asked if there is still \$300,000 left from the telecom settlement, earmarked for non-motorized projects. Administrative Services Director Jorgenson stated yes.

Mayor Smith stated he does not think it is unreasonable to ask the adjacent property owners to help out with the sidewalks, curbs and gutters. And given the other needs the city has, it would not be unreasonable to do just the stormwater project and not all the extras.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the \$300,000 was allocated to the project and sidewalks, curbs and gutters were ordered in for a cost of \$450,000 and gas tax funds in the amount of \$250,000, would that actually account for the \$1 million shortage. Engineer Leland concurred.

Quiet Zone – Engineer Leland reported the final design for the quiet zone is ready to bid out, he then handed out the preliminary estimates for the five crossings for a total project cost estimate of \$800,000. There would also be some pedestrian improvements that were requested at Benton Avenue.

Commissioner Noonan stated it would be a low priority for him to delay the quiet zone. He personally has had mixed feelings along the way; however, there are a lot of citizens that want the quiet zone. He would be in favor of doing the base project.

Commissioner Haladay asked if doing the base bid subjects the city to the yearly inspections. Engineer Leland stated yes and noted there is \$500,000 in the budget for project. In order to remove the city from the yearly inspection, it would require installing alternative one.

Mayor Smith stated it is important not to have a yearly review and inspection. Commissioner Haladay commented if the base bid and alternate one was done, we would be close to the budgeted amount of \$500,000. Engineer Leland noted the total costs of the base bid and alternate one would be close to \$600,000. He also noted there will be costs affiliated with the yearly inspections. If the quiet zone is not implemented, there will be no annual review.

Commissioner Haladay stated he supports moving forward to bid the project.

Commissioner Ellison stated the previous commission made the decision to move forward with the quiet zone; however, at that time he did not support the decision. The costs have escalated extensively and again he does not believe we should spend \$800,000 for a quiet zone. He referenced the two surveys the Independent Record did and both overwhelmingly showed the city should not move forward with the quiet zone. He has looked at the safety records and noted there are two types of accidents that occur, people driving around the arms and pedestrians that do not stop when the arms are down. There are other high priorities that the funding could be spent on. He also noted that one of the strong proponents of the quiet zone has commented that people get use to the noise. Commissioner Ellison stated he is not in favor of moving forward.

Mayor Smith stated he supports moving forward with bidding the project; the commission voted to move forward. He did recognize the costs have increased significantly.

Commissioner Noonan also supports moving forward with bidding the project. He appreciates Commissioner Ellison's comments and noted the commission will make a final decision during the budget work sessions.

Rimini Raw Water Line – FHWA/L&C County – Engineer Leland noted Lewis & Clark County is paving Rimini Road and due to where the city's water lines are, city staff has worked with federal highways to replace those pipes on a 60/40 funding agreement.

Director Camp gave an overview of the project, which would begin in May 2016, if all the pieces fall into place.

Commissioner Haladay asked for the status of gas tax funds for this year. Engineer Leland stated the gas tax has been proposed to fund the Bill Roberts/Safe Routes project and several smaller projects. Commissioner Haladay asked if the Bill Roberts was originally folded into the commission request in regards to the urban routes for Benton Avenue improvements. Engineer Leland explained staff applied for a TSEP grants for the Benton Avenue project and it was not funded.

Commissioner Haladay asked if urban funds have been designated for Benton Avenue improvements. Engineer Leland stated if the TCC moves that as a recommendation, urban funds could be used for the Benton Avenue improvements.

Commissioner Noonan asked if this project is in the current budget. Engineer Leland stated it is not in the current budget and water reserves would be used to fund it.

Methane Trench – Engineer Leland reported the trench project is complete except for landscaping. At this time, there are zero readings in the medians.

Joslyn/Country Club Intersection – Engineer Leland reported this project is approximately 90% complete; there are a few clean up items to finish. It is operating as a four-way intersection.

Centennial Trail West - Engineer Leland reported this project is ready to start next week. There will be a slight shift on the location of the trail.

Earthquake Valves – Engineer Leland reported this is a FEMA project that was awarded to the city and is currently underway; it is a huge safety project for the city. Four of the five tanks have had valves installed. This project was funded from FEMA in the amount of \$900,000.

West Side Cannon Street Sewer Project – Engineer Leland reported this project is complete with the exception the road needs to be repaired.

I-15 Bridge Sewer Relocation - Engineer Leland reported the bridge project is MDT; the city had to relocate 400' of sewer main.

Sidewalk Replacement Program - Engineer Leland reported there are 16 projects underway for just over \$50,000; 15 more have signed up. So far we are looking at \$135,000 in new sidewalks. The budgeted amount is 150,000 per year; however, there is funding available.

Commissioner Noonan asked if there is a deadline to sign up for the sidewalk program. Engineer Leland stated there is no deadline to apply.

