

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

May 18, 2016 – 3:30 p.m.

**Room 326, City-County Building
316 N. Park Avenue, Helena**

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Pro Tem Ellison called the meeting to order. Commissioners Haladay and Noonan were present. Mayor Smith and Commissioner Farris-Olsen were excused. Staff present was: City Manager Alles; Assistant City Attorney Iryna O'Connor; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Police Chief Troy McGee; Assistant Public Works Director Phil Hauck; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Solid Waste Superintendent Pete Anderson; Utilities Maintenance Superintendent Kevin Hart; Wastewater Supervisor Mark Fitzwater; Community Facilities Director Gery Carpenter; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Human Resource Director James Fehr; and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included HCC Representative Gary Spaeth and IR Reporter Al Knauber

2. May 4, 2016 Meeting Summary – The May 4, 2016 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Board Appointments – There are no board appointments on the May 23rd city commission meeting agenda.

Commission Comments – No comments were offered.

4. City Manager's Report

City Manager Alles reported he spoke with Darby Bramball, who is organizing a coalition of parents from Central School, and has requested a meeting with the city commission. Manager Alles stated it is his intention to invite the group to the June 1st administrative meeting. Commission concurred.

Manager Alles reported he spoke with Gina Weist from the Humane Society regarding the pet cemetery. He will meet with both groups in the near future and hopefully facilitate them into working together regarding the pet cemetery.

Commission Priorities Worksheet – Manager Alles referred the commission to the FY2017 commission priorities worksheet and will bring specific projects forward.

Online Forms – Manager Alles reported a limited number of online forms are now available on the city web page and referred the commission to the examples of the noise permit application and Streets & Traffic Division service request form.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison asked how many noise permits are issued in a normal year. Police Chief noted there are a lot of noise permits issued for a variety of reasons.

Commissioner Haladay asked what other forms will be available. Manager Alles noted there are other departments, including the Parks Department that will begin to use the on-line forms.

Commissioner Haladay suggested the community decay, landscape ordinance and snow shoveling complaint/request forms would be good to have available.

Commissioner Noonan stated he believes these forms will be beneficial to the citizens.

5. Department Discussions:

Public Works

Long-term Wastewater Utility Projects with Major Budget Impacts – Manager Alles and Assistant Public Works Director Hauck referred the commission to the list of prioritized projects that exceed the current funding capabilities of the wastewater fund for fiscal years 2018/2022. Included in this discussion will be a preliminary look at a long-term rate strategy to accomplish these future challenges.

Other documents included in the packets were: project list, preliminary rate analysis, residential impact of rate increases, utility rate survey and 2% MHI rate guidance worksheet.

Assistant Director Hauck noted there is a master plan on the wastewater utility; however, it does not address the increase in compliance being required by DEQ and EPA.

Commissioner Haladay referred to the wastewater rate comparisons and asked if there is a minimum charge that is occurred every month. Assistant Director Hauck concurred. Commissioner Haladay asked is there a different base fee for different types of properties. Assistant Director Hauck noted in wastewater the base fee is the same for all users.

Commissioner Haladay asked if we know how the other six larger cities charge for wastewater. Assistant Director Hauck stated he will need to go back through the information and report back to the commission. He noted the commercial rate has the same base fee; however, their consumption is charged on a monthly basis. The residential rate is based and averaged on their winter usage.

Commissioner Haladay asked to see a comparison on how other cities are structuring their rates. Assistant Director Hauck stated he could will provide the rate resolutions for the seven larger cities and prepare a summary of them.

Commissioner Noonan asked what the process is moving forward to accomplish the proposed list, are these projects in the FY17 budget. Assistant Director Hauck noted this list is an attempt to look at FY18 and beyond; they are not in the FY17 budget. After the FY17 budget is adopted, staff will begin to look at the current rates and put together a proposal on how some of these projects can be funded.

Commissioner Noonan asked what projects are in the works for this summer and funded in the FY16 budget. City Engineer Leland stated the first Westside project on Cannon Street is complete; there are two other projects proposed for the Westside; design for the replacement and lining of pipes throughout the city, shared service lines have been replaced with individual service lines.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison asked if there will be future replacement of shared service lines. Assistant Director Hauck noted staff is looking at other areas and would need to look at the full scope of shared service lines.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison referenced the Harris Street upsizing project and asked what this project includes. Utility Maintenance Superintendent Hart stated Harris Street is one of the main collectors of stormwater and the pipes are old and undersized. This project is in the master plan and staff will size and replace it according to the master plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison asked what would be driving the city to build the eco-park. Assistant Director Hauck noted it does deal with the city's discharge. Wastewater Supervisor Mark Fitzwater noted the city will get a new permit and it is based on the TMDL and it will be restricted. He is looking at the ultimate limit the city will have, which is beyond the current technology. One way to get around the surface permitting is to look at groundwater discharge and the eco-park would address the regulations.

Manager Alles referenced the Westside project and noted the city will not find out about the TSEP grant until April 2017; however, he would like to proceed and have the project engineered and ready to go. The overall project may take a couple of years to complete.

Manager Alles noted he recently attended a meeting of the Montana Realtors Association to speak on the Westside project. At that meeting, one member noted the city of Helena's stormwater charges are low compared to other communities.

Assistant Director Hauck stated he will put a summary of all the rates and give to the commission prior to any decision needing to be made on the various rates. Mayor Pro Tem Ellison thanked Assistant Director Hauck and asked once the summary report is available that staff reach out to Commissioner Haladay to assure the information that he is asking for is included.

