

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
September 6, 2017– 4:00 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, Farris-Olsen, Haladay and Noonan were present. Staff present was: City Manager Ron Alles; Executive Assistant Sarah Elkins; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Deputy City Attorney Iryna O'Connor; Police Chief McGee; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Human Resources Director James Fehr; Parks and Recreation Director Amy Teegarden; Public Works Director Randall Camp; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Parks Superintendent Craig Marr; Parking Director Dave Hewitt and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included: HCC Representatives Gary Spaeth, Terry Ray and Tyrel Suzor-Hoy; Sean Logan; Mark Burzynski; MidTowne Association members M.C. Beeby and Rose Casey; John Iverson; BID Board members Al Roy and Lee Shubert; MDT Representative Carol Strizich, Lisa with Project Management.

2. August 16, 2017 Meeting Summary – The August 16, 2017 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Upcoming Appointment – Mayor Smith is recommending the following appointments:

City-County Parks Board Reappointment of Ross Johnson to a second term on the City-County Parks Board. Term will begin upon appointment and expire September 30, 2020.

City Zoning Commission Reappointment of Ada Montague and Jerin Borrego to first full terms on the City Zoning Commission. Terms will begin upon appointment and expire on September 30, 2020.

**Business Improvement District/
Helena Parking Commission** Appointment of Ryan Stavnes to a first term on the BID/HPC. Term will begin upon appointment and expire October 31, 2021.

**Tax Increment Financing Advisory
Board (Railroad District)**

The Railroad Urban Renewal Area Tax Increment Financing Advisory Board is hereby established and shall be comprised of the following eight (8) individuals:

One (1) representative of a business within the Railroad Urban Renewal Area;

Max Pigman

One (1) owner of property located within the Railroad Urban Renewal Area:

Barbara Wetherall

One (1) resident who resides within the Railroad Urban Renewal Area;

Terry Hamilton – resident and business owner

One (1) representative of the Midtown 6th Ward Neighborhood;

MC Beebe

One (1) representative of the Montana Business Assistance Connection;

Eric Seidensticker

One (1) representative of a not-for-profit organization that represents low-income individuals;

Carolyn Belling – Helena Industries

One (1) representative of Helena School District No. 1 or its designee;

One (1) representative of the Helena College, University of Montana.

The Helena School District and Helena College has not submitted the name of their representatives. Two applications were received for the resident representative and the not-for-profit representative. Copies of the applications on those I am not recommending are also attached.

Mayor Smith noted he is recommending not appointing the members of the Citizen Conservation Board until the September 25th meeting; this will allow for additional recruitment to fill the appropriate categories. Attached are copies of the applications received to date.

Citizen Conservation Board

The Citizen Conservation is hereby established and shall be comprised of the following individuals, each of whom must be citizens of the City of Helena:

One (1) representative from the Helena Citizen's Council

Denise Barber

Two (2) representatives from the Watershed or Water Conservation sector

Patrick Judge

Two (2) representatives from environmental organizations

Brian Fadie

Greg Ross

Two (2) representatives from the business or building industries

Sarah Norcott

Two (2) citizens at large

Ken Knudson

Hanna Cail

Two (2) student leaders

One (1) representative from the Health Care Community

Lisa Fairman

One (1) Professional Engineer

One (1) Educator from the Earth Science Field

Dianna Hammer – Application does not list qualifications for specific category.

Ann Brodsky – Will be out of country 9-4 through 11/7 and two other citizens-at-large submitted applications.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen thanked the Parks Department for getting the creek running on the walking mall.

He then referred to two documents; Apprenticeship Utilization Act and Contracting Accountability Act and Best Value Act. He asked that these items be put on the next administrative meeting on September 20th. Mayor Smith concurred to put these items on the next admin meeting.

Manager Alles proposed city staff look at these documents and submit comments. He asked that staff have additional time to review the documents and prepare a response. Commissioner Farris-Olsen concurred to put it off until October/November. Commissioner Noonan concurred with the comments.

Commissioner Noonan brought forward the following recommendation for the Public Art Committee:

The Helena Public Arts Committee working with the City-County Parks Board will guide a process for replacement of the Fountain in Hill Park through the following steps:

1. Having a period of public input into possible fountain/art work replacement;
2. Working with community members to supplement the HPAC budget for creation of fountain/art for Hill Park;
3. Establishing criteria for RFP by artists for new installation;
4. Selecting an artist from the RFP and contracting with that artist;
5. Overseeing the installation with contact with all appropriate City departments;
6. Unveiling and dedicating the new installation in Hill Park.

