



**Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)  
Monthly Meeting  
March 22, 2017- 7:00 PM  
City/County Building - Room 326  
Helena, Montana**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Attendance**

#### **Members Present:**

District 1      Mary Ann George, Paul Pacini

District 2      Gary Spaeth, Tyrel Suzor-Hoy

District 3      Elizabeth Rivard, Sumner Sharpe

District 4      Dave Maslowski, Tom Woodgerd

District 5

District 6      Terry Ray, Maureen Kiely

District 7      Dick Sloan, Denise Roth Barber, John Forbes, Bob Habeck

**Guests Present:** Brian Coplin, HELP; Cory Bailey, Helena Police Department; Renee Bauer, Helena Business Improvement District (BID); Jeff Wadekamper, Helena Regional Airport; George McCauley, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Committee; Maggie Tickell, citizen; Lee Tickell, citizen; Mark Roylance, BID.

### **Call to Order, General Business and Announcements**

Chair Gary Spaeth called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and all present were introduced. Spaeth introduced Tyrel Suzor-Hoy who was appointed to fill a vacant position in District 2 by the remaining representatives in that District.

Helena Police Department officer Cory Bailey reported that four officers are graduating from the academy; however they do not have a full police force. He explained that actions related to cars parking the wrong way and abandoned vehicles are complaint driven.

Denise Roth Barber asked Bailey to report back on whether or not the old shooting range parking lot is inside or outside the city limits.

### **Helena Regional Airport Authority**

Jeff Wadekamper, Helena Regional Airport Director, reviewed current and planned activities. Factors affecting air transportation include airline industry consolidation and a move to larger jet airplanes. The Airport Authority plans to apply for a federal Department of Transportation grant to assist with efforts to expand air service to Seattle and add new service to Portland.

### **Walking Mall Maintenance**

Mark Roylance, Helena Business Improvement District (BID), asked the HCC to support the recommendations in the memo from Paul Pacini (Mourning Cloak Team) dated February 14, 2017. Roylance explained that the Walking Mall looks tired and it is difficult to schedule an event because five different departments are involved. Solutions identified by Roylance include: one-stop shopping for a permit to hold an event; development standards, master plan for the walking mall; coordinator; repair and maintenance; and a trailhead marker on the Walking Mall. Roylance stated that the BID would do maintenance if they could get money for it. The BID spends all the money they have.

In response to a question, George McCauley, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Committee Chair, explained that the total cost for the city to come into compliance with the ADA is \$11 million. The City hired a consultant to develop a transition plan that covers an 11-year time frame. The ADA Committee recently voted to accept the consultant's plan.

Motion by Sumner Sharpe, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mary Ann George to support the recommendations in the referenced memorandum. George clarified the motion to include reformatting of the

recommendations by the Executive Committee. In response to a question about where the funds to pay for a coordinator would come from, George clarified that the HCC recommendations address the importance of the issue. It is up to the recipients of the report to determine how to implement the recommendations. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Fact Finding Issues and Team Assignments**

HCC members discussed fact finding team assignments and agreed that the team assignments should be ad hoc. Members will bring issues to the HCC to investigate and those interested can volunteer to investigate issues of interest to them. Issues were submitted to HCC Secretary Mary Ann George before the meeting and identified during the meeting. A list of issues and members volunteering to address the issues is attached.

### **February 22, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the February 22, 2017 HCC meeting were approved with the following correction: Under the heading Reports from Fact Finding Teams - - - , **Walking Mall Maintenance**, delete: "However, Pacini explained that the memo and recommendation were prepared by Pacini alone. It does not represent the efforts of the Mourning Cloak team." Insert: "The recommendation was prepared by the Mourning Cloak Team which Paul explained, was presently composed of only himself. Other members originally assigned to the team had asked for reassignment to Teams studying issues which they found more to their liking."

### **HCC Budget and City Budget**

HCC Treasurer Dick Sloan called for HCC members to volunteer to attend budget work sessions in May.

### **Publicity**

HCC Secretary Mary Ann George described publicity efforts including: recording radio spots; and writing a guest editorial in combination with letters to the editor.

### **Coordinator's Report**

HCC Coordinator Mary Vandenbosch distributed a list of boards and committees with names of HCC members serving on or observing these groups. She explained that the HCC has voting representation on five committees. Unless appointed by the City Commission, the role of HCC members attending other committees is to observe, learn about the issues, report back, and make public comment.

### **Public Comment**

George McCauley discussed his proposal regarding enforcement of the City's snow removal policy. He is concerned that enforcement of the policy is ineffective because it is complaint-driven. In his opinion, residents are unwilling to file complaints about neighbors. He supports assigning city employees to look for violations. McCauley requested a letter of support for his proposal from the HCC. He plans to ask the City's ADA Compliance Committee to take up this issue. Mary Ann George and Dave Maslowski volunteered to serve on the ad hoc fact finding team to investigate this issue.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

## **Attachment**

### **HCC Fact Finding Teams and Issues**

March 22, 2017

#### **Youth Community Center: Elizabeth Rivard**

Does Helena need a Community Center with specific focus on more opportunities to engage youth? Could this be in conjunction with one of the new schools in the City?

#### **Street Conditions: Sumner Sharpe**

Street conditions are poor and getting worse. Need to address the long-term issue of the cost of rebuilding streets rather than simply chip-sealing them, every two or three years.

#### **City Snow Removal Policy and Procedure: Mary Ann George, Dave Maslowski**

#### **Capital Hill Mall: Terry Ray**

#### **BlueCross and Blue Shield Building: Sumner Sharpe**

#### **Helena Regional Sports Complex: Denise Roth Barber**

#### **Caird Property Development: Maureen Kiely and Tyrel Suzor-Hoy**

#### **Car Speed Signs: Tom Woodgerd**

Some schools have signs that tell cars how fast they are going. Others don't.

#### **Downtown Zoning Update: Paul Pacini**

#### **Topics Not Assigned**

HCC should set up a fact-finding team to begin a concentrated outreach effort, using our meager budget resources, to help build/generate citizen involvement as well as building

neighborhood representation and voices. HCC represents neighborhoods and is the voice of citizens; and we could do much better. We need to know what the citizenry thinks about what needs or problems should be addressed as well as what would improve the livability of Helena.

I think it would be interesting to find out how many people this valley can support in terms of water usage. Should we put restrictions on developments?

Also, could the newly purchased land near the VA (purchased by PPLT, Fort Harrison, and I think there was one other entity involved) be used for community agriculture and education by the County Extension office, Master Gardeners and the Helena school system?

The existing painted crosswalk along Highway 12 has been used by pedestrians for many years, but both traffic and pedestrian use has increased over the years, resulting in a hazardous situation (especially for pedestrians) and a potential for conflict with vehicles. The Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Committee is hoping to see some improvements made to this crosswalk, which is currently just a painted walk with no flashing beacons or any enhanced safety measures. Kessler students use this crosswalk to get to school.