Transfer Station Strategic Plan Scope of Service –Manager Alles reported staff requested and received an Engineering Services Proposal from Great West Engineering to recommend improvements at the transfer station.

Assistant Director Hauck noted the previous city commission dealt with some of the improvements that were suggested by staff and other master plans. However, a final decision on some of the recommended projects was never made. Staff is seeking guidance from the commission regarding making improvements/upgrades to the transfer station due to 23 years of wear and tear on a 7 day a week operation. The cost of the study is projected at \$42,903. The study would look at the following items:

- Z-WALL

Staff is considering adding a Z-wall to the Transfer Station for increased diversion of C&D (Construction & Demolition), metal waste, and possibly other materials. This would provide a savings to the City as far as paying tipping fees at the landfill. The FY17 proposed cost for Class IV Waste is \$23.00/ton vs. the proposed cost for Class II Waste at \$30.00/ton.

- MAINTENANCE BUILDING
Staff would like to tear down the existing loader shed located at the direct east end of the Transfer Station push pit. The existing building is in very rough condition. Staff would like to build a replacement building further east to provide storage for the push pit loader as well as Freon recovery and additional equipment storage.
Re-locating the building would provide additional ground level unloading for transfer station customers. The pit extension would have to be covered and enclosed on 2 sides and gated at the east end.
- ADDITIONAL RECYCLING DROP OFF
The consultant could evaluate adding a recycling drop-off point that would not require the public to cross the scale (much like our current remote sites). This could eliminate traffic and be more convenient for customers that are crossing the scale for recycling only.
- TRANSFER STATION EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM & RESTROOM FACILITY
Staff would like to remodel existing employee facilities at the Transfer Station tipping floor area to create a more sanitary environment for employees to eat their lunch, change clothes, shower, etc. The existing employee area shows extensive wear and tear over 23 years of use and is very limited in size.

None of these improvements have been included in the FY17 budget. The cost for the consultant contract could be accomplished with savings from the FY16 budget. The advantage of having a consultant contract would be the public involvement process. The downside of having a consultant study these projects is the cost and the delay in implementation.

Solid Waste Superintendent Anderson reviewed each of the proposed projects with traffic flow and congestion being a top priority. Moving the maintenance building would be an improvement for the operations and again help with traffic flow.

Commissioner Noonan asked if there is room somewhere for recycling without having to go over the scale. Superintendent Anderson stated this is part of the study and a recommendation will be brought forward, it would be a tight fit, but could be accomplished.

Commissioner Haladay stated it is his understanding, from the previous commission, there was no interest in furthering our footprint at the transfer station. This proposal looks like we are going in the opposite direction. Manager Alles stated there was discussion to remove the recycling area to the south/east portion of the property and build a new building. There was concern with the maintenance building; however, the recommended improvements would increase customer service.

Commission Haladay noted the previous commission has been unwilling to expend money in hopes efficiencies could be implemented, based on the solid waste study. Manager Alles spoke on the intent of the ZWall regarding hauling the C&D waste to the landfill.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison referred to the proposed study, which would cost approximately \$43,000, and asked what benefit would there be to having the study done. Manager Alles stated the biggest advantage would be to relocate or create a recycling site outside the gate. That would be the biggest advantage of the study. The other projects staff could do in-house.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison suggested if interested, the commissioners could tour the site. He noted what captured his attention was the location and condition of the employee break area that needs to be upgraded. He would support moving forward with the specific needs and if the study accomplishes those needs, he would support doing the study.

Director Hauck noted this is not a time sensitive matter; staff is looking for direction to move these projects forward.

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 – Commissioner Noonan noted he would like to add Public Art funding to the budget discussion list and may be recommending an increase to the current funding. The committee needs to re-evaluate what they do and what projects they take on.
At the last MBAC it was reported that NorthWestern Energy plans on building a new sub-station on property on the north/east side of town. MBAC is still looking at obtaining the Armory; however, they cannot be the purchaser and be eligible for the grants.
Manager Alles noted the city has had conversations with the state on occupying the Armory; however, at that time the state was not interested. And at this time he is not interested in pursuing occupying the Armory with any city operation.
Commissioner Haladay stated the city should be open to potential opportunities to assist when we can. Manager Alles can facilitate others interested in the building; however, he is not interested in the city leasing any portion of the building.
Commissioner Noonan concurred the city should assist in facilitating others who may be interested in the building.
- f) Helena Citizens Council representative – HCC Chair Gary Spaeth reported two items are in the pipeline; one is the recommendation for a \$.02 gas tax proposal which has to be approved by the county commission and put on the November ballot; the other is how to appoint HCC members to boards/committees. The HCC will be asking that an HCC member be appointed as an ex-officio member on all city boards/committees.

7. Review of agenda for May 9, 2016 – Commissioner Haladay asked if staff could research on whether there can be a different assessment rate for out of city residents, especially for water and wastewater. Manager Alles noted staff can explore what other cities are doing and report back to the commission.

Commissioner Haladay referenced the consent agenda for the May 23rd city commission meeting and noted he will ask that the final passage of Ordinance 3219 and Ordinance 3220 be removed for further consideration. He also stated he does not believe Ordinance 3220 should be on the consent agenda as it was not a unanimous vote. Commissioner Haladay asked in reference to the Highland Park zone change, how is the abandoned septic tank taken care of, does it stay in place. Manager Alles stated the County Health Department monitors the abandoned septic tanks and they require the tank to be cleaned and filled in or removed.

8. Public Comment – None received.

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

10. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.