A group of volunteers want to launch a fundraising campaign soon. They have already got commitments for \$4,000. They understand that the fundraising doesn't come with a say about what will be funded except for the same opportunities for input that the community will have.

There was commission concurrence to move forward and work with the Public Art Committee.

Manager Alles recommended the parks department be the lead on the project with input from the Public Art Committee. Commissioner Noonan concurred with the recommendation.

Director Teegarden stated this would be similar to the mural at the band shelter, who worked closely with the Public Art Committee. Commissioner Noonan would like to inform the group who wants to raise money that the project is moving forward through the parks department.

4. City Manager's Report – Manager Alles reported the citizens are using a lot of water; based on a four year average we have used more than 200,000 million gallons of water this year. The highest peak day was 15.1 million gallons. The average per day is 6.6 million gallons.

Public Works Director Camp updated the commission on the manholes that have been installed in Rimini Road. Manager Alles also noted the engineering department has been busy with several projects, including the Henderson Ditch.

5. Department Discussions
Parks and Recreation

Walking Mall Management Update – Parks & Recreation Director Teegarden updated the commission on the Management Focus Improvement Projects, Operations and Maintenance and Challenges on the walking mall to include the following:

Stream in the walking mall is now working – design and labor has been completed by city staff. There have been a lot of complements on the finished project.

Gazebo – re-painted by city staff

Increased level of maintenance in the walking mall and throughout the city parks

Sidewalk cafes have become a challenge for the parks department – many businesses want to install one adjacent to their business.

Landscaping islands are a high maintenance issue due to the pedestrian traffic.

Challenge is the existing trip hazards and non ADA compliance for the pedestrian mall.

Improved coordination – pedestrian mall special use permit is being developed through the parks department. Staff will review permit and then take it to the BID Board for their review and comments.

There may be a need to review the pedestrian mall ordinance.

Roles and responsibilities of the property owners need to be better defined.

BID Board Member Al Roy thanked Director Teegarden for the presentation; he did say a concern of his is with vehicles being on the mall that has dripping fluids. He asked that additional funding be allocated for the parks department; they continue to take on additional responsibilities.

BID Board Member Shubert noted the BID is appreciative of the work that has been done. Mr. Shubert noted chalk graffiti is becoming an issue in the pedestrian mall. There is also a lot of skateboarding happening on the mall and he has seen some near misses.

HCC Chair Gary Spaeth noted the HCC has been involved in the walking mall discussion and recognized many of the issues/problems have been addressed. He thanked everyone who has been involved.

Mayor Smith noted he has had a couple of issues on his mind; one is the security of law enforcement on the pedestrian mall and how do we manage the mixed uses that are occurring there. The other issue is the relationship between the city and property owners.

Director Teegarden commented when this discussion first started a year ago, safety was one of the issues brought up, during the day and specifically late at night. There are certain maintenance issues the parks department can do to make the area safer. She again noted the policy outlining the responsibilities of the individual city departments and property owner's needs to be completed. Once the policy is adopted an educational proponent can be available to the BID Board of Directors, city staff and property owners.

Manager Alles noted there has been little to no enforcement of bikes and skateboards on the mall. He has not received direction to have strict enforcement; however, if that is the direction of the commission, it will happen. Chief McGee noted several years ago, the police department did strictly enforce the bike and skateboard ordinance. At that time the commission received a lot of pushback. If the commission wants strong enforcement on the pedestrian mall, he will pull staff from other duties.

Mayor Smith stated he would not want to pull officers from other duties to do enforcement on the pedestrian mall. He then spoke of the possibilities and options available to allow bikes and skateboards on the pedestrian mall. Manager Alles noted he has not received a lot of complaints regarding bikes and skateboards on the mall.

Commissioner Noonan noted if you step up enforcement you create a conflict of an open atmosphere on the pedestrian mall. He believes it may be counter-productive.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the \$45,000 allocated for maintenance on the pedestrian mall is for a full resurface of the pedestrian mall or only portions. Director Teegarden stated it is a combination of things such as replacing picnic tables and signs to bring them into ADA compliance. The surface repair is for smaller individual areas of the pedestrian mall.

Commissioner Haladay asked how much of the maintenance costs for the pedestrian mall not being reimbursement by public works is. Director Teegarden noted all the maintenance costs, except for the \$15,000 for snow removal, comes out of the parks budget. Commissioner Haladay suggested a lot of the maintenance projects should be funded out of street maintenance. The \$15,000 for snow removal would be an annual contribution from public works to parks.