West Main Water/Sewer/Storm/Streets - Engineer Leland reported water, sewer, stormwater will all be replaced. The design is being prepared to send to FEMA and once back, the project will be bid out. FEMA requirements have increased the project budget.

Commissioner Haladay asked when work would begin on this project. Engineer Leland stated it will be in the 2017 construction season.

Downtown ADA Ramps - Engineer Leland reported approximately 60% of ramps have been completed by MDT. There will be approximately 57 ramps installed. In addition there will be a signal installed at the corner of Last Chance Gulch and 14th Street.

14th/Last Chance Gulch Signal – As noted above, the installation of this signal has been approved by MDT and it is scheduled for 2017.

Bus Stop ADA Construction Engineer Leland reported the consultant has given staff the information needed to bring the bus stops, on each of the two routes, into ADA compliance bus. Staff is ready to move forward with the local roads and will need permission from MDT on their routes. Staff hopes to have both routes running in the near future.

Commissioner Haladay asked if there are ten stops for each route. Director Camp stated at this time it is nine stops on one route and eleven stops on the other. At some point the recommendation was to have 43 stops in total, which were reviewed by the consultant. Staff is trying to stick to a ½ hour ride time for passengers. The plan is to install additional stops as time and funding allows.

Street Overlay ADA Corners Construction – Engineer Leland reported the Right of Way Access Guidelines (PROWAG) require ADA ramps be installed when a street overlay project is

completed. This will be an annual project and will reduce the miles of street overlay that is completed each year. Due to the PROWAG, the overlay projects could double in costs.

Commissioner Noonan asked if the increased costs due to PROWAG were included in the projects presented to the commission. Engineer Leland stated yes.

Commissioner Haladay asked if installing a bike lane would require PROWAG. Engineer Leland stated a new bike lane or reconfiguration would require compliance; however, repainting a current bike lane would not.

Tenmile Transmission Main - Engineer Leland reported this project is moving forward. An alignment route has been chosen with construction scheduled for 2017 – 2018.

Stormwater Master Plan - Engineer Leland reported the last master plan was done in 2003. There are a lot of new requirements with the MS4 Permit. It is time to look at a new master plan. A request for qualifications was sent out and staff received eight proposals and will be interviewing three firms next week.

Cruse/Cutler Street Improvements – Engineer Leland reported money has been set aside to make the improvements. However, the Downtown Master Plan has a different recommendation for this area. Based on other projects, is this still a priority of the commission and which design the commission prefers.

Commissioner Haladay referred to the downtown master plan; one of the recommendations for Cruse is to shrink the right of way and sale the remaining city owned property. He asked could the revenue from the sale of the property, or the burden be put on the ultimate buyer to make the improvements on Cruse. Engineer Leland stated staff needs to make sure there are no restrictions on the right of way as the city obtained it from MDT. Any proceeds would go to the general or street funds. The costs of the improvements could be put on the purchaser of the property.

Wastewater Discharge PER (ECO Park) – Engineer Leland reported a contract has been awarded to Morrison and Maierle Engineering. Based on the new requirements, staff is looking at groundwater discharge. If we have to meet the metals requirements, it will be very costly.

MRTP Pump Station - Engineer Leland reported a new pump station was installed five years ago, there are major problems with the pumps. A contract with Great West will allow the consultants to review what is happening and help determine the cause of the failures in the pumps.

Water Main Replacement – Engineer Leland reported the regular projects are underway and will continue throughout the summer.

Sewer Lining Projects – Engineer Leland reported staff will be replacing some sewer lines due to failures.

Consensus Direction to Manager: Commissioner Ellison recognized this is a huge list the public works department is working on and thanked them.

Community Development

Residential Parking Request/CUP/Downtown Master Plan – Community Development Director Haugen updated the commission on the following:

1. The conditional use permit for the parking lot owned by 360 Office, previously Empire Office, has been previously denied. Staff met with the current owners and at this time, they are not going to submit an application for a CUP until a decision is made on the residential parking district. However, the owners believe they should receive two residential permits, if it is approved.
2. The downtown master plan is calling to revisit residential parking districts and parking time limits; the recommendation is to eliminate both, which includes the two blocks east and west of Last Chance Gulch, which includes Jackson Street.

3. The downtown master plan will be presented to the commission as a recommendation to amend the city's growth policy. The Planning Board will have to review the downtown master plan and then make a recommendation to the city commission.

Director Haugen noted there are other recommendations in the downtown master plan. Manager Alles wanted staff to explain if the commission decides to consider the residential parking district and also adopt the downtown master plan that recommends the elimination of the residential parking districts. Staff is looking for commission direction on which they would like to consider first.

Mayor Smith called for public comment with the following persons addressing the commission:

Moffie Funk asked several questions on the CUP process that is required of 360 Office and the amount of time to review the application. Director Haugen reviewed the criteria for a parking lot in a residential area.