Manager Alles stated the \$15,000 was identified as the cost for snow removal as an annual contribution.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked does the \$15,000 cover just snow removal or other maintenance. Manager Alles stated he would bring forward the specifics on what the \$15,000 covers. It was originally allocated for snow removal. There have been other funding sources discussed to purchase additional equipment to be used on the pedestrian mall.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen concurred with Commissioner Haladay, if the maintenance project is in the public right of way, the street maintenance fund should pay for it. Manager Alles noted he and Director Teegarden will work on a summary and bring it back before the commission.

Commissioner Ellison concurred with Commissioner Haladay's comments regarding street maintenance funds paying for more of the maintenance on the pedestrian mall. He also commented the pedestrian mall was originally a street with street maintenance funds paying for maintenance. He would support city staff working out an equitable funding recommendation. Commissioner Haladay reiterated his recommendation is to use street maintenance funds for maintenance on the pedestrian mall.

Commissioner Noonan asked how the tension between the BID staff and the property owners on the issue of water has been resolved. Parks Superintendent Marr stated the issue has been resolved; there is water available for watering the landscaping.

Mayor Smith summarized there has been a lot of improvements made in addressing the maintenance of the pedestrian mall. Staff is ready to meet with the BID Board and property owners to review the draft policy.

Public Works

Front Street Update – City Engineer Leland gave an overview of the project and noted construction is scheduled for April/May of 2018. The project will include stormwater replacement, waterline replacement streetscape and will bring the entire area up to ADA compliance. There are some issues that will have to be addressed, including parking, lighting district, access to the Great Northern and working with the property owners. Until the project is 90% designed, the final costs will be unknown.

Manager Alles noted the project is approximately at 60% engineered designed; he asked Engineer Leland what he sees as the next step. Engineer Leland stated the consultant hopes to get the 60% design to staff within the next couple of weeks. Once the design is at 90%, staff will review it and bring it forward for commission review. Construction should begin in April/May 2018.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked how conversations are going with MDT on a raised crosswalk or a crosswalk across Neill Avenue. Engineer Leland stated the raised intersection was removed from this project and was going to be part of the project submitted for a grant, which we did not receive. At this point the recommendation is to get the project designed and bid out. A raised intersection can be installed at a later date. Staff has not had a conversation with MDT regarding the installation of raised intersection or crosswalks. However, once the project is at 60% or 90% designed, staff will contact MDT. Commissioner Farris-Olsen noted there currently is not an ADA compliant crosswalk. Manager Alles stated staff will be painting the crosswalks on Neill Avenue that were covered with the resurfacing project.

Commissioner Noonan asked if staff has reinstalled the crosswalk on Neill Avenue. Engineer Leland stated he will follow-up on getting the crosswalk re-painted. The crosswalk on Highland Street will also be re-painted.

Commissioner Haladay commented in regards to the raised intersection, with a representative from MDT present, we need to plant the bug now and start the conversation. It makes sense in an urban

area to have a raised intersection on Neill Avenue; it is great for pedestrians. Engineer Leland noted Neill Avenue is one of MDT's main highways through town.

Commissioner Haladay stated in regards to the 4- million project he asked what funds the overruns are anticipated from. Engineer Leland stated the staff is looking at overruns in streets and stormwater funds.

Commissioner Haladay referenced the lighting district and asked if consideration has been given to the city owning it. Engineer Leland reported staff has met with NorthWestern Energy and noted the poles are already there and NWE can do a one-time pilot project for LED lights and this project qualifies as the pilot project. However, the city could take over and create their own lighting district. Manager Alles noted he believes a lighting district needs to be created; however, a pilot project would be a good opportunity. Commissioner Haladay asked what the timeline is to make decision. Engineer Leland stated the consultant and NWE are working out the design and costs for the lighting district and then a public meeting will be scheduled.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked if the city owns the poles, would that increase the costs versus NWE owning them. Manager Alles noted the upfront costs would be more; however, different funding options are being discussed. Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated he would support the city owning the lighting district and poles. At the present time, the city does not have the flexibility to be creative with a light district.

Commissioner Haladay noted the long range transportation plan included bike lanes along Front Street and asked if there are bike lanes in the plans. Engineer Leland stated there are no specific bike amenities/lanes; however the sidewalks are being designed to be wider and there will be angle parking. Commissioner Haladay asked that staff give a presentation on the Front Street project at the next NMTAC meeting. Engineer Leland concurred and noted NMTAC has been involved from the beginning.

Quiet Zone Update – Engineer Leland noted the quiet zone is approximately 90% complete and should be done in the next couple of weeks. There is a 30-day notice to MDT and MRL and then there would no horns blown.

There have been concerns on how the consultant designed where Centennial Trail crosses the quiet zone on Benton Avenue and how the trail and sidewalk will connect and still be ADA compliant. Engineer Leland showed the design of the crossing and noted the crossing is ADA compliant and that the pedestrians and bicyclist will use the rapid flash beacons.

Mayor Smith commented this project will be safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. Engineer Leland noted a grant was received from MDT to install a trail from Centennial Trail on the east side of Benton Avenue all the way to Custer Avenue.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked when the bid for West Main project will be put out again. Engineer Leland noted the bid should be put out again in November/December 2017.

Mayor Smith asked for an update on the waterline from Tenmile into the city. Engineer Leland stated it is at DEQ for review and staff has begun conversations with the property owners. The project will be bid out in November/December 2017.

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 – **6th Ward Transportation Resolution** – Manager Alles stated the 6th Ward/MidTowne Association made a presentation to the HCC and are looking for support from the City Commission. He noted any transportation plan needs to include input from the TCC and public

meetings would need to be held. Letters of support from the Helena School District and Helena College have been received.

HCC Chair Spaeth reported the HCC has a report on the Civic Center and would like to present it to the commission at an administrative meeting. He then stated the HCC approved a resolution in support of the recommendations of the 6th Ward/MidTowne Association.

Sixth Ward/Mid-Towne Neighborhood representatives M.C. Beeby, Rose Casey and Terry Ray gave a presentation on the resolution, map and recommendation for improvement for access to the area. Ms. Casey noted the association has been visioning for many years and they believe a lot of plans are coming to fruition. Ms. Casey referred the commission to the petition submitted regarding access. Pedestrian access is important for the area, it is important for visitors to access the area and that Helena Avenue remain open.

Ms. Casey emphasized the importance of moving forward with recommendations. John Iverson spoke in support of the recommendations. Russ Fillner, Helena College representative, stated the college supports the recommendations and offered to answer any questions.

HCC member Tyrel Su Hoy commented this area has a lot of potential for Helena and could have a huge economic impact to the city. He specifically addressed the potential development of the Caird property.

HCC Chair Spaeth noted the HCC works hard to create neighborhoods and noted this neighborhood is active and he encouraged the commission to support the recommendations.

Commissioner Haladay stated it is his understanding it is MDT's opinion that this intersection works. However, he does not believe it works. Commissioner Haladay stated he would like to see gas tax funds be used to improve this intersection. He recommended the commission give direction to start the project and commission consensus to allocate funding toward the project. Commissioner Haladay asked that staff ask for and receive a decision from MDT.

MDT Representative Carol Strizich stated she is not a traffic engineer; however, there have been a lot of conversations regarding this intersection. MDT considers this intersection to be functioning and therefore doesn't rise to a high priority within MDT. However, that doesn't mean something can't happen, it does mean there isn't funding. MDT would have to review and approve anything that affects MDT's system as they have to assure the primary function of moving traffic.

Mayor Smith asked if the TCC has discussed this issue. Commissioner Haladay noted the city is going to have to fund this project and if that is the case, the commission is going to have to make a decision to move forward and fund it. He believes all parties should be kept in the discussion.

Commissioner Ellison concurred with Commissioner Haladay's comments and noted the Transportation Update did not include this project. If the city wants something different, then the city needs approve it and fund it.

Commissioner Noonan stated the commission needs to support moving forward as there has been money already invested in this area. The commission has to be willing to complete the broader vision for the area.

Mayor Smith clarified the recommendation is to use Lyndale Avenue and leave Boulder as is. Ms. Casey stated if Livingston is re-opened and Lyndale is used as the access to Wal-Mart; Boulder Avenue would be a non-issue.

Commissioner Haladay stated the broader question is do we want to make this intersection work better for the area; does the commission want to move forward and how to do so.

Manager Alles noted he too had suggested forwarding this project to the TCC due to MDT's involvement; however, the city commission needs to dedicate the resources to move forward with the preliminary engineering report. The plan would have to go through the correct process.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated it should be the city commission that makes the decision and not assign it to any committee for another recommendation. He would support dedicating the time and resources to move forward.

Mayor Smith stated he supports moving forward; however, there will be a lot of parties involved.

Manager Alles noted the commission needs to discuss the street priorities, which include upcoming projects and funding. The plan is to have an additional conversation in the next couple of weeks.

7. **Review of agenda for September 11, 2017** – Mayor Smith stated he will have a question regarding the removal of a light in a street lighting district.

Commissioner Noonan noted the dedication of the Jackson Street Parking Garage mural is on September 7th at 6:00 p.m.

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.