Doreen Filson spoke of the traffic on Jackson Street and employees who work in the area that park in front of the residences on Jackson Street. Joe Filson concurred with the previous comments.

Cliff Christian, owner of townhouse development, spoke in support of the residential parking district. He also noted how expensive it is to develop in the city versus the county.

John Cowie stated he is the contractor working on the townhouse development and has seen many employees from other areas of town who park in front of the residents. His construction vehicles are competing for parking.

Commissioner Noonan asked if the issue is there is adequate parking for businesses; however, the employees choose not to use it. Director Haugen stated in regards to 360 Office, it is the cost of installing an asphalt parking lot. The downtown master plan is recommending the adjacent neighborhood is part of the downtown. The other part of the downtown master plan is taking some of the surface parking lots, which are considered underutilized properties, and building up. Director Haugen noted the federal government use to pay for the employees parking; however, at this time, they do not.

Parking Director Dave Hewitt noted as far as the 800 block of Jackson, there is a petition to establish a residential parking district and they do meet the criteria. There is very limited off-street parking in the area and everything the parking commission has asked of the residents, they have done.

Commissioner Ellison stated staff has received the petition from the residents and will bring to the commission for consideration. Parking Director Hewitt noted all paperwork has been completed and forwarded to the City Manager. However, there is a conflict with installing the district when the downtown master plan is recommending the elimination of parking in the area.

Commissioner Ellison clarified if the residential parking district is created; only those with permits could park in the area. All others who may park there would receive a ticket for illegal parking in the area.

Mayor Smith asked who would enforce and patrol the area. Parking Director Hewitt stated the parking commission would enforce it during normal working hours. However, after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, the police would respond to complaints.

Commissioner Haladay stated he thought the residential parking districts were automatic once the residents submitted the required paperwork. Director Hewitt explained once the city manager has received the paperwork, it is up to him on when it is placed on an agenda.

Acting City Manager McGee noted Manager Alles will schedule it for a future meeting but wanted the commission to be aware of the conflict between creating the residential parking district and the recommendation in downtown master plan to eliminate residential parking districts.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the downtown master plan recommends the elimination of residential parking districts one block to the east and west of Last Chance Gulch. Director Haugen noted it is two blocks to the east and west of Last Chance Gulch.

Commissioner Haladay asked how many districts exist in the business improvement district boundary. Director Hewitt noted approximately 15 residential parking districts exist. Commissioner Haladay stated by adopting the downtown master plan, the existing residential parking districts would not be eliminated; unless the commission takes formal action to eliminate them. Director Hewitt concurred.

Commissioner Haladay commented the commission can approve the residential parking district even if the downtown master plan is accepted. The commission can prioritize what would be implemented.

Director Haugen noted the BID/HPC is an advisory board and the recommendation shows intent to make the request. It is ultimately up to the commission to adopt the downtown master plan with that specific recommendation.

Commissioner Haladay asked what are the commission's guidelines to deny a residential parking district. Director Hewitt stated the creation of a district is not automatic; the commission makes the decision to approve or deny.

Commissioner Ellison concurred the commission makes the decision on a residential parking district. The commission recently consolidated several districts and maintained others. He has concerns with the downtown master plan recommending the elimination of the residential parking districts.

Cliff Christian asked how the residents are we going to follow up on this request. Mayor Smith stated staff will put the petition on an upcoming agenda.

Commissioner Haladay asked when the original petition was received. Director Hewitt stated he received the petition in January 2016.

Mayor Smith commented the neighborhood is under stress for parking and he would be favorable in considering the creation of residential parking district. He is concerned with the 360 Office parking lot and what they can or cannot do with their property.

Commissioner Noonan at the heart of the downtown master plan is the desire to have residential life as part of downtown and he does not believe eliminating parking districts would help. The commission should consider the request separate.

Commissioner Ellison stated absent of any opposition to the creation of the district, he would support the creation of the district.

Commissioner Haladay expressed concerns on the why the commission has not seen this before now. He supports bringing it forward for consideration.

Consensus Direction to Manager: Place the consideration of a residential parking district on an upcoming city commission meeting agenda.

6. Committee discussions

- a) Audit Committee, City-County Board of Health, L&C County Mental Health Advisory Committee, Montana League of Cities & Towns – No report given.
- b) Mayor Pro-Tem, Audit Committee, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee – No report given.
- c) ADA Compliance Committee, Audit Committee, City-County Parks Board, Civic Center Board – No report given.
- d) Board of Adjustment, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee – No report given.
- e) Business Improvement District/Helena Parking Commission, Montana Business Assistance Connection, Public Art Committee – No report given.
- f) Helena Citizens Council representative – Dick Sloan stated the HCC recognizes city staff is diligently working on many of the project. HCC recognizes public safety and health priorities need to take priority over other projects. The HCC will be bringing forward a recommendation for a \$.02 gas tax.

7. Review of agenda for May 9, 2016 – No discussion held.

8. Public Comment – None received.

